



APPROVED 05/01/15

**Maine Connections Academy, Inc. (MCA)
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Friday, March 20, 2015 at 10:00 a.m.**

**Held at the following location and via teleconference:
75 John Roberts Road, Suite 11B
South Portland, ME 04106**

I. Call to Order

Ms. Volk called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m. when all participants were present and able to hear each other. The meeting was open to the public.

II. Roll Call

Board Members Present: Amy Volk, Nick McGee, Amy Linscott (in person) and Julie Hannon (via phone);

Board Members Joined During Meeting: Carol Weston (via phone);

Guests: Karl Francis, School Leader; Heather Neal, Financial Consultant; Frank Heller, Member of the Public (in person); Rachel Graver, Pat Laystrom, Curtis Valentine, Shawn Soltz, Megann Arthur and Heather Woodward, Connections staff (via phone).

III. Public Comment

Mr. Heller introduced himself to the Board, and the Board discussed the school and Board activities with Mr. Heller, as well as his interest in potentially joining the Board.

[Ms. Weston joined via phone and Ms. Hannon in person at 10:14 a.m.]

IV. Routine Business

a. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Volk asked the Board to review the Agenda distributed prior to the meeting. The Board tabled Consent Items (c) Approval of Revision(s) to the 2014-2015 School Year State Specific School Handbook: Internet Subsidy Program Policy, (d) Approval of the 2015-2016 School Year General School Handbook, and (e) Approval of the 2015-2016 School Year State Specific School Handbook, as the documents were not available for review prior to the meeting. The Board also added Student Enrollment in Elective Courses as an additional update under the Financial Report, and Information Item: Contract Negotiations with Accounting Firm (RHR Smith). There being no additional changes noted, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the March 20, 2015 Maine Connections Academy, Inc. Board Meeting, as amended, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

V. Oral Reports

a. Principal's Report

i. Update on Field Trips

Mr. Francis discussed with the Board school field trips recently held and those that are upcoming. Board members had discussion on the costs associated with field trips, and school policies regarding staff and family participation.

ii. Update on School Handbooks for the 2015-2016 School Year and Graduation Requirements

Mr. Francis provided the Board with an update on the process and development of the handbooks for the next school year. He detailed specific requirements being included in the policies regarding graduation requirements. The Board discussed specific policies with school leadership.

iii. Update on State Testing

Mr. Francis provided the Board with an update on the current staff preparations for upcoming state testing, as well as locations around the state where testing is planned to be held.

iv. Maine Charter School Commission End of Year Visit – May 18, 2015

Mr. Francis discussed the upcoming Commission visit with the Board, including anticipated inquiries and topics for review.

Board members had extensive discussion with school leadership regarding data in the Monthly School Report (MSR), and additional monthly information regarding students in escalation, as well as enrollment and withdrawals.

b. Financial Report

Ms. Neal reviewed the financial information contained in the Board materials with the Board, providing specific information on the budget and forecast for the school year. She reviewed the balance sheet, revenue and expense statements. Ms. Neal further reviewed specific expenses, invoices and funding levels for the school.

i. Update on Revisions to School Fiscal Policies

Ms. Neal discussed the current process for development and review of fiscal policies for the school with the Board. Board members had extensive discussion on preferences within the policies, and the forecast.

ii. Budget Planning for 2015-2016 School Year

Mr. McGee and Ms. Neal reviewed the progress completed to date on budget planning for the next school year.

iii. Update on the RFP for Audit

Ms. Neal provided the Board with an update on the RFP process for an auditor, including the location of the RFP publicly, as well as the timeline for the review of proposals.

iv. Student Enrollment in Elective Courses

Mr. Francis reviewed with the Board the process for student involvement in elective courses, and how those courses are billed to the school. Board members had discussion on students in truancy status and the school's legal obligations regarding their enrollment in elective courses.

VI. Consent Items

Ms. Volk asked the Board members whether any items from the Consent Items should be moved to Action Items for discussion, or tabled. The Board had a brief discussion on staffing at the school. There being no changes noted, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, the Consent Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the January 16, 2015 Board Meeting; and
- b. Approval of Staffing Report; are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Action Items

a. Approval of Connections Academy of Maine, LLC Invoices for January and February

Mr. McGee reviewed in detail the January and February invoices as drawn from the financial report provided in the Board materials, and reviewed earlier in the meeting. He then asked the Board members whether they had any questions on the invoices or if any items required further explanation. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Connections Academy of Maine, LLC invoice for January, in the amount of \$170,958.24, as presented, is hereby approved; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Connections Academy of Maine, LLC invoice for February, in the amount of \$153,315.09, pending final review by the Board Treasurer and Financial Consultant, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Information Items

a. Legislative Update

Ms. Volk asked Ms. Laystrom to provide the Board with an update on the recent legislative activities in Maine, which may impact the school.

[The Board took a brief recess at 1:01 p.m., resuming the meeting at 1:08 p.m.]

b. Review of Old Business/ New Business

i. Line of Credit

Mr. McGee reviewed with the Board the advantages of the school opening a line of credit, per his discussions with local banks. He outlined the rates proposed by his first choice for a local bank, and the proposed uses of the funds for operational needs of the school. The Board had discussion on the line of credit, and their support of applying for a line of credit for \$100,000. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Line of Credit for \$100,000, as discussed, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

ii. Contract with Connections

Mr. McGee and Ms. Neal discussed the current fee schedule with the Board, and the ability for the Board to re-negotiate the fee schedule each school year during the budget process, as stated in the school's Educational Products and Services Agreement with Connections. The Board discussed Mr. McGee, Mr. Francis and Ms. Neal working with Connections on proposed revisions to the fee schedule for the next school year.

iii. Contract Negotiations with Accounting Firm (RHR Smith)

Mr. McGee reviewed the current services received, and the current Agreement with the accounting firm, RHR Smith. The Board discussed current legislation regarding accounting processes and procedures for the school, and the possible negotiations to be made in the contract with RHR Smith. Board members expressed their support of Mr. McGee working with RHR Smith on negotiations for a potential new contract.

IX. Adjournment and Next Meeting – April 3, 2015 at 10:00 a.m.

Ms. Volk noted that the Board was at the end of its agenda. The next Board meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. The Board being at the end of its agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 1:34 p.m.