



APPROVED 11/17/2021

**South Carolina Connections Academy (SCCA)
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Wednesday, September 15, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.**

Held at the following location:
201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 250
Columbia, SC 29210

1(800) 503-2899; Code 529-1039#

I. Call to Order

In Mr. Prince's absence, Mr. Hall called the meeting to order at 3:09 p.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: Adam Hall, Meka Childs, Rebecca Battle-Bryant, and Kizzi Gibson, (all via phone);

Board Members Joined During Meeting: Gary Prince (via phone);

Board Members Absent: Frank Thomas and Ashley Newton;

Guests Present: Josh Kitchens, Executive Director (in person at the school location); Adriana Walker and Brandy Smith, School staff; Kyle Michel, Kyle Michel Law Firm; Brittiany Sanford, Christina Clausen, Sonali Rogers, Michelle Bull and Laura Coleman, Pearson Virtual Schools staff (all via phone).

III. Public Comment

There were no comments at this time.

IV. Audit Committee, Committee of the Entire Board

- a. Approval of Board Designee to Finalize and Submit the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year Financial Audit Report by the Applicable Deadlines

Ms. Rogers reviewed the audit process for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021 completed to date. She further advised that the audit report is due prior to the Board's next meeting.

[Mr. Prince joined the meeting at 3:10 p.m.]

The Board discussed the timeline and agreed to appoint the Board Chair as Board Designee to finalize and submit the audit report by the due date. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Childs and seconded by Mr. Hall as follows:

RESOLVED, that Gary Prince as Board designee to finalize and submit the 2020-2021 fiscal year financial audit report by the applicable deadlines, as discussed, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

V. Routine Business

- a. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Prince asked the Board to review the Agenda distributed prior to the meeting and properly noticed and posted per the legal requirements. There being no changes noted, a motion was made by Mr. Hall and seconded by Ms. Childs as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the September 15, 2021 South Carolina Connections Academy Board of Directors Meeting, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Oral Reports

- a. School Leader's Report
 - i. Back to School Activities, Staffing and Training Update

Mr. Kitchens discussed with the Board recent back to school activities, including new staffing and training efforts.

- ii. Enrollment Update

Mr. Kitchens reviewed the school's current enrollment with the Board, including the enrollment distribution across grades.

iii. Student Learning Results

Mr. Kitchens reviewed with the Board the school's successful passage rates and academic achievements.

iv. Connections Academy Summer Leadership Conference

Mr. Kitchens discussed the recent Connections Academy Leadership Retreat, held virtually. He reviewed the topics covered at the retreat and made note of the valuable mentoring and networking opportunities for him and other school leadership team members. He further reviewed accolades received by SCCA in multiple categories.

The Board congratulated Mr. Kitchens and his staff for their awards and high academic achievement rates.

b. Financial Report

Ms. Rogers reviewed the financial materials included in the Board meeting materials in detail, highlighting the budget and forecasting areas of the financial statements. Ms. Rogers further reviewed the balance sheet and school's revenue and expense statements.

i. Unaudited 2020-2021 Financial Results

Ms. Rogers reviewed the unaudited financial results from the previous school year with the Board.

ii. August 2021 Financial Results

Ms. Rogers further reviewed the August financials with the Board, as included in the Board meeting materials.

VII. **Consent Items**

Mr. Prince 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 further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Hall and seconded by Dr. Gibson as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Consent Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the June 16, 2021 Annual Board Meeting;
- b. Approval of Staffing Report;
- c. Approval of Pearson Invoice(s) for June (# 91000008438), July (# 91000008624) and August (# 91000008690);
- d. Approval of 2021-2022 Base Salaries and Career Ladder Positions;

- e. Approval of First Semester Closing Enrollment for the 2021-2022 School Year for K-11 Grades on February 18, 2022; and
- f. Ratification of Lease for School Facility Expansion Space; are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Action Items

- a. Approval of Adjusted Focus Goals for the 2020-2021 School Year

Mr. Kitchens reviewed with the Board the School Focus Goals for 2020-2021, as included in the Board meeting materials. He reminded Board members that the original goals were approved with a state testing goal which was hindered by the ongoing pandemic. He reviewed with the Board the proposed changes and reiterated that the school goals represent the major driver for the staff incentive plan. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Gibson and seconded by Ms. Childs as follows:

RESOLVED, that the adjusted Focus Goals for the 2020-2021 school year, as presented, are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

- b. Approval of Board Training and Conference Attendance Planning for the 2021-2022 School Year

Ms. Coleman reviewed the upcoming trainings and conferences that have been identified that may interest members of the Board. The Board discussed the advantages and specific agenda topics of each conference, and their support of Board members making an effort to attend the training opportunities. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Hall and seconded by Ms. Childs as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Board training and Conference attendance planning for the 2021-2022 school year, as discussed, are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Information Items

- a. School Success Partner (SSP) Update

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

i. Pearson Support Team Updates

Ms. Clausen provided the Board with an update on support services and personnel provided to the schools and Board by Pearson Virtual Schools, including her role within the SSP team.

b. Academic Success Partner (ASP) Update

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

i. School Metrics

Ms. Sanford 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. Sanford.

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

Ms. Sanford 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.

c. Board Relations (BR) Update

Ms. Coleman presented on behalf of the Board Relations (BR) team.

i. Conflict of Interest Statement Reminder

Ms. Coleman thanked the Board for their prompt completion of the annually required Conflict of Interest statements.

ii. Upcoming Board Member Election Reminder

Ms. Coleman provided the Board with an update on the timing and process for the upcoming Board biennial election. She further encouraged Board members up for re-election to discuss their intentions to seek re-election with herself and Mr. Prince.

iii. Education Service Provider (ESP) Evaluation

Ms. Coleman reviewed with the Board a new Charter requirement to annually evaluate Pearson Virtual Schools as SCCA's Education Service Provider (ESP) and the progress made to-date to secure a 3rd party vendor to conduct that evaluation.

iv. Technology Statement for General School Handbook

Ms. Coleman 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.

v. Board Experience Survey Results

Ms. Coleman reviewed the results of the survey, and thanked Board members for their participation and partnership in the educational process. The Board thanked Pearson Virtual Schools for the strong partnership.

X. Adjournment and Confirmation of the Next Meeting – Wednesday, November 17, 2021 at 3:00 pm ET

Mr. Prince noted that the Board was at the end of its agenda and that the next meeting is scheduled for November 17, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. ET. A motion was made by Mr. Hall and seconded by Ms. Childs to adjourn the meeting at 3:39 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.