



APPROVED 10/20/2021
Oklahoma Connections Academy (OKCA)
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL MEETING

Date and Time:

Wednesday, September 29, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. CT

Held via videoconference at the following locations:

John Tidwell, Board Chair:
3307 S Harvard
Tulsa, OK 74105

Charlie Daniels, Board Vice President/Secretary:
2191 Kyle Road
Bartlesville, OK 74006

Aubrey Lakey, Board Treasurer/Board Clerk:
10436 Ashford Court
Owasso, OK 74055

Michael Lapolla, Board Member:
2819 South Cincinnati Avenue
Tulsa, OK 74114

Bob Sullivan, Board Member:
2100 S. Utica Ave, Suite 210A
Tulsa, OK 74114

1-866-899-4679; 661-420-149#

Held via teleconference and videoconference:

1-866-899-4679; 661-420-149#

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/661420149>

I. Call to Order

Mr. Tidwell called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m., when all participants were present and able to hear each other.

II. Statement of Compliance with the Open Meeting Act

Mr. Tidwell confirmed the Board Meeting Agenda had been posted in accordance with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act.

III. Roll Call

Board Members Present: John Tidwell, Charlie Daniels, Aubrey Lakey, and Michael Lapolla (via videoconference);

Board Members Absent: Bob Sullivan;

Guests: Melissa Gregory, School Leader; Rebecca James, School staff; Skyler Lusnia, SVCSB representative; Nicole Anderson, Mandi Adams-Brazill, Kristin DeGroff, and Gary Corkran, Pearson Virtual Schools staff (via phone and videoconference).

IV. Public Comment

There were no public comments at this time.

V. Routine Business

a. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Tidwell asked the Board to review the Agenda distributed prior to the meeting. He asked whether the Board requested any changes be made to the Agenda. There being no changes requested, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the September 29, 2021 Oklahoma Connections Academy Board of Directors Special Meeting, as presented, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion was approved unanimously.

VI. Oral Reports

a. Principal's Report

Ms. Gregory provided an update on data included in the Monthly School Report and the Principal's Report Dashboard document.

i. Using Benchmark Assessments to Assess Student Progress

Ms. Gregory advised of the school's use of NWEA/Map assessments, and discussed the value of the data gleaned from the exams.

ii. Update on Back to School Activities

Ms. Gregory discussed Back to School events and training for school staff. She advised of the postponement of in person student activities throughout August and September, as well as planned outdoor student events in October.

iii. Update on Enrollment, Staffing, and Training

Ms. Gregory discussed the addition of staff members to accommodate the increase in student enrollment, as well as the onboarding and training provided to new staff members.

iv. Update on Accreditation

Ms. Gregory reminded the Board of the annual accreditation process through the state of Oklahoma, and advised that the school had received notice of the current year's accreditation. She further provided a timeline for the anticipated annual Fall accreditation visit.

v. Connections Academy Summer Leadership Conference

Ms. Gregory discussed the recent Connections Academy Leadership Conference, held annually. She reviewed many of the topics covered at the retreat and noted valuable mentoring and networking opportunities for her and other school leadership team members.

vi. Student Spotlight

Ms. Gregory discussed the successes of a current OKCA student who participates in the Tulsa Ballet. She profiled the student's schedule and appreciation for the school's programming, which allows her to participate in ballet productions.

Mr. Tidwell introduced Ms. Anderson and Ms. Adams-Brazill to the Board, who provided a brief review of their credentials and work with Pearson.

b. Financial Report

Mr. Corkran reviewed the financial materials included in the Board meeting materials in detail, highlighting the budget and forecasting areas of the financial statements. He further reviewed the revenue and expense statements and discussed specific line items of interest with the Board.

[Mr. Lusnia joined the meeting at 4:32 p.m.]

i. Unaudited 2020-2021 Financial Results

Mr. Corkran reviewed the unaudited financial statements from the previous school year with the Board. Board members discussed American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, and requested further information at the next meeting.

Additionally, Mr. Corkran provided an overview of the annual process for submission of the school's Estimate of Needs, as slated for consideration later in the meeting. He further discussed the timeline for document submission to the state. Board members discussed the document in detail, and noted that all necessary signatures would be coordinated and submitted in adherence with all state requirements. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Estimate of Needs, as presented, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion was approved unanimously.

VII. Consent Items

Mr. Tidwell 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 made and no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, the Consent Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the June 16, 2021 Annual and Regular Board Meeting;
- b. Approval of Staffing Report;
- c. Approval of Pearson Invoices for June (# 91000008407), July (# 91000008601), and August (# 91000008825);
- d. Approval of Revision(s) to the 2021-2022 School Year State Specific School Handbook: Enrollment, Truancy, and Grade Scale Updates;
- e. Approval of 2021-2022 Base Salaries and Incentive Percentage and Career Ladder Positions; and
- f. Approval of Federal Title Funding Plans for the 2021-2022 School Year: Revision(s) to Parent and Family Engagement Policies; are hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion was approved unanimously.

VIII. Action Items

- a. Consideration of Revision(s) to Board Meeting Schedule for the 2021-2022 School Year

Ms. DeGroff discussed the Board meeting schedule, including the location of record for all planned meetings. Board members discussed the schedule in detail, including the desire to list the school as the location of record. Additionally, the Board discussed returning to a nine-month meeting schedule, as held in previous years, and moving the meeting time for all subsequent meetings to 3:00 p.m. CT. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the revision(s) to Board Meeting Schedule for the 2021-2022 School Year, as discussed, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion was approved unanimously.

