



**APPROVED 5/25/2017**

North Carolina Connections Academy  
**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL MEETING**  
Thursday, April 27, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

**Held at the following location and via teleconference:**  
2700 Meridian Parkway, Suite 300  
Durham, NC 27713

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**I. Call to Order**

Dr. Setser called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. when all participants were present and able to hear each other. The meeting location was open for the public to attend.

**II. Review and Consideration of Potential Board Member Candidate: Joyce Loveless**

Dr. Setser reviewed Joyce Loveless' background and experience with the Board. The Board reviewed Ms. Loveless' qualifications and discussed the consideration of her appointment. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Setser and seconded by Ms. Phifer as follows:

RESOLVED, that the appointment of Joyce Loveless to the North Carolina Connections Academy Board of Directors, as a Class 2 Director, for a term to the 2018 Annual meeting, pending successful completion of necessary background checks and subject to all necessary notifications to the North Carolina Department of Education, as discussed, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously

**III. Roll Call**

Board Members Present: Eric Strother and Bridget Phifer (in person); Bryan Setser and Donna Sullivan (via phone);

Board Members Absent: Kristin Cuilla and Catherine Edmonds;

Guests Present: Nathan Currie, School leader; GeRita Walden and Sarah O'Shea, School staff; Joyce Loveless, Potential Board Member; David Schmidt, Vality Consulting (all in person); David Hostetler, Board Counsel; Melissa Nelson, Brenda Little, Heather Woodward, Karen Duquette and Laura Coleman, Connections staff (all via phone).

**IV. Public Comment**

There were no comments at this time.

**V. Audit Committee, Committee of Entire Board**

- a. Approval of Audit and Tax Firm Engagement for the 2016-2017 School

Ms. Little reviewed the audit and tax firm engagement letter, as included in the Board materials. She advised the Board that the firm was the same the Board had engaged for the previous school year, and reviewed the anticipated audit-related charges and scope of services. She further advised the Board that the estimate of audit and tax firm related charges was similar to the previous school year. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Strother and seconded by Ms. Phifer as follows:

RESOLVED, that the engagement of Rives & Associates, LLP for the 2016-2017 school year, as presented, is hereby accepted.

The motion passed unanimously.

## VI. Routine Business

### a. Approval of Agenda

Dr. Setser asked the Board to review the Agenda distributed prior to the meeting. The Board requested to enter into Closed Session immediately following the Approval of Agenda. There being no further changes noted, a motion was made by Dr. Setser and seconded by Dr. Sullivan as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the April 27, 2017 Meeting of the Board of Directors of the North Carolina Connections Academy, as amended, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

## CLOSED SESSION

### a. § 143-318.11(a)(3) – To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged

The Board entered into Closed Session at 9:11 a.m., pursuant to North Carolina General § 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged. Board members in attendance to begin the session were: Bryan Setser, Eric Strother, Bridget Phifer and Donna Sullivan. Guests invited by the Board to attend were: David Hostetler, Joyce Loveless, David Schmidt and Nathan Currie. All others left the meeting at this time.

The Board ended Closed Session and entered into open session at 10:18 a.m. No action was taken during Closed Session.

## Approval of Action(s) Necessary Based on Closed Session

No action was taken during Closed Session.

## VII. Oral Reports

### a. School Leader's Report

#### i. End of Year Activities Update

Mr. Currie discussed with the Board end of year school activities, including staff appreciation week, prom planning and the traveling academy.

ii. Telecommunications Services Update

Mr. Currie reviewed the proposal for hosted Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) Services as included in the Board meeting materials. He further reviewed the benefits and budget effects of the communications upgrade, including eliminated costs and fees and increased mobility for staff. The Board expressed their support of the upcoming communications upgrade.

iii. State Testing Update

Mr. Currie introduced Ms. O'Shea to review with the Board the ongoing state testing preparations by school staff. Ms. O'Shea provided a report of the preparations including hiring efforts for the summer school academy. Mr. Currie further advised the Board that the State Department of Education will be visiting the state testing sites similar to last year and encouraged Board member involvement as testing administrators and proctors.

b. Financial Report

Ms. Little reviewed the financial report included in the Board Meeting materials. She reviewed the changes in the financials and forecasted expenses from the previous month's statements, enrollment funding, projected fund balance and specific expenses

i. Financial Dashboard Review

Ms. Little reviewed the Financial Dashboard as included in the Board meeting materials. Ms. Little responded to Board member concerns about increased pass through expenses that are not covered by deficit protection as they are realized from last fiscal year during which the protection was not in place.

ii. Monthly Cash Flow

There were no questions or discussion from the Board on the Monthly Cash Flow document, as included in the Board meeting materials.

c. Future Planning

The Board requested the discussion of these items be tabled pending further negotiations with Connections.

i. Teacher Compensation Phase II Update

This item was tabled.

ii. Curriculum Discussion

This item was tabled.

iii. Connections Relationship Options

This item was tabled.

