



APPROVED 9/19/2013

**Georgia Connections Academy (GACA)
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Wednesday, August 15, 2013 at 6:00 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 6:03 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 at the school, which was open to the public); Rich Thompson, Steve Julal and Charlotte Collins (via phone);

Guests Present: Heather Robinson, School Principal (in person at the school, which was open to the public); Rachel Bailey, Shawn Soltz and Heather Woodward, Connections Education staff (all via phone).

III. Public Comment

There were no public comments at this time.

IV. Routine Business

a. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Hug asked the Board to review the Agenda distributed prior to the meeting. There being no changes noted, Mr. Julal made the following motion and it was seconded by Mr. Thompson as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the June 26, 2013 Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Georgia Connections Academy, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

V. Oral Reports

a. Principal's Report

i. Update on Back to School Activities, Staffing and Training

Ms. Robinson provided the Board with an overview of activities at the school in preparation for the start of the school year, including welcome calls to families. She reviewed the recent staffing changes, as well as ongoing training.

ii. Update on Enrollment

Ms. Robinson reviewed the Monthly School Report with Board members. She further reviewed the current enrollment with the Board.

iii. Update on School Improvement Plan Goals and Action Plan

Ms. Robinson reviewed the School Improvement Plan goals and action plan with the Board.

iv. Dashboard/ Media Clips and Marketing

Ms. Robinson reviewed the draft dashboard framework included in the Board materials. She discussed the reports and data that she intends to include in the future. The Board was supportive of moving forward with the dashboard.

v. Georgia's Withdrawal from PARCC

Ms. Robinson reviewed the letter included in the Board materials concerning Georgia's withdrawal from PARCC. The Board discussed the letter in detail.

b. Financial Report

Mr. Soltz reviewed the financial information included in the Board materials with the Board. He reviewed the balance sheet, and the school's revenue and expense statements with the Board. He reviewed the end of year results, revenue, state funding, teacher health insurance, virtual state supplement, compensation expenses and the school's fund balance.

i. Letter to the Georgia Charter School Commission Regarding School Funding

The Board reviewed the letter included in the Board materials and discussed the potential funding implications.

ii. Unaudited 2012-2013 Financial Results

Mr. Soltz reviewed the timing on the financial results.

VI. Board Strategic Development

a. Board Recruitment

Ms. Hug reviewed the recent Board member recruitment initiative. The Board discussed their desire to recruit three additional members. The Board discussed the questionnaire and vetting process previously approved.

b. EMO Evaluation

Mr. Julal noted that he has been working on drafting an EMO evaluation for the Board to review.

VII. Consent Agenda

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 June 8, 2013 Meeting;
- b. Approval of Minutes from the June 26, 2013 Meeting;
- c. Approval of Minutes from the June 30, 2013 Meeting;
- d. Approval of Staffing Report;
- e. Approval of 2013-2014 Base Salaries and Incentive Percentage, Career Ladder Positions and Home-Worker Stipends;
- f. Confirmation of Board Designee on Connections Education Curriculum Advisory Panel;
- g. Approval of Revision to the 2013-2014 State Specific School Handbook: Federal Programs Complaint Policy; and
- h. Approval of Revision to the 2013-2014 State Specific School Handbook: School wide Attendance and Truancy Policy; are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Action Items

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

Mr. Julal reviewed in detail the CA invoice for the month of June 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 June, in the amount of \$945,493.05, as presented, is hereby approved for payment upon the availability of funds.

The motion passed unanimously.

b. Approval of School Goals for 2013-2014 School Year

Ms. Robinson reviewed the school goals for the 2013-2014 school year included in the Board package with the Board. Ms. Robinson reminded the Board that the school goals represent the major driver for the staff incentive plan. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Julal and seconded by Mr. Thompson as follows:

RESOLVED, that the School Goals for the 2013-2014 school year, as discussed, are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

c. Approval of Additional Administrative Staff Positions

Ms. Robinson reviewed the current administrative structure with the Board. Ms. Bailey discussed the desire to add a high school principal, as this is consistent with other schools of a similar size.

The Board discussed the school's enrollment target, as previously approved by the Board. The Board further discussed the intention to cap high school (9-12) enrollment, but continue to allow K-2 enrollment when the enrollment reaches 3,000 students. The intent then for when 2nd semester starts, high school enrollment would reopen until enrollment reaches 4,000 students, which will reach the cap imposed by the school's charter. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Collins as follows:

RESOLVED, that enrollment process, as discussed, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

[Ms. Robinson left the meeting at 7:15 p.m.]

Ms. Bailey discussed the desire to move Ms. Robinson into the role of a Lead Principal. The Board was very supportive of this change. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Julal as follows:

RESOLVED, that additional administrative positions and the appointment of Ms. Robinson as the Lead Principal with compensation for the 2013-2014 school year in the amount of \$91,000 with a 20% bonus potential, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

[Ms. Robinson rejoined the meeting at 7:22 p.m.]

d. Approval of Professional Development Plan

Ms. Bailey reviewed in detail the Connections Academy Professional Development Plan for the 2013-2014 school year that was provided in the Board materials for Board review and consideration. She referenced the school's Educational Products and Services Agreement with Connections Academy that includes an annual outline of teacher and staff training and professional development programs and opportunities. Ms. Bailey outlined the key components of the teacher and staff training and professional development program planned for the upcoming school year, and Ms. Robinson provided the Board with information on supplemental training opportunities the school plans to provide. Ms. Bailey further advised the Board that the progress for each staff member was logged and records were maintained. The Board discussed the plan, and how the plan worked in cooperation with first year teacher requirements in the state. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Julal and seconded by Mr. Thompson as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Connections Academy Professional Development Plan for the 2013-2014 School Year, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

e. Approval of Board Training and Conference Attendance for the 2013-2014 School

Ms. Woodward reviewed the upcoming trainings and conferences that have been identified that may interest members of the Governing Council. The Governing Council discussed the trainings, and all interested members to each. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Julal and seconded by Mr. Thompson as follows:

RESOLVED, that Board training and conference attendance for the 2013-2014 school year, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Information Items

a. State Relations Update

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

b. Update on National Charter School Conference

Ms. Ciora provided the Board with an update on her attendance at the NCSC.

c. Public School Options Meeting in Washington, DC

Ms. Robinson updated the Board on the recently held Public School Options meetings held in Washington, DC.

d. Georgia Families for Virtual Public Education

Ms. Robinson reviewed the GFVPE and their involvement in schools of choice. The Board discussed the need to have a policy that will establish parameters regarding external entities involvement with GACA. The Board asked Ms. Robinson to work on drafting a policy for future Board consideration.

X. **Adjournment and Next Meeting Date – September 19, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. via teleconference**

The next meeting is scheduled for September 19, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. ET via teleconference. A motion was made by Mr. Julal and seconded by Ms. Collins to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 p.m.