



APPROVED 9/16/2025

Arkansas Connections Academy (ARCA)

Board Meeting Minutes

August 19, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

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 10:00 a.m. when all participants were able to hear each other.

Board Members Present: Dennis Beck, Melissa Cruise, Kelly O'Brien, and Virginia Walden Ford (via videoconference);

Guests Present: Erin Lieblong, School staff (at the school location); Beth Lee, Paige McKee, School staff; Laura Johnson, Brian Rosta, Steve O'Brien, Megann Arthur, and Diana Johnson Teague, Pearson Virtual Schools