



**APPROVED 04/21/2020**

**Arkansas Connections Academy, Inc. (ARCA)  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

**Held at the following location and via teleconference:**

Arkansas Connections Academy  
1009 Beau Terre Drive, Building O  
Bentonville, AR 72712

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**I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Dr. Beck called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. when all participants were able to hear each other. The school was open to the public to attend the meeting. Dr. Beck conducted a Roll Call.

Board Members Present: Dennis Beck, Virginia Walden Ford, Carla Hartwell and Hailey Maloney (via phone);

Board Members Absent: David Hartman;

Guests: Darla Gardner, School Leader (in person); Nicole Stephens and Jeremy Hobak, School staff; Kristin DeGross, Bryce Adams, Tina Blair, and Kristie Clements, Pearson Online & Blended Learning (OBL) staff (via phone).

**II. Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**III. Routine Business**

a. Approval of Agenda

Dr. Beck asked the Board Members whether there were any changes necessary to the Agenda that has been posted in accordance with Arkansas open meeting law. There being no changes noted, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the March 17, 2020 Arkansas Connections Academy, Inc. Regular Board Meeting, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

#### **IV. Audit Committee, Committee of the Entire Board**

##### a. Review and Acceptance of Audit Report for the 2018-2019 School Year

Ms. Blair presented this item to the Board. She reviewed the audit report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019, as included in the Board materials. Ms. Blair highlighted key aspects of the report, and advised that there were no significant material deficiencies or weaknesses. She further advised that under regulatory reporting rules as required by the ADE, the school received an unqualified opinion, which is the best the school can achieve. Board members discussed the audit report, and expressed their satisfaction with the school and OBL for the results. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Audit Report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019, as presented, is hereby accepted.

The motion passed unanimously.

#### **V. Oral Reports**

##### a. School Leader Report

Ms. Gardner provided an update on the school's response to the current COVID-19 public health situation, including the support currently being provided to families. She further advised that upcoming field trips and in person events had been cancelled, and that the school would discuss graduation plans at an upcoming meeting.

##### i. Update on State Testing

Ms. Gardner provided the Board with an update on state testing, and advised that testing was being held as scheduled. The Board discussed anticipated participation rates in detail.

[Ms. Gardner left the meeting at 10:15 a.m.]

##### b. Financial Report

Ms. Blair reviewed the financial report included in the Board Meeting materials.

[Ms. Gardner rejoined the meeting at 10:17 a.m.]

Additionally, Ms. Blair highlighted key aspects in the school's revenue and expense reports, as well as the current forecast.

The Board requested that Ms. Gardner provide a review of the Monthly School Report. Ms. Gardner discussed current enrollment, as well as ongoing outreach efforts on behalf of the school and OBL amidst the COVID-19 epidemic. Additionally, Ms. Gardner discussed additional measures in place for state testing, as well as a potential statewide waiver regarding standardized testing participation.

## **VI. Consent Items**

Dr. Beck asked the Board members whether there were any items from the Consent Items that they wished to have moved to Action Items for discussion. There being no discussion or changes, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, the Consent Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the February 18, 2020 Board Meeting;
- b. Approval of Staffing Report;
- c. Approval of Pearson Online & Blended Learning Invoice(s) for February; and
- d. Approval of Revision(s) to Employee Handbook; are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

## **VII. Action Items**

- a. Approval of School-Funded Summer School Scholarship Offering to Students

Mr. Adams presented this item to the Board. He reviewed the programmatic offerings held through iNACA to allow for student participation in summer school courses. Board members advised of their support of the program. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the school-funded summer school scholarship offering to students, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Beck held additional discussion on potential opportunities for enrollment growth at the school, to include students currently closed out of local brick and mortar districts.

- b. Approval of MOU with Northwest Technical Institute (NWTI)

Ms. Gardner introduced Mr. Hoback to the Board, who reviewed the potential partnership with NWTI. He discussed the opportunity for students to earn credits towards certifications in various career tracks, including medical technology and welding. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the MOU with Northwest Technical Institute (NWTI), as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

**VIII. Information Items**

a. State Account Relations (STAR) Update

Mr. Adams provided the Board with an update on recent legislative activities which may impact the school.

i. OBL Agreement/Charter Renewal Timeline Update

This item was not discussed.

b. Partner School Leadership Team (PSLT) Update

Ms. Clements presented to the Board on behalf of OBL's Partner School Leadership Team. She thanked Ms. Gardner and the school staff for maintaining a sense of order during a tumultuous time in the nation's history.

c. Update on Greater Bentonville Chamber of Commerce Membership

Ms. Gardner advised that the annual invoice for membership with the Bentonville Chamber of Commerce had not yet been received, and that an update would be provided at a future meeting.

**IX. Adjournment and Confirmation of Next Meeting Date – April 21, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.**

Dr. Beck noted that the Board was at the end of its agenda and that the next meeting was scheduled to be held on April 21, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. At 10:38 a.m. the Board made and seconded the following motion:

RESOLVED, that the adjournment of the Arkansas Connections Academy, Inc. March 17, 2020 Board meeting, is hereby approved.

The motion was approved unanimously.