



APPROVED 10/02/15

**Maine Connections Academy, Inc. (MCA)
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Friday, August 28, 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 and Roll Call

Ms. Volk called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. when all participants were present and able to hear each other. The meeting was open to the public.

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

Board Members Absent: Julie Hannon;

Guests: Karl Francis, School Leader; Heather Neal, Financial Consultant (in person); Pat Laystrom, Rachel Graver, Shawn Soltz and Megann Arthur, Connections staff (via phone).

II. Public Comment

There were no comments at this time.

III. Routine Business

a. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Volk asked the Board to review the Agenda distributed prior to the meeting. The Board added the following items to the agenda for discussion during the Financial Report: Consideration of a Credit Card for School Use, and Write-off Amount Authorization. Board members also asked Mr. Francis to provide a brief overview of staffing changes at the school for the start of the school year. There being no additional changes noted to the Routine Business items, the Board indicated their intent to consider all Routine Business items in one motion. A motion was then made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that Routine Business items:

- a. Approval of Agenda;
- b. Approval of Minutes from the June 5, 2015 Board Meeting;
- c. Approval of Minutes from the August 21, 2015 Board Meeting; and
- d. Approval of Staffing Report; are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Oral Reports

a. Principal's Report

Mr. Francis reviewed with the Board some highlights from his written report, as provided with the Board materials, as well as the Monthly School Report. He also reviewed current student enrollment, and those in the pre-approval stages of enrollment.

i. Update on Back to School Activities and Staffing

Mr. Francis discussed with the Board recent back to school activities, including successful orientations with students, families and teachers. He also updated the Board on staffing and specific training efforts.

ii. Update on Maine Charter School Commission Annual Charter Report

Mr. Francis provided the Board with an update on the report, as included in the Board materials. He reviewed the major topics and school performance data with the Board in detail.

[Ms. Weston left the meeting at 10:28 a.m.]

iii. School Operations Metrics

Mr. Francis outlined some of 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 with Mr. Francis.

iv. Approval of Advanced Ed as Accrediting Body

Mr. Francis presented this item to the Board. He reviewed the school's desire to pursue accreditation through Advanced Ed, including the background to this specific choice for the school. Board members had discussion on Advanced Ed and other potential accreditation options with school leadership.

v. Approval of International Trip: Italy

Mr. Francis reviewed with the Board the proposed international trip for the school. He outlined the budget, tentative itinerary and student grade range to be offered the opportunity, as well as insurance coverage for the school. Board members discussed the materials included in the Board package in regards to the proposed trip to Italy.

vi. Ratification of School Doctor and Nurse for the 2015-2016 School Year

Mr. Francis provided the Board with a brief review of the school's Agreement for a school doctor and nurse, as included in the Board materials.

vii. Approval of Professional Development Plan for the 2015-2016 School Year

Mr. Francis reviewed the Professional Development Plan for the 2015-2016 school year as set out in the document included in the Board packet. He advised that the training, offered by Connections as required by the agreement between Connections and the School Board, is accomplished through a very comprehensive interactive program that requires several core courses which are graded to ensure adequate knowledge transfer to all participants. Mr.

Francis also provided the Board with additional detail regarding the school's supplemental training plans for teachers.

viii. Approval of Revision(s) to the 2015-2016 School Year State Specific School Handbook

Mr. Francis advised the Board that the school was still working with the Board Designee and Connections to finalize the proposed revisions to the school handbook, and that the revisions would be presented at a future meeting.

This item was tabled.

ix. Approval of School Goals for the 2015-2016 School Year

Mr. Francis reviewed the school goals for the 2015-2016 school year with the Board in detail. He advised the Board regarding the process completed in the drafting and weighting of the proposed goals, including those involved in the process from the school, Board and Connections. He reminded the Board that the school goals represent the major driver for the staff incentive plan, and the advantages of aligning the school's goals with existing Connections framework, to ensure proper quantifiable metrics for staff bonus calculation. Board members discussed with school leadership specific school goals and measurements, the school leader and teacher competencies and school bonus incentive matrix.

