



MEETING MINUTES

Name of Foundation: Georgia Charter Education Foundation

Board Session: Georgia Charter Education Foundation

School(s): Coweta Charter Academy at Senoia

The minutes of Sunshine Law meetings need not be verbatim transcripts of the meeting. These minutes are a brief summary of the events of the meeting.

Date:	Start	End	Next Board Meeting:	Next time:	Prepared by:
September 26 , 2023	6:02pm	8:53PM	October 24, 2023	6:00 pm	Maggie Peters
Meeting Location:			6675 E., GA-16 Senoia, GA 30276		

Attended by:	
Board Members: Danny Nungesser, Board Chair Beth Duncan, Vice Chair Maggie Peters, Director Margarette Coleman, Director Jennifer Hughey, Director Absent: Mary Knight, Treasurer	Other Attendees: Teresa Ellison, CCAS Principal Reagan Hage, NEI Angela Lassetter, Consultant Virtual Attendees: Christine Locrotondo, CSUSA Joined @6:27 Sandy Shedenhelm, CSUSA

I. CALL TO ORDER

Pursuant to public notice, the meeting commenced at 6:02 pm with a Call to Order by GCEF Board Chair, Danny Nungesser. Roll call was taken, and quorum established.

MOTION: MOTION WAS MADE BY BETH DUNCAN AND SECONDED BY MARGARETTE COLEMAN TO CHANGE CURRENT AGENDA PRESENTED AND ADD TOPICS AS FOLLOWS TO THE AGENDA FOR THE SEPTEMBER 26, 2023 BOARD MEETING. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. AGENDA REVIEW

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

IV. ADMIN

A. AUGUST 22, 2023 BOARD MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

B. ANGELA LASSETTER INTRODUCTION

C. ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL TRAINING

D. CHARTER RENEWAL PROCESS UPDATE

E. COMMISSION MONITORING UPDATE

V. LEADERSHIP REPORTS

A. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

VI. ACADEMICS

A. ELL POLICY

VII. FINANCIAL

A. MONTHLY FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

B. MONTHLY FINANCIAL REVIEW

C. AUDIT UPDATE

D. ENROLLMENT UPDATE

VIII. OPERATIONS

A. STATE CHARTER UNIFIED ENROLLMENT SYSTEM

B. SCHOOL WEBSITE COMPLIANCE, INFORMATION AND NAVIGATION

IX. GOVERNANCE

A. CHARTER SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT COMPLIANCE

B. SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS OVERSIGHT

C. BOARD MEETING OVERSIGHT REPORTS AND TRACKING TOOLS DEVELOPMENT

D. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEMS

E. MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

X. CONFIRMATION OF NEXT BOARD MEETING AND COMMITTEE DATE/TIMES

XII. ADJOURNMENT

II. AGENDA REVIEW

- No additional comments on agenda

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Offered for public comments. No outside attendees for public comments.

IV. ADMIN

A. AUGUST 22, 2023 BOARD MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

MOTION: MOTION WAS MADE BY MARGARETTE COLEMAN AND SECONDED BY BETH DUNCAN TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 26, 2023 BOARD MEETING MINUTES. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. ANGELA LASSETTER INTRODUCTION

- Beth Duncan introduced Angela Lassetter by stating the following. "The board would like to introduce Angela Lassetter to this meeting. She is an organizational consultant with many years of experience as a charter and private school board member, school founder and former charter school superintendent. Mrs. Lassetter has been hired to assist the board with a review of various aspects of our school's programs and processes to further our efforts toward continuous school improvement. As such, for meeting expediency, the board is formally recognizing Mrs. Lassetter to fully participate in all board discussions for the duration of this meeting and all subsequent board and committee meetings over the next year unless otherwise specified by the board. Welcome and we look forward to working with you."

C. ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL TRAINING

- Angela Lassetter asked if all administrators attend the state training offered by the commission?
- Teresa Ellison answered in the past yes but not recently
- Angela Lassetter made the recommendation that they attend the training.

