



APPROVED 05/29/2019

**Georgia Connections Academy (GACA)
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**
Thursday, April 18, 2019 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 5:02 p.m. when all participants were present. The meeting location was open for the public to attend.

II. Roll Call

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

Board Members Joined During Meeting: Tiarra Felix (via phone);

Board Members Absent: Steve Julal;

Guests Present: Heather Robinson, School Leader (in person); Brazilla Page, School staff; Karen Duquette, Allison Solesby, Tanya Lee and Laura Coleman, Pearson Online & Blended Learning (POBL) staff (via phone).

III. Mission Statement

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

IV. Public Comment

There were no comments at this time.

V. Audit Committee, Committee of the Entire Board

a. Approval of Audit Firm Engagement for the 2018-2019 School Year Financial Audit

Ms. Lee advised the Board that the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year audit firm engagement letter was being finalized by the school's independent audit firm, and would be available at a future meeting for Board review and consideration. There being no further discussion, this item was tabled to a future Board meeting.

VI. Routine Business

a. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Thompson asked the Board to review the Agenda distributed prior to the meeting. At the advice of the School Leader, the Board requested the addition of the Approval of Board Designee to Review and Finalize State Charter Schools Commission (SCSC) Corrective Actions. There being no further changes noted, a motion was made by Ms. Watts and seconded by Dr. Brown as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the April 18, 2019 Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Georgia Connections Academy, as amended, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Oral Reports

a. School Leader's Report

i. Data Dashboard/ Strategic Plan Update

Ms. Robinson reviewed the school data dashboard information as included in the Board materials with the Board. She also shared with the Board the current status of items contained within their Strategic Plan.

ii. Graduation Plans and End of Year Activities

Ms. Robinson reminded the Board that the high school graduation ceremony is planned for May 30, 2019, and encouraged Board members to attend. She also updated the Board on recent and upcoming end of year activities.

[Ms. Page joined at 5:11 p.m.]

[Ms. Felix joined at 5:13 p.m.]

Ms. Robinsons further reviewed Class of 2019 data with the Board. The Board discussed the upcoming graduation and cohorts with Ms. Robinson.

iii. State Testing Update

Ms. Robinson reviewed with the Board the ongoing state testing preparations by school staff, as well as anticipated participation rates.

Ms. Robinson further reviewed the recent positive federal programs audit, as well as Pearson Online & Blended Learning's (POBL) continued efforts to align curriculum for the 2019-2020 school year.

b. POBL Products, Services and Initiatives Update

Ms. Solesby reviewed details within the Pearson Online & Blended Learning's (POBL) 2019-2020 Products, Services and Initiatives memo, as included in the Board materials. Ms. Solesby reviewed upcoming program enhancements, planned product roll-outs, and specific initiatives that are high on the priority list of POBL for the next school year, and beyond. She detailed curriculum

changes and alignment initiatives, and reviewed the anticipated timeline for the next generation of the school's learning management system to be available.

c. Financial Report

Ms. Lee reviewed the financial materials included in the Board materials in detail, highlighting the budget and forecasting areas of the financial statements. She reviewed the changes in the financials and forecasted expenses since the last meeting's statements, including the balance sheet and school's revenue and expense statements. The Board discussed staff compensation in detail with Ms. Robinson.

VIII. Board Strategic Development

a. Planning for the 2019-2020 School Year

Ms. Robinson sought Board member feedback on the progress of the current strategic goals and creation of next year's strategic development. The Board discussed the school's upcoming leadership changes.

b. Review and Acceptance of EMO Evaluation

Mr. Thompson reviewed the results of the Board members' recently completed Educational Management Organization (EMO) evaluation. The Board noted that they were pleased with the results, POBL's nearly perfect score, and that there were no significant items for further discussion. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Watts and seconded by Dr. Brown as follows:

RESOLVED, the acceptance of the EMO Evaluation, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Duquette thanked the Board for their feedback and encouraged the Board to let her know if they have any additional questions or comments. She further advised that POBL would continue efforts regarding the couple items where room for improvement was noted.

c. SCSC Annual Mandatory Training Update – May 24th Training Opportunity

On behalf of Ms. Arthur, Ms. Coleman reminded the Board of the upcoming training opportunity on May 24, 2019 and encouraged Board members to attend. She further advised that additional information on the training would be confirmed via email.

d. SCSC Communication Regarding GA Dept. of Law Interpretation of OML for GACA re Staffing Approval Requirements and In Person Meeting Attendance

Ms. Duquette updated the Board on the recent change to the charter school law which will allow for the Board to continue to meet telephonically with the exception of the annual public hearing on the budget.