There being no further discussion, the Board indicated their intent to consider items from the Principal's Report in one motion at this time. A motion was then made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the following items:

- iv. Approval of Advanced Ed as Accrediting Body;
- v. Approval of International Trip: Italy;
- vi. Ratification of School Doctor and Nurse for the 2015-2016 School Year;
- vii. Approval of Professional Development Plan for the 2015-2016 School Year; and
- ix. Approval of School Goals for the 2015-2016 School Year, are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

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 new reporting requirements for the school.

i. Approval of Connections Academy of Maine, LLC Invoice for May and June

Ms. Neal reviewed in detail the June invoice as drawn from the financial report provided in the Board materials, and reviewed earlier in the meeting, reminding Board members that they had previously authorized the Board Treasurer to pay the May invoice. She then asked the Board members whether they had any questions on the invoices or if any items required further explanation.

ii. Review and Approval of Connections Academy of Maine, LLC Invoice for Reimbursement of Capital Expenditures

Ms. Neal reviewed in detail the invoice for reimbursement of capital expenditures as drawn from the financial report provided in the Board materials, and reviewed earlier in the meeting. She then asked the Board members whether they had any questions on the invoice or if any items required further explanation.

iii. Approval of Revised Fiscal Controls Policy and Procedures

Ms. Neal reminded the Board of the fiscal controls policies and procedures included in the Board materials, and the ongoing review and development process for those policies. She introduced the idea of having a credit card for school use when time does not permit the completion of the check request process. Mr. McGee also discussed with the Board the option of Board consideration of an authorized write-off amount, to allow for easier reconciliation. Board members discussed all fiscal control matters presented, and determined that no additional approvals were needed at this time.

iv. Approval of Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy

Ms. Neal provided the Board with detailed background information regarding her proposed changes to the school's travel and expense reimbursement policy and procedures. She detailed the timing involved in staff reimbursements, as well as grant applications and submissions for travel-related funds. Ms. Neal proposed that the school change their policy to a per diem system for travel expenses, as opposed to the current receipt reimbursement process. Board members had extensive discussion on the current travel and expense reimbursement policies and procedures with Ms. Neal, school staff and Connections' financial representative, including the pros and cons of each policy option for the school.

v. Approval of Fiscal Officer Agreement

Mr. McGee presented this item to the Board. He reviewed specific details included in the proposed Agreement with the Board. Board members discussed the current draft of the Agreement, as well as items that still need to be finalized.

vi. Approval of 2015-2016 Base Salaries and Incentive Percentage, Career Ladder Positions and Home-Worker Stipends

Mr. Francis provided the Board with a brief overview of the documentation included in the Board materials, as well as some additional information regarding staff member compensation structure. Board members had discussion on the compensation information.

vii. Approval of Title I: Parent Involvement Policy

Mr. Francis presented this item to the Board. He referred the Board to the Parent Involvement Policy, as included in the Board materials, and reminded the Board of the annual review requirements for the school to be eligible for Title I funding.

There being no further discussion, the Board indicated their intent to consider items from the Financial Report in one motion at this time. A motion was then made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the following items:

- i. Review and Approval of Connections Academy of Maine, LLC Invoice June;
- ii. Review and Approval of Connections Academy of Maine, LLC Invoice for Reimbursement of Capital Expenditures;
- iv. Approval of Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy;
- v. Approval of Nick McGee as Board Designee to Negotiate, Finalize and Execute the Fiscal Officer Agreement on behalf of the Board;
- vi. Approval of 2015-2016 Base Salaries and Incentive Percentage, Career Ladder Positions and Home-Worker Stipends; and

vii. Approval of Title I: Parent Involvement Policy, are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

viii. Action Items

a. Approval of Board Training and Conference Attendance for the 2015-2016 School Year

Ms. Woodward reviewed the upcoming trainings and conferences that have been identified that may interest members of the Board. The Board had brief discussion on training options for the Board, and the school's current budget. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

This item was tabled.

ix. Information Items

a. Legislative Update

Ms. Volk provided the Board with an update on the recent legislative activities in Maine, which may impact the school.

b. Update on Conflict of Interest Statements

Ms. Linscott provided a brief update to the Board on the annual Conflict of Interest Statement requirements.

c. Review of Background Check Policy

Ms. Linscott discussed the proposed background check policy with the Board.

d. Curriculum Review Update

Ms. Arthur reviewed with the Board the memo regarding changes to the annual curriculum development and review process for partnering board members. She highlighted the specific changes in format for review, from the previous Curriculum Advisory Panel meetings to new twice annual town hall presentations, as well as the documentation regarding each year's curriculum build that will be provided to board members for review and consideration. Ms. Arthur advised the Board that these changes were the result of partnering board member feedback, and that additional information on the town hall presentations would be forthcoming.

x. Adjournment and Next Meeting – October 2, 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 October 2, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. The Board being at the end of its agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 12:55 p.m.