D. CHARTER RENEWAL PROCESS UPDATE

- Reagan Hage informed the board that the commission visited the school 2 Fridays prior to begin the charter renewal process and no board members attended.
- Several board members stated that they were not aware of this date. Maggie Peters stated that she had been told the visit would occur on 9.28.2023.
- Discussion continued about the need for communication to the board
- Danny Nungesser asked if there is anything he can do to support the renewal?
- Reagan Hage answered that the commission sent a packet and told us that the commission stated that if there are no changes then it will be an automatic 5 year renewal. He stated that they were incredibly impressed with the academics, principal and basically all around.
- Maggie Peters asked what would happen if we want to make changes to the charter?
- Teresa Ellison stated that if there is anything that needs to be updated or changed we will have to put it in the application but if we change things it will increase the likelihood that we will have to go through the interview process.
- Angela Lassetter asked if we were aware of the submittal date? or a timeline?
- Reagan Hage answered right before the New Year.
- Teresa Ellison stated that the date to submit was January 3rd.
- Angela Lassetter made a recommendation that if the board wants to make changes to the charter that this is the time to do that.
- Danny Nungesser asked what the November 1st date is for?
- Reagan Hage answered that is the date to submit the questionnaire and that we should know by the 1st or 2nd week of February they will make a decision.
- Maggie Peters asked for best practices on how to approach the charter renewal process.

- Angela Lassetter stated that this was a high level process and she suggests the document be presented through the link.

E. COMMISSION MONITORING UPDATE

- Teresa Ellison updated the board by letting them know that the recent monitoring visit on 9.26.23 went well. A few changes will be added such as additional evacuation maps in the cafeteria, ensuring all electrical panels are locked, ensuring every teacher has a flashlight and making sure they are aware of who has the keys to the extinguisher boxes for access.

V. LEADERSHIP REPORTS

A. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

- Teresa Ellison shared an update on the school with the board. Current enrollment for September is 739. The school had 6 withdrawals and 4 new students. Reasons for withdrawal in August were lack of support, services not met, homeschool, teacher/admin communication. There are currently 94 employees with 0 open positions and 1 separation.
- Teresa Ellison shared the recent events that the school participated in and upcoming events as well.
- Danny Nungesser asked Teresa if she would do the September events again? Teresa answered that the information session on 9/12 did not have great attendance.
- A suggestion was made to move them to once per quarter/semester
- The marketing calendar/plan for the school was shared with the board.
Discussion: Discovered we are a member of the chamber of commerce locally, shared ideas on how to increase awareness of our school, possibly working with local community, realtors and churches to increase name recognition. Beth Duncan asked if we have an ROI to calculate the return on our expenditure of the Niche profile. Jennifer Hughey asked if there are other websites similar to Niche? She also asked what our breakdown is from Spalding and Meriwether? Angela Lassetter shared that Niche can be beneficial for pointing parents to the website. She stated that our website is not built out the way it could be and we could make it better.
Angela Lassetter asked for the marketing plan and Maggie Peters requested the marketing plan also. Reagan Hage printed and provided marketing plan copy. Multiple suggestions were made to increase visibility in the community. Board suggested that an additional conversation on how to support the marketing piece is needed and possibly the Development Committee should schedule a meeting to continue the discussion.
- It was mentioned that the website is difficult to navigate and policies and procedures are difficult. Teresa Ellison shared that CSUSA used to manage the website and the board at the time requested that the task of upkeeping our website be brought in house.
- Jennifer Hughey asked Reagan Hage if we have tracked the decline in enrollment from a trend perspective? She asked if last year was a negative trend as well? Reagan Hage stated that generally the school starts around 800 and we end the year around 770-765. In his 3 years it has always been like that. Margarette Coleman stated that this is the first year that we have not grown and that was a shock. We expected to be around 800 but since we have seen that we have to do something different. She stated that the average member of the public is not aware what CCAS was. Suggestions were made that we get a 1 page marketing/informational printed material out that could help.
- Teresa Ellison shared some of the additional activities they focus on with the community.
- Class sizes on Niche are incorrect.
- Danny Nungesser stated that with the lower enrollment we will have to address the budget.
- Teresa Ellison shared that Sandy Shedenhelm will discuss the recent I Ready diagnostic results with the board. : Sandy Shedenhelm discussed Fall Diagnostic data. ELA/Reading: 18% are 2 or more levels behind. 22% on grade level or above. Discussed new students vs. returning students. Break out by grade level. 7th grade proficiency needs attention.