- b. Consideration of Estimate of Needs

This item was previously approved.

c. Consideration of Application for Hourly School Year Calculation

Ms. Gregory reviewed the school's application to calculate the school year by hours instead of days, and reviewed the timeline for online submission of the application. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the application for hourly school year calculation, as presented, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion was approved unanimously.

d. Consideration and Acceptance of Math and Science Courses for Graduation Requirements

Ms. Gregory presented this item to the Board. She reviewed the state requirement for the annual acceptance of Math courses above the level of Algebra I, and Science courses, taught at any of the state vocational schools, to meet the school's graduation requirements. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that Math and Science Courses for Graduation Requirements, as presented, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion was approved unanimously.

e. Consideration and Acceptance of Internet Courses for Graduation Requirements

Ms. Gregory reviewed the state requirement for the annual acceptance of internet courses, taught at any technology center school, by certified teachers, which are aligned toward subject matter standards, as counting towards academic credit and toward meeting the school's graduation requirements. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that Internet Courses for Graduation Requirements, as presented, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion was approved unanimously.

f. Consideration of College and Career Readiness Assessment for the 2021-2022 School Year: ACT

Ms. Gregory advised the Board of the school's desire to use the ACT/College and Career Readiness Assessment for high school students. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that College and Career Readiness Assessment for the 2021-2022 School Year: ACT, as presented, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion was approved unanimously.

g. Ratification of OPSRC and OPCS Membership Invoices

Ms. Gregory presented this item to the Board. She discussed the timeline for payment of the invoice for membership, as well as the school's intent to present the invoice at the Annual meeting moving forward. Mr. Lapolla advised of the groups' support of anticipated legislation regarding student participation in extracurricular activities within home districts. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the OPSRC and OPCS Membership Invoices, as presented, are hereby ratified.

A roll call vote was conducted, the motion was approved unanimously.

h. Consideration of Board Designee to Work with the School Leader to Review and Finalize School Handbook Updates Regarding Education Open Transfer Act Modifications

Ms. Anderson presented this item to the Board. She discussed recent legislation regarding student capacity and the number of allowable transfers per year, and advised of Pearson's ongoing work with the school to ensure all necessary language is incorporated in the school's handbook. She requested a designee to work with Ms. Gregory to review and finalize the updates regarding the Education Open Transfer Act Modifications. Mr. Daniels volunteered as designee. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that Charlie Daniels as the Board designee to work with the School Leader to review and finalize School Handbook updates regarding Education Open Transfer Act Modifications, as discussed, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion was approved unanimously.

IX. Information Items

a. School Success Partner (SSP) Update

Ms. Anderson presented to the Board on behalf of the School Success Partner (SSP) team.

i. Pearson Support Team Updates

Ms. Anderson provided the Board with an update on support services and personnel provided to the school and Board by Pearson Virtual Schools. The Board requested additional information regarding new support team members working with the school.

ii. Back to School Update

Ms. Anderson provided additional information on the school's enrollment growth and support offered through Pearson's enrollment team. She further advised of her recent attendance at the staff's back to school events in August, and lauded the school staff for their excitement and energy to start a new school year.

b. Academic Success Partner (ASP) Update

Ms. Adams-Brazill presented to the Board on behalf of the Academic Success Partner (ASP) team.

i. School Metrics

Ms. Adams-Brazill presented this item to the Board. She reviewed the data included in the Board meeting materials, highlighting the school's performance as compared with other Pearson partnering schools of similar size and years in operation. Board members discussed the metrics data with Ms. Adams-Brazill.

ii. Teacher Professional Development Products and Services for the 2021- 2022 School Year

Ms. Adams-Brazill reviewed the professional development products and services for school staff, as offered by Pearson for the 2021-2022 school year. She discussed the various levels and delivery models of professional learning opportunities available to staff members and advised of the curated catalog of content to allow for a more personalized professional development experience.

Mr. Tidwell discussed his upcoming participation with Ms. Gregory in a legislative review of Education Management Organizations, and inquired as to the Board's comfort with requesting a memo from Board Counsel on specifics regarding the Board's relationship with Pearson. Mr. Daniels volunteered as designee to work with Board Counsel on the documentation. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that Charlie Daniels as Board Designee to work with Board Counsel on Memorandum Regarding EMO/Board Relationship, as discussed, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted, the motion was approved unanimously.

c. Board Relations Update

Ms. DeGroff presented to the Board on behalf of Pearson's Board Relations team.

i. Conflict of Interest Statements and Background Check Reminders

Ms. DeGroff thanked the Board for their completion of the Conflict of Interest statements.

ii. Technology Statement for General School Handbook

Ms. DeGroff provided an update on the technology statement, as included in the Board meeting materials. She advised that the statement had been included within the school handbook to provide clarification on access to Connections Academy owned computers upon enrollment withdrawal or graduation.

iii. Board Training and Conference Attendance Planning for 2021-2022 School Year

Ms. DeGroff reviewed the upcoming trainings and conferences that have been identified that may interest members of the Board. The Board reviewed the upcoming training offerings, discussing the advantages and specific agenda topics of each conference, and their support of Board members making an effort to attend the training opportunities.

iv. Board Experience Survey Results

Ms. DeGroff discussed the Board Experience Survey results with the Board. She reviewed the results of the survey, and thanked Board members for their participation and partnership in the educational process.

X. Extended Public Comment (limited to agenda items only)

There were no comments at this time.

XI. Adjournment and Confirmation of Next Meeting Date – October 20, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. CT

The Board confirmed the next Board Meeting is to be held on October 20, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. CT. The Board, being at the end of its agenda, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, to adjourn the meeting at 5:39 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

Submitted by



Name: Kristin DeGroff
Board Minute Clerk

Approved by



Name: John Tidwell
Board President