



APPROVED 09/20/2018

**Georgia Connections Academy (GACA)
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**
Thursday, August 16, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. ET

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

I. Call to Order

Mr. Thompson called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. when all participants were present. The school location was open for the public to attend.

II. Roll Call

Board Members Present at Roll Call: Rich Thompson, Steve Julal, JoAnn Brown and Susanne Watts (via phone);

Guests Present: Brazilla Page, School staff (in person); Heather Robinson, School Leader; Tiarra Felix, Board Member Candidate; Karen Duquette, Melissa Nelson, Tanya Lee, Alan Chapman, Sally Fernandez, Laura Coleman and Megann Arthur, Pearson Online & Blended Learning (POBL) staff (via phone).

III. Mission Statement

Mr. Thompson read the school's Mission Statement to begin the meeting.

IV. Review and Consideration of Board Member Candidates

Mr. Thompson reviewed the Potential Board Member questionnaire of Board member candidate, Tiarra Felix, as included in the Board materials. Ms. Felix reviewed her background and qualifications with the Board. Board members indicated their support of Ms. Felix's candidacy for the Board. There being no additional discussion, Dr. Brown made the following motion and it was seconded by Ms. Watts as follows:

RESOLVED, that the appointment of Board Member, Tiarra Felix, as a Class 1 Director for a term to the Annual Meeting 2019, effective immediately, as discussed, is hereby accepted.

The motion passed unanimously.

V. Public Comment

There were no comments at this time.

VI. Routine Business

a. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Thompson asked the Board to review the Agenda distributed prior to the meeting. There being no changes noted, a motion was made by Dr. Brown and seconded by Ms. Watts as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the August 16, 2018 Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Georgia Connections Academy, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Oral Reports

a. Outreach and Enrollment Update

Ms. Duquette introduced to the Board, Mr. Alan Chapman, Pearson Online & Blended Learning (POBL) Marketing Department. Mr. Chapman reviewed with the Board the enrollment and outreach efforts to date in detail, including targeted efforts in place for the new conditions under the recent charter renewal. He further introduced Ms. Sally Fernandez as the new Marketing contact for GACA. The Board thanked Mr. Chapman for his work with the school and welcomed Ms. Fernandez.

b. School Leader's Report

i. Data Dashboard

Ms. Robinson reviewed the school Data Dashboard information, as included in the Board materials with the Board, highlighting 2018-2021 strategic goals, enrollment and demographics and cohort rates. She further reviewed improvement plan timelines and upcoming professional development opportunities for the leadership team. Ms. Robinson further reviewed progress toward specific action items within the Board's Strategic Plan.

[Mr. Chapman and Ms. Fernandez left at 5:25 p.m.]

ii. Back to School Activities, Staffing and Training Update

Ms. Robinson discussed with the Board recent and upcoming back to school activities, including successful orientations with students, families and teachers.

c. 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. The Board discussed the financials in detail with Ms. Lee.

i. Unaudited 2017-2018 Financial Results

Ms. Lee reviewed the unaudited financial results from the previous school year with the Board, including summer school expenses. She further provided the Board with an update on the audit engagement process.

VIII. Board Strategic Development

a. Strategic Plan Update

Ms. Robinson provided the Board with a Strategic Plan Update within her Data Dashboard presentation.

b. SCSC Monitoring Letter Update

Ms. Robinson advised the Board of the upcoming monitoring visit from the State Charter School Commission (SCSC). She briefly highlighted preparations made by the school and support received in preparation from POBL.

c. Student Performance Review Project Update

Ms. Robinson and Ms. Page updated the Board on recent progress in regards to the curriculum alignment project.

d. College and Career Academy (CCA) Proposal Update

In Dr. Rosta's absence, Ms. Nelson reviewed with the Board the current Career and Technology Education (CTE) tracks available for GACA students. Ms. Lee reviewed the CTE funding received for the 2017-2018 school year. The Board discussed the current CTE tracks and potential expansion in detail with Ms. Nelson and Ms. Robinson. The Board requested CTE research documentation for review at a future Board meeting.

e. EMO Evaluation Update

Mr. Julal reminded Board members to complete the annual Education Management Organization (EMO) evaluation by September 15, 2018.

IX. Consent Items

Mr. Thompson 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 changes noted, a motion was made by Mr. Julal and seconded by Dr. Brown as follows:

RESOLVED, the Consent Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the June 21, 2018 Annual Board Meeting;
- b. Approval of Staffing Report;
- c. Approval of Connections Academy of Georgia, LLC Invoice for June;
- d. Approval of 2018-2019 Base Salaries and Incentive Percentage and Career Ladder Positions; and
- e. Approval of Gwinnett County Chamber of Commerce Membership Invoice; are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

X. Action Items

There were no action items.

XI. Information Items

a. State Relations Update

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

Mr. Thompson requested Dr. Brown assume duties of chairing the Board meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Mr. Thompson reviewed a recent requirement by the Department of Education (DOE) for all students to take an aptitude test. Mr. Thompson noted he works for a company that provides aptitude and interest based surveys to students and his conflict of interest, however he wanted to ensure that students and families are aware of the aptitude tools available.

Mr. Thompson regained Chair duties of the Board meeting at 6:25 p.m.

b. School Leadership Team (PSLT) Update

Ms. Nelson presented to the Board on behalf of Pearson Online and Blended Learning's (POBL) School Leadership Team.

i. School Operations Metrics

Ms. Nelson reviewed the data included in the Board materials, highlighting the school's performance as compared with other POBL partnering schools of similar size and years in operation.

ii. Teacher Professional Development Products and Services for the 2018-2019 School Year

Ms. Nelson reviewed the professional development products and services for school staff, as offered by POBL for the 2018-2019 school year. She discussed the various levels and delivery models of professional learning opportunities available to staff members based on years of service and experience. She also highlighted the additional training and development opportunities offered by school leadership. Ms. Nelson further advised of the training and resource opportunities available for Learning Coaches at the school.

c. Board Support Update

Ms. Arthur provided the Board with an update on Board support, advising the recent changes in support representatives in the Partner School Leadership Team (PSLT) for the 2018-2019 school year.

i. Board Meeting Agenda Update

Ms. Arthur reviewed with the Board recent changes to the Board meeting agenda to streamline the Board package and increase efficiencies. Board members indicated their support of the agenda format.

d. Board Training and Conference Attendance Planning for the 2018-2019 School Year

Ms. Arthur reviewed the upcoming trainings and conferences identified that may interest members of the Board. The Board reviewed the upcoming training offerings and discussed the advantages of each conference. The Board expressed their support of considering state and national conference opportunities at a future Board meeting.

e. Conflict of Interest Statements and Background Check Reminders

Ms. Arthur reminded Board members to complete their annual conflict of interest statements and background checks and thanked those Board members that had already completed the requirement.

XII. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date – Thursday, September 20, 2018

Mr. Thompson noted that the Board was at the end of its agenda. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:48 p.m. The next meeting is to be held on Thursday, September 20, 2018.