

GEORGIA CYBER ACADEMY (GCA)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MINUTES | December 13, 2017 | 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Conference Call: 1 (515) 739 – 1469, access code 675050 #

Board Room <http://tinyurl.com/GCA-Board-Room>

Board Attendees: Ryan Mahoney (Board Chair), Dr. Erica Fener-Sitkoff (Board Vice Chair), Angela Lassetter, Ben Brumfield, Jeff Gates

Board Member Absentee: Jemelleh Coes, Charlie Harper

Board contractors: Michael Kooi, Alexa Ross

Staff attendees: Dr. Andrew Oberg (Head of Schools), Veronica Clemons (Deputy Head of Schools), Stacy Kimmons (CAO), Andre Hopewell (Finance Manager), Rosie Lowndes (Middle School Principal), Maria Waters (Elementary Principal), Michelda Watson (FAST Manager), Allison Yawn (Operations Manager), Erica Curry (SPED), Kristy Howard, Jennifer Mitchell, Joan Wilson, Maria Blencowe, Tim Melvin, Michelle Blackwell, Janet Wheeler, Stacey Clandenen, Taylor Lord, Gentry Lowe, Alisha Kelly, Trina Weaver, Janet Wheeler, Elizabeth Rose, Ellen Holland, Kristy Howard, Becky Moody, Shireen Mueller, Pam Freed, Susan Rudd

Other Attendees: Mark Middleton, Rob Fortson, Karen Ghidotti, John Kramer

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS:

	Motion	Second	Vote
Motion to approve November Board Minutes	Erica Fener-Sitkoff	Ben Brumfield	Unanimous Approval
Motion to Amend Agenda to include SPED review proposal by Board Counsel	Angela Lassetter	Jeff Gates	Unanimous Approval
Motion to Approve SPED review proposal by Board Counsel	Angela Lassetter	Jeff Gates	Unanimous Approval
Motion to Adjourn meeting at 7:14 PM	Erica Fener-Sitkoff	Ben Brumfield	Unanimous Approval

I. **CALL to ORDER** at 6:20 PM by R. Mahoney

II. **REGULAR SESSION**

III. **REVIEWED and APPROVED November MINUTES** – voted to approve without revision. Motion – Erica Fener-Sitkoff | Second – Ben Brumfield

IV. **HEAD of SCHOOL (HoS) REPORT** *delivered by Dr. Andrew Oberg:*

- a. **Cyber Charter Rally** – Wednesday, January 31, 2018. Coalition of Families for Virtual Education. Laid out itinerary and importance of making our voice heard.
- b. **National BETA school of distinction** – Kudos to Rebecca Cooper and GCA students for recognition three straight years
- c. **Special Education Leadership Initiative** – Erica Curry developing leaders for SPED and developing greater capacity for SPED services to GCA students.
- d. **Winter administration of EOC** – EOC tests Dec. 11-15 at 13 test sites across state – headed up by Genevieve McGarry
- e. **Face-to-Face December Professional Development** - December 5-7, three days of PD with all staff and sharing of best practices went well...coordinated by Eve Mooney

