



APPROVED 11/17/2016

Georgia Connections Academy (GACA)  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Thursday, October 20, 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

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I. Call to Order

Ms. Hug called the meeting to order at 5:04 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 Joined During Meeting: Greg Mishkin (via phone);

Guests Present: Heather Robinson, School Principal; Kimberly Allen, School Staff (in person); Allison Reaves, Jay W. Ragley, Shon Hocker, Shawn Soltz and Megann Arthur, Connections staff (all via phone).

III. Mission Statement

At Ms. Hug's request, Ms. Robinson 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. 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 October 20, 2016 Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Georgia Connections Academy, as presented, 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. She reviewed the participation rates for the recently held PSAT testing, as well as new student opportunities and programs.

[Mr. Mishkin joined the meeting at 5:10 p.m.]

Ms. Robinson also highlighted recent student and staff member accomplishments.

ii. State of the School Report

Ms. Robinson provided the Board with a state of the school report. She referred the Board to the school improvement plan included in the Board materials, advising that it details the plans of school leadership, the success level of the previous school year goals and progress on the current school year goals. Ms. Robinson reminded Board members that the staff worked closely with Connections Academy staff on establishing this year's school goals, and reiterated that the school goals represent the major driver for the staff incentive plan. Ms. Robinson related that the school improvement plan and annual goals are created with the intention of improving school outcomes, the student and family experience, and to foster student achievements school-wide.

At the request of a member of the Board due their limited availability for the evening's meeting, an item later in the agenda was moved up for discussion.

Engagement of Independent Consultant to Analyze Student Data

Mr. Mishkin presented his proposal regarding the potential use of an outside consultant for tracking student data. He referenced communications from the SCSC, including those the school's performance was currently being compared against. The Board had extensive discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of engaging a third party consultant to analyze certain student data based on area of residency within the state, and the associated restrictions of data privacy laws and regulations. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Mishkin and seconded by Mr. Thompson as follows:

RESOLVED, that the authorization for Greg Mishkin to work with a third party vendor to analyze student data, as presented.

The motion failed to pass with two (2) affirmative votes by Mr. Mishkin and Mr. Thompson, three (3) negative votes by Ms. Hug, Mr. Julal and Dr. Brown, and one abstention by Ms. Collins.

Following the Board's roll call vote on this item, Mr. Mishkin voiced his intent to step down from the Board of Directors within three (3) months, assuming the Board fails to take what he believes are the necessary steps to improve the school's performance framework assessment by the SCSC.

b. Financial Report

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

i. FY16 Financial Framework Update

Mr. Soltz reviewed the data from the FY16 in the performance framework format, as requested by the Board at the last meeting. He highlighted the areas where the school's financial framework had increased in points from the previous year's assessment, and advised the Board regarding strategies being implemented currently to continue to upward trend.

**VII. Board Strategic Development**

a. Performance Framework Update

Ms. Robinson provided the Board with an update on the ongoing work by the school to attempt to improve the school's score on the GCSC

i. Mission Goal Discussion

Ms. Robinson provided the Board with an update. She reviewed the potential for the school to receive an additional five (5) points on their framework assessment with the addition of mission-specific school goals, and proposed two potential mission-specific goals for Board feedback regarding submission. The Board indicated their support of the two additional goals, as well as the accompanying proposed Charter Amendment. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Brown and seconded by Ms. Collins as follows:

RESOLVED, that the submission of additional school goals and accompanying proposed charter amendment, as presented and discussed, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

b. Engagement of Independent Consultant to Analyze Student Data

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

c. Update on Board Training

Ms. Robinson reminded Board members of the SCSC training opportunities being offered throughout the school year.

**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 Ms. Brown and seconded by Ms. Collins as follows:

RESOLVED, the Consent Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the September 15, 2016 Board Meeting;
- b. Approval of Minutes from the September 27, 2016 Special Board Meeting;
- c. Approval of Staffing Report;
- d. Approval of Enrollment Opening for the 2017-2018 School Year;
- e. Approval of Revisions to the 2016-2017 School Year State Specific School Handbook: Advanced Placement Testing; and
- f. Approval of Board President to Work with the School Leader to Finalize and Submit the Annual Report in Accordance with All Applicable Deadlines; are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

**IX. Action Items**

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

Mr. Julal reviewed in detail the CA invoice for the month of September 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 Ms. Collins as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Connections Academy of Georgia, LLC invoice for the month of September, in the amount of \$2,002,740.13, as presented, is hereby approved for payment upon the availability of funds.

The motion passed unanimously.

[Mr. Julal left the meeting at 5:55 p.m.]

**X. Information Items**

a. State Relations Update

Mr. Ragley provided the Board with an update on recent legislative activities that may impact the school.

[Mr. Soltz left the meeting at 5:58 p.m.]

b. School Leadership Team (PSLT) Update

Ms. Reaves provided the Board with an update on behalf of Connections' School Leadership Team.

ii. School Operations Metrics

Ms. Reaves 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. Board members discussed the metrics data as well as other school results data.

- c. Agreements for Student Enrollment for 2017-2018 School Year: Parent/Legal Guardian (Caretaker) Acknowledgement, Regulatory Program Description, Caretaker Designee Agreement and Designated Learning Coach Agreement

Ms. Reaves reviewed the student enrollment agreements for the 2017-2018 school year included in the meeting materials. She explained that minor edits have been made to the agreements for next school year, and highlighted that the changes were non-substantive from the current year's agreements.

[Mr. Mishkin left the meeting at 6:07 p.m.]

- d. 2016-2017 School Year Items for Board Consideration

Ms. Arthur reviewed the outline of items planned to be presented for Board consideration throughout the current school year. She further advised the Board that the document was fluid, and items may be included, omitted, or considered on a varied timeline based on a number of factors, including state submission and enrollment deadlines, as well as school need for student support.

**XI. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date – November 17, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.**

There being no further business to discuss, the next meeting was confirmed for November 17, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. ET. The meeting was adjourned at 6:09 p.m. following a motion made by Mr. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Brown.