



APPROVED 5/18/2017

Georgia Connections Academy (GACA)  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Thursday, April 20, 2017 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, Rich Thompson and Steve Julal (via phone);

Board Members Joined During Meeting: Charlotte Collins (via phone);

Board Members Absent: JoAnn Brown;

Guests Present: Heather Robinson, School Principal (in person); Russ Moore, Member of the Public; Allison Reaves, Jay W. Ragley, Karen Duquette, Shawn Soltz, Laura Coleman 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 requested to add a College and Career Academy Proposal Update to Information Items. There being no further changes noted, Mr. Thompson made the following motion and it was seconded by Mr. Julal as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the April 20, 2017 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 data dashboard information and Monthly School Report (MSR), as included in the Board materials with the Board.

[Ms. Collins joined the meeting at 5:11 p.m.]

#### ii. Graduation Plans and End of Year Activities Update

Ms. Robinson advised the Board of the school's planning for the upcoming high school graduation ceremony and encouraged Board members to attend. She further reviewed recent school events.

#### iii. State Testing Update

Ms. Robinson reviewed with the Board the upcoming state testing preparations by school staff.

#### iv. Telecommunication Services Update

Ms. Robinson reviewed the proposal for hosted Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) Services, as included in the Board meeting materials. Ms. Robinson recommended the school not utilize the VOIP technology at this time, based upon some outstanding budget concerns and other priorities of the school and Board for the next several months.

#### v. School Calendar and Staff Communications Update

Ms. Robinson provided the Board with an update on this item. She reviewed the proposed school calendar for the 2017-2018 School Year, including the changes being made that will affect the allocation of personal days for school staff. Ms. Robinson further discussed that all proposed school calendar changes that affect staff member work schedules are outlined in the proposed revisions to the Employee Handbook.

### 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. HB 65 Annual Operating Budget Requirements

Mr. Soltz reviewed the recent legislative changes which requires the Board to consider their budget at two separate Board meetings, one of which the majority of the Board must attend in person rather than by phone. The Board discussed their availability for the upcoming Board meetings with Ms. Arthur and requested coordination of attendance requirements via email follow up prior to the next meeting.

## VII. Board Strategic Development

### a. Performance Framework Update

Ms. Hug reviewed with the Board the State Charter School Performance Accountability Framework document as included in the Board materials, and presented to the Board by representatives from the State Charter Schools Commission (SCSC) earlier in the month at their Strategic Planning Session. She and the Board further discussed how the SCSC takes the Framework into consideration during the charter renewal process, as well as specific action items and initiatives surrounding the school's upcoming charter renewal process.

### b. Updates to Board Strategic Plan

Ms. Hug reminded the Board of the progress made to date towards the Strategic Plan which will be sent to Board members for review prior to discussion at the next Board meeting.

### c. Fundraising Update

Ms. Robinson provided the Board with an update on fundraising efforts.

## 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. The Board requested clarification on the LiveTutor Invoice. There being no items moved, a motion was made by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Julal as follows:

RESOLVED, the Consent Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the February 16, 2017 Board Meeting;
- b. Approval of Minutes from the March 8, 2017 Special Board Meeting;
- c. Approval of Minutes from the April 5, 2017 Strategic Planning Session;
- d. Approval of Staffing Report;
- e. Approval of LiveTutor Invoice(s);
- f. Approval of School Calendar for the 2017-2018 School Year;
- g. Approval of Staff Compensation Plan for the 2017-2018 School Year; and
- h. Approval of Employee Handbook Revision(s); are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

## IX. Action Items

### a. Approval of Connections Academy of Georgia, LLC Invoices for February and March

Mr. Julal reviewed in detail the CA invoices for the months of February and March 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 invoices 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 invoices for the months of February, in the amount of \$1,932,920.81, and March, in the amount of \$1,751,437.00, as presented, are hereby approved for payment upon the availability of funds.

The motion passed unanimously.

X. **Information Items**

a. State Relations Update

Ms. Duquette reviewed the written State Relations Report provided in the Board meeting materials on recent legislative activities that may impact the school. The Board discussed per pupil funding with Ms. Duquette.

b. School Leadership Team Update

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

i. 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.

c. Curriculum for the 2017-2018 School Year

Ms. Reaves 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. Reaves further advised the Board on upcoming enhancements to the curriculum based on performance indicators. Board members discussed the curriculum plans in detail.

d. Board Planning for the 2017-2018 School Year

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

i. Board Composition

Ms. Arthur discussed with the Board the current composition, including board member terms and officer positions that would be up for renewal at this year's Annual Meeting, and encouraged Board members to discuss their intentions regarding terms and renewal with the Board Chair. Ms. Hug announced her upcoming relocation plans and desire to resign from the Board at the conclusion of the school year.

ii. Proposed Meeting Schedule

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

College and Career Academy Proposal Update

Mr. Thompson reviewed the College and Career Academy Proposal as included in the Board materials. The Board expressed their desire for Mr. Moore to join the meeting to continue describing the proposal.

[Mr. Moore joined the meeting at 5:51 p.m.]

Mr. Moore reviewed his professional background and experience, and the College and Career Academy Proposal in detail with the Board. The Board thanked Mr. Moore for his proposal and expressed a desire to continue the discussion at the next Board meeting. Mr. Ragley confirmed Connections' desire to continue discussions with the Board and Mr. Moore, and to assist in additional research into the option as the Board requests.

**XI. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date – May 18, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.**

Ms. Hug noted that the Board was at the end of its agenda. There being no further business to discuss, the next meeting was confirmed for May 18, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. ET. The meeting was adjourned at 6:09 p.m. following a motion made by Ms. Collins and seconded by Mr. Julal.