V. **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- a. **ACADEMIC OVERSIGHT** *report delivered by Michael Kooi in the absence of Chair –*
 - i. New Academic Dashboard was discussed. Staff will make some tweaks that will make it more manageable and still provide all the data the Board needs to provide sufficient oversight.
 - ii. New grading policy was discussed. Discussed extra credit and grading structure but ran out of time to finish the discussion and extended it to the January meeting.
 - b. **FINANCE** *report delivered by Andre Hopewell, School Finance Manager -*
 - i. Provided an update on Monthly Financials. Focused on items that were above and below the expected rate largely because of specific expenditures.
 - Travel, PD, testing were some of these line items
 - Bambo Sonaiké finalizing the 990 form on behalf of GCA
 - Chair indicated that working with Bambo had been an improvement
 - c. **GOVERNANCE** *report delivered by Angela Lassetter, Governance Chair -*
 - i. Importance of board review of bylaws, policies and strategic plan for potential changes at next meeting;
 - ii. GCA website update – staff stated that things were moving forward;
 - iii. Conflict of Interest forms – all members received except one and we will get that
 - iv. Board vacancies – two current vacancies...Chair has indicated that he has made progress with new members and particularly getting a CFO member
 - v. Governance Dashboard – no concerns
 - vi. Statistics on new Board policy initiatives – reviewing at next meeting
 - vii. Governance Training – Mike is getting all board members registered. Chair asked that anyone that cannot make it let him know. Chair also asked that board members get some time to meet with Mike individually.
 - viii. Suicide Prevention Policy Draft – gave the go ahead to approve in January
 - ix. SCSC annual oversight visit update – still waiting to hear on their visit
- **Other items for Discussion** –
 - Thanked Jeff Gates for his time and dedication as a board member as he is rolling off.

Jeff thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve.

- Next board meeting set for January 17.
 - Erica – due to complaints and concerns of students the Board had a desire to do random sampling review to ensure compliance and to drive improvements in the program. Board wanted to leverage the expertise of its board counsel to provide this guidance.
 - Alexa – proposing that GCA provide 10 IEPs per grade to review selected at random and all educational records to be reviewed by a team of three lawyers with a set of criteria to be reviewed including child find, CBI, to transition. Start with K-2 and move forward each week. Legal staff will make recommendations for improvement. Also wants to review the pending complaint with DOE as she has reviewed and has cause for concern. Also wants to be made aware of any other pending complaints. Starting review in January with the idea of finishing up by the March board meeting.
 - Proposal provided to board members via email. Took a couple of minutes to review.
 - Andrew asked that the Board provide staff with a copy of the proposal as well as they were not made aware of the Board's concern over SPED issues.
 - Alexa clarified that SPED issues had been discussed in prior board meetings including legal representation for the school that the Board was not aware of and had not selected.
 - Andrew stated that this school year there had only been one state complaint that had been resolved without a finding of non-compliance.
 - Erica Curry indicated that the DOE response had been received the prior week
 - Erica Curry indicated that they had been working on proactive items to avoid having complaints in the first place and working in preparation for DOE audit
 - Working with attorneys to prepare for the DOE audit and to address all issues that they expect could come up in the audit now
 - Alexa indicated that the Board simply wants to do its own independent review to ensure that things are being handled properly and legally.
 - Erica Sitkoff indicated that the SPED review would be a tool to proactively inform practices at the school and that Alexa's experience with the state on this topic was a tool we needed to utilize to make sure that GCA can make necessary programmatic changes. The Board wants to have greater involvement in decision making on how to handle SPED complaints and be able to work with the school's attorneys on that decision making.
 - Jeff asked how many SPED students there were and how many IEPs would be reviewed. Erica Curry stated that there were approximately 1800 SPED students. Alexa indicated that there would be 130 total IEPs reviewed.
 - Ryan indicated that this was something that had been discussed previously by the Board in response to past investigations and other issues with the school as well as the issue of the fact that the Board had not had a role in selecting counsel to represent the school on such matters previously.
 - **Motion to Amend the Agenda to include board action on SPED review proposal by Board Counsel** – motion – A. Lassetter, second – J. Gates – Unanimous approval.
 - **Motion to Approve Board Counsel SPED review proposal** – motion – A. Lassetter, second – J. Gates. Unanimous approval.
 - **Public comment** – There were no public comments
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VI. **ADJOURNED** at 7:15PM | motion – J. Gates, second - B. Brumfield

*To request November 2017 board packet, contact Veronica Clemons, vgclemons@gacyber.org
Board Packet Documents for December 2017:*

*December Board Agenda
November Board Minutes
Monthly Financial Report
Head of School Report
School and Special Program Reports
Special Education Report
Operations Board Report
Human Resources Report*

(end)