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. The Board requested to add the new approval item, as

previously discussed, to the Consent Items and appoint Dr. Brown as the Board Designee. There being no further changes noted, a motion was made by Dr. Brown and seconded by Ms. Watts as follows:

RESOLVED, the Consent Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the February 21, 2019 Board Meeting;
- b. Approval of Connections Education, LLC Invoices for February and March;
- c. Approval of Staff Compensation Plan for the 2019-2020 School Year;
- d. Approval of Revision(s) to the 2018-2019 School Year State Specific School Handbook: Removal of Duplicate Coursework and Student and Staff Communication (Texting) Policies; and
- e. Approval of JoAnn Brown as Board Designee to Review and Finalize SCSC Corrective Actions; are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

X. Action Items

a. Review and Approval of Staffing Report

Ms. Coleman reminded the Board of recent communications from the SCSC regarding staffing decisions, and the Board's efforts to remain in compliance with all requirements and recommendations, as applicable and appropriate. Ms. Robinson provided the Board with an update on changes to staff composition, as also detailed in the Board meeting materials. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Brown and seconded by Ms. Felix as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Staffing Report, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

b. Review and Consideration of Bonus Payout Timing

Ms. Robinson reviewed the staff bonus incentive option as previously discussed during the April Board meeting. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Brown and seconded by Ms. Watts as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Bonus Payout timing, as discussed, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

XI. Information Items

a. State and Strategic Client Relations (SCCR) Update

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

b. School Leadership Team (PSLT) Update

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

i. School Operations Metrics

Ms. Solesby presented the quarterly School Operations Metrics to the Board. She 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.

c. Board Planning for the 2019-2020 School Year

Ms. Coleman discussed the planning for the 2019-2020 school year that POBL has been working on with the school.

i. Proposed Meeting Schedule

Ms. Coleman reviewed the proposed six month Board meeting schedule for the 2019-2020 school year, as requested by the Board for review. Board members discussed the schedule and various deadlines throughout the school year, and confirmed their support of piloting a six month meeting schedule for the upcoming school year. Ms. Coleman advised that the consideration of the Board meeting schedule for the 2019-2020 school year will be included on the June Annual Meeting agenda.

ii. Board Composition

Ms. Coleman 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.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Pursuant to O.C.G.A. §§ 50-14-3 – to discuss the employment, compensation or periodic evaluation of an employee

The Board entered into Executive Session at 6:11 p.m. upon a motion made by Dr. Brown, seconded by Ms. Watts and confirmed via a roll call vote of the Board pursuant to O.C.G.A. §§ 50-14-3 – to discuss the employment, compensation or periodic evaluation of an employee. Board members in attendance were: Rich Thompson, JoAnn Brown, Susanne Watts and Tiarra Felix. Guests in attendance were: Heather Robinson, Allison Reaves and Laura Coleman. All others left the meeting at this time.

After the Board concluded their discussion, the Board resumed their open session via roll call vote motioned by Dr. Brown and seconded by Ms. Watts at 6:17 p.m. and confirmed via roll call of all Board members present. No action was taken during Executive Session.

XIII. Approval of Action(s) Necessary Based on Executive Session

Mr. Thompson reminded the Board of the discussion held during Executive Session regarding Ms. Robinson's upcoming resignation and end-of-year compensation. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Watts and seconded by Dr. Brown as follows:

RESOLVED, that the School Leader Bonus Compensation for the 2018-2019 school year in accordance with Pearson Online & Blended Learnings (POBL) calculations based on goal achievements, as discussed, is hereby approved.

XIV. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date – Thursday, May 16, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. ET

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 6:18 p.m. The next regular meeting is to be held on Thursday, May 16, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.