



APPROVED 1/19/2017

**Georgia Connections Academy (GACA)
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Thursday, November 17, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. ET**

**Held at the following location and via teleconference:
Georgia Connections Academy
2763 Meadow Church Road, Suite 208
Duluth, GA 30097**

I. Call to Order

Ms. Hug called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. when all participants were present and able to hear each other. The school location and phone line were open for the public to attend.

II. Roll Call

Board Members Present at Roll Call: Alisa Hug (in person), JoAnn Brown, Rich Thompson, Charlotte Collins and Steve Julal (via phone);

Board Members Absent: Greg Mishkin;

Guests Present: Heather Robinson, School Principal (in person); Allison Reaves, Karen Duquette, Tanya Lee, Mike Bruzga and Megann Arthur, Connections staff (all via phone).

III. Mission Statement

Ms. Hug read the school's Mission Statement to begin the meeting.

IV. Public Comment

There were no comments at this time.

V. Routine Business

a. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Hug asked the Board to review the Agenda distributed prior to the meeting. The Board added Action Item (b) Review and Acceptance of Resignation of Board Member, Gregory Mishkin, Information Item: Discussion of Potential Partnership with Utopian Academy for the Arts, and an Executive Session pursuant to O.C.G.A. §§ 50-14-3 – to discuss the employment, compensation or periodic evaluation of an employee. There being no additional changes noted, Dr. Brown made the following motion and it was seconded by Mr. Julal as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the November 17, 2016 Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Georgia Connections Academy, as amended, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Oral Reports

a. School Leader's Report

i. Data Dashboard

Ms. Robinson reviewed the school dashboard/media clips and marketing information included in the Board materials with the Board, including up-to-date enrollment numbers and associated staffing levels. Ms. Robinson discussed recent school and student events, including some at the Georgia Educational Technology Conference. Board members expressed their support of the positive opportunities for students being offered.

ii. Update on Attendance Procedures for High School

Ms. Robinson provided the Board with an overview of updates to attendance procedures at the school for students who are either truant, or skipping school routinely. She advised that the students affected were primarily in high school, so that is where the focus is at the school, with any K-8 student issues being handled on a case-by-case basis. Board members discussed the updated procedures being followed by staff with Ms. Robinson.

iii. Update on Student Intervention Efforts – Tier 1 and Tier 2

Ms. Robinson updated the Board on Student Intervention Efforts. She advised the Board of the three (3) tiers for students, as well as school staff members' increased awareness of critical educational components and benchmarks, as well as Connections' useful tools for tracking student progress. Ms. Robinson further discussed the relation these efforts have to the school's annual success in goals completion.

b. Financial Report

Ms. Lee reviewed the financial report included in the Board Meeting materials. She highlighted key aspects in the school's revenue and expense reports, as well as the school's forecast for the school year.

c. School Leader Review Process Update

Dr. Brown reviewed the current progress in the school leader review process, including meetings to date and the implementation of the state's recommended evaluation process. She reminded Board members of the timeline for Ms. Robinson's annual evaluation.

VII. Board Strategic Development

a. Performance Framework Update

Ms. Robinson referred Board members to the final amendment to the school's charter, as included in the Board materials, which reflects the school's acceptance of the Performance Framework and also includes the additional mission-specific goals approved at the last board meeting. Board members indicated their support of the amendment language, and Ms. Hug indicated her intent to execute the documentation after the meeting for submission to the SCSC.

b. SCSC Governance Training Update

Ms. Robinson discussed the two upcoming training opportunities being offered by the SCSC for the Board's annual mandatory training. Board members reviewed which of the sessions they intended to attend with those in attendance.

VIII. Consent Items

Ms. Hug asked the Board members whether there were any items from the Consent Items that they wished to have moved to Action Items for discussion, or tabled. There being no items moved, a motion was made by Mr. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Julal as follows:

RESOLVED, the Consent Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the October 20, 2016 Board Meeting; and
- b. Approval of Staffing Report; are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Action Items

a. Approval of Connections Academy of Georgia, LLC Invoice for October

Mr. Julal reviewed in detail the CA invoice for the month of October as drawn from the financial report presented earlier in the meeting and contained in the Board materials. He asked the Board members whether they had any questions on the invoice or required any further explanation. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Julal and seconded by Mr. Thompson as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Connections Academy of Georgia, LLC invoice for the month of October, in the amount of \$2,344,615.00, as presented, is hereby approved for payment upon the availability of funds.

The motion passed unanimously.

b. Acceptance of Resignation of Board Member, Gregory Mishkin

Ms. Hug briefly reviewed the resignation letter by Mr. Mishkin, as received by the Board earlier in the week. There being no additional discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Julal and seconded by Dr. Brown as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Acceptance of Resignation of Board Member, Gregory Mishkin, as presented, be hereby approved.

The motion did not receive a vote, as Mr. Thompson requested that the Board discuss further prior to voting on the motion. Ms. Hug then provided those in attendance with an overview of actions taken at the last board meeting and other communications that led to Mr. Mishkin's submission of his resignation from the Board, intended to be effective on January 20, 2017.

Board members had discussion on the letter submitted by Mr. Mishkin, as well as additional discussion of action taken at the last meeting. The Board indicated their intent for some members to have additional discussion with Mr. Mishkin prior to accepting his resignation.

This item was tabled.

X. Information Items

a. State Relations Update

Ms. Duquette provided the Board with an update on recent legislative activities that may impact the school.

b. School Leadership Team (PSLT) Update

Ms. Reaves provided the Board with an update on behalf of Connections' School Leadership Team. She reminded Board members of the survey which will soon be sent to them to allow for their feedback on their school leader's performance prior to her mid-year review.

Discussion of Potential Partnership with Utopian Academy for the Arts

Ms. Robinson advised the Board that she had received communication from the Academy regarding a potential partnership. She reviewed the discussions she has had to date with representatives from the Academy, and sought Board feedback on whether to further explore the partnership opportunity. Following Board support of the potential partnership, Ms. Robinson advised that she would continue discussions with representatives from Utopian Academy and provide an update at a future meeting.

c. Future Funded Enrollment Growth

Ms. Robinson reminded the Board that the funded enrollment target for the 2017-2018 school year will be discussed for approval during the upcoming January Board meeting. She reviewed the school's enrollment cap as the major driver in the enrollment target planned, and advised of the budget and outreach plans that the number would effect.

i. Facility Update

Ms. Robinson reminded the Board that the school facility lease will be up for renewal in 2018, as it runs concurrently with the term of the school's charter. She advised that there will be ongoing discussions at future meetings regarding the school facility plans.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Pursuant to O.C.G.A. §§ 50-14-3 – to discuss the employment, compensation or periodic evaluation of an employee

A motion was made by Ms. Collins and seconded by Dr. Brown to enter into Executive Session at 5:52 p.m. via a roll call vote of the Board pursuant to O.C.G.A § 50-14-3 to discuss the employment, compensation or periodic evaluation of an employee. Board members present were: Ms. Hug, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Julal, Ms. Collins and Dr. Brown. At the invitation of the Board, Ms. Robinson, Ms. Reaves, Mr. Bruzga and Ms. Arthur remained in the Executive Session. All others left the meeting at this time.

After the Board concluded their discussion, the Board resumed their open session upon a motion by Dr. Brown and seconded by Mr. Julal at 6:02 p.m. via roll call vote. No action was taken during Executive Session.

XII. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date – January 19, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

There being no further business to discuss, the next meeting was confirmed for January 19, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. ET. The meeting was adjourned at 6:03 p.m. following a motion made by Mr. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Brown.