VI.ACADEMICS

A. ELL POLICY

- Teresa Ellison gave an update regarding our ELL policy. Updates primarily regarding terminology such as screeners. Change to exit criteria and that was updated. Have right at about 20 ELL students.

MOTION: MOTION WAS MADE BY MAGGIE PETERS AND SECONDED BY BETH DUNCAN TO APPROVE THE SUGGESTED CHANGES TO THE ELL POLICY PRESENTED AT THE AUGUST 26, 2023 BOARD MEETING. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

VII.FINANCIAL

A.MONTHLY FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

- Maggie Peters shared finance committee update. Had a discussion around audit. They shared that we would have to have a second audit this year again. The intent is to present the completed audit at the October board meeting. Auditor said that he does not see any reason why we should not be able to have the audit done on time. Also, shared that we are currently being funded for 817 students. Recount in March.
- The board asked if they could take funds back. It was stated that is a gray area and it will be an average.
- Angela Lassetter suggested that we focus on mid-year enrollment.
- Teresa Ellison updated the board that our policy is to recoup the insufficient funds fee and they are not allowed to write checks anymore.
- She also stated that the school had the run, hide fight training and that several staff/faculty were very good and excelled at this training.
- Reagan Hage shared that he requested a credit memo for the charged invoice for Janitorial services. He was not able to track down documentation so he requested the credit to the school account.

B.MONTHLY FINANCIAL REVIEW

- Reagan Hage presented the financials.
- Maggie Peters brought up the \$2,000 increase that came directly from Gov. Kemp. Suggested that although we were not given enough for every teacher, we need to do the right thing and find a way to give every teacher \$2,000.
- Angela Lassetter stated that it is a concern that they did not fund us for all teachers and they base it on the CPI. She said that in general they will not fix it on the back end. She suggested that we make a call to understand why we were only funded for 10 months.
- Danny Nungesser asked how many teachers we have? Maggie Peters answered 53.
- Jennifer Hughey asked when was the money funded? Teresa Ellison stated that it was announced in feb/mar. She explained that they would have gotten all of it if they worked for a traditional school district. It was suggested by Angela Lassetter that the school make it up and adjust the budget for it.
- Danny Nungesser asked how many teachers are we funded for? Maggie Peters stated that we are funded for 48.93 teachers. But for only Sept -June which is \$1,666.67 per teacher. We still have 5.07 teachers that we were not given funding for. Total will be \$110K which means we will have to find \$28.5 in the budget. Suggestion was made that at the next staff meeting we let the teachers know what has happened. It was shared that the funds have not been disbursed yet. Reagan Hage shared that the teachers got a 3% pay raise but not the additional \$2000. Beth Duncan clarified that at the district schools they would get both. Teresa Ellison said that is correct. Multiple board members agreed that we should do the right thing and pay the additional \$2000 on top of the 3%. It was agreed to review the budget to make adjustments to cover the additional funds.

MOTION: MOTION WAS MADE BY MAGGIE PETERS AND SECONDED BY MARGARETTE COLEMAN TO APPROVE THE FINANCIALS PRESENTED AT THE AUGUST 26, 2023 BOARD MEETING. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

C.AUDIT UPDATE

- Regan Hage stated that the audit is almost done. 1 single item they kicked back for clarification.
- The grant funding triggered the need for an additional audit.

D. ENROLLMENT UPDATE

- skipped-covered in prior discussion from the Principal's report.

VIII.OPERATIONS

A. STATE CHARTER UNIFIED ENROLLMENT SYSTEM

- Teresa Ellison said that she was on a recent call regarding the new enrollment system. Still many things to work out before moving to this platform.
- Angela Lassetter suggested that this may be put into motion until the 25-26 school year. She suggested that since we have an EMO the best practice is for the school to hold the contract for the enrollment software. Currently, Schoolmint is being used by CCAS. That makes sure that the data is under the control of the board/school. The board should be able to make changes and has the authority regardless of who the vendor is.
- Beth Duncan requested that Reagan Hage get the board a copy of the School mint contract. Reagan Hage said he would inquire about getting a copy of them.
- This could benefit parents the most with only one point to enter data. This will also benefit school because it would reduce the need for training on different systems.