## VIII. Consent Items

Dr. Setser asked the Board members whether there were any Consent Items that they wished to have moved to Action Items for discussion, or tabled. The Board requested Consent Item (d) Approval of Staff Compensation Plan for the 2017-2018 School Year be tabled as there was no document for Board review and consideration. There being no further changes, a motion was made by Dr. Setser and seconded by Dr. Strother as follows:

RESOLVED, the Consent Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the February 23, 2017 Board Meeting;
- b. Approval of Minutes from the March 23, 2017 Special Board Meeting;
- c. Approval of Staffing Report; and
- e. Approval of Revision(s) to the NCCA Board Policy Manual
  - i. Employee Handbook Revision(s); are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

## IX. Action Items

- a. Approval of Connections Academy of North Carolina, LLC Invoices for February and March
  
- b. Approval of School Calendar for the 2017-2018 School Year

The Board expressed their intent to review and consider the Action Items together. Dr. Setser asked the Board members whether there were any Action Items that they wished to discuss or table. There being no desired questions or discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Setser and seconded by Dr. Sullivan as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Connections Academy of North Carolina, LLC invoices for the months of February, in the amount of \$1,068,746.18, and March, in the amount of \$915,160.88, as presented, are hereby approved.

RESOLVED, that the 2017-2018 school year School Calendar, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

## X. Information Items

- a. State Relations Update

Ms. Duquette reviewed the State Relations report included in the Board meeting materials on recent legislative activities which may impact the school, including revised ELA standards and local funding legislation.

- b. Partner School Leadership Team (PSLT) Update

Ms. Nelson presented to the Board on behalf of Connections' School Leadership Team.

- i. School Operations Metrics

Ms. Nelson presented this item to the Board. She reviewed the data included in the Board materials, highlighting the school's performance as compared with other Connections' partnering schools of similar size and years in operation, specifically welcome call

completion, teacher professional learning community engagement and decreased withdrawal rates. Board members discussed the metrics data with Ms. Nelson.

c. Curriculum for the 2017-2018 School Year

Ms. Nelson reviewed the 2017-2018 Curriculum and Instructional Programming Memo as included in the Board materials, as well as the recent Curriculum Town Hall presentation hosted by Connections. Ms. Nelson further advised the Board on upcoming enhancements to the curriculum based on performance indicators. In response to Board members' questions, Ms. Nelson confirmed that school staff will see the curriculum enhancements over the summer months.

d. Board Planning for the 2017-2018 School Year

Ms. Coleman discussed the planning for the 2017-2018 school year that Connections Academy has been working on with the school.

i. Board Meeting Minutes

Ms. Coleman reviewed recent feedback from the State Department of Education (DOE) on the Board meeting minutes. She advised that although the Board has abided by all open meeting law requirements for the state of North Carolina, she will provide the additional information requested by the State DOE including specific individuals that make each motion and details of Board discussion.

ii. Board Composition

Ms. Coleman discussed with the Board the current composition, including board member terms that would be up at this year's annual meeting, and encouraged Board members to discuss their intentions regarding terms and renewal with the Board Chair.

iii. Proposed Meeting Schedule

Ms. Coleman advised that the consideration of the Board meeting schedule for the 2017-2018 school year will be included on the June Annual Meeting agenda. The Board confirmed their support of maintaining the current meeting schedule for the upcoming school year.

**XI. CLOSED SESSION**

- a. § 143-318.11(a)(3) – To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged

This item was held earlier in the Board meeting.

**XII. Approval of Action(s) Necessary Based on Closed Session**

This item was held earlier in the Board meeting.

**XIII. Adjournment and Confirmation of Next Regular Meeting – Thursday, May 25, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 10:47 a.m. upon a motion made by Dr. Setser, seconded by Ms. Phifer and carried unanimously by all Board members present. The next meeting is scheduled for May 25, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.