B. SCHOOL WEBSITE COMPLIANCE, INFORMATION AND NAVIGATION

- Angela Lassetter shared that the website needs some more attention. She shared that we need to ensure that we are compliant. Specifically, the board page. Discussed the difference between the summary minutes and approved minutes. She stated that we need to have the agenda on the website a week in advance and the information such as the date needs to be accurate. Discussion was had around the need for draft minutes within 2 days and the need to find a board recorder/board liaison.
- Angela Lassetter recommended that the board own our domain and have the service provider keep up the website and have it go to the board owned domain. She stated that this is a best practice to ensure the data and information continues to be available.

IX.GOVERNANCE

A. CHARTER SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT COMPLIANCE

- Angela Lassetter stated that the perception is that the employees are not employees of the board. Maggie Peters stated that they are...sort of. Shared that there is a co-employment model that she was told had been put in place. Reagan Hage stated that the board's employees are under their (CSUSA) tax I.D. for the sake of the benefits package.
- Angela Lassetter clarified that the state of Georgia's rule is that the board is to be the employer of the teacher and instructional staff. That means under your (The Board) EIN.
- Reagan Hage stated that they got this approved by the commission. So the commission has approved this.
- Angela Lassetter stated that she understood but that she received the rule from Ceronne (at the commission) and it was very clear that the board be the employer.
- Reagan Hage asked to see the policy change that the board voted on because they voted and had a long conversation with Ceronne herself back at the last renewal and this was approved by the commission. Unless there was a change in policy or vote that happened...because this was approved by the commission.
- Angela Lassetter stated that she would go back and talk to Ceronne again to see if there was a model that was approved. If it is, she would still recommend that the board be the employer of its staff.

- Maggie Peters stated that she was under the impression that the employees had contracts with the board as the employer.
- Angela Lassetter stated a hypothetical: if CSUSA was no longer the service provider for the school would the employees still be the employees of this school. Reagan Hage stated that nothing would change but the employees would move under our fed ID and we would need to get our own benefits package.
- Discussion continued around possibly moving to state benefits during Charter renewal.
- Jennifer Hughey asked what would happen if CSUSA was no longer with us and we lost all of our employees? She stated that would not be an overnight fix. Angela Lassetter shared that there is usually a non-compete for employees of a service provider. She shared that it sounds safer to make them employees of the board. Jennifer Hughey asked what the benefit would be to keeping them under CSUSA FEIN? Reagan Hage said that they have over 10,000 employees and save them thousands of dollars.
- Teresa Ellison shared that if the EMO is not here then many contracts/people would not be here such as the food service provider.
- Multiple benefits were discussed for moving the staff to the school's benefits plan.
- The Board requested that Angela Lassetter get clarification from the state commission on the topic regarding co employment.
- Angela Lassetter stated that if we do need to change this time of year would be perfect because this is the normal open enrollment.
- Maggie Peters requested that if they did approve the co employment model that we get that in writing.

B. SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS OVERSIGHT

- No new information

C. BOARD MEETING OVERSIGHT REPORTS AND TRACKING TOOLS DEVELOPMENT

- tabled for later date

D. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEMS

- Shared that we do not have a Governance Committee. Tabled the discussion for a later date

E. MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

- Angela Lassetter shared that the website has many mission statements listed. She said that we will need this to include in the charter renewal. The board should determine the mission and vision and then make sure that everything at the school follows that. She advised that we review them and make sure they are consistent.

X. CONFIRMATION OF NEXT BOARD MEETING AND COMMITTEE DATE/TIMES

- Confirmed that next board meeting is scheduled for October 24th at 6:00

XII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: MOTION WAS MADE BY MARGARETTE COLEMAN AND SECONDED BY BETH DUNCAN TO ADJOURN THE SEPTEMBER 26, 2023, GEORGIA CHARTER EDUCATION FOUNDATION BOARD MEETING AT 8:53 PM. MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Danny Nungesser, Board Chair

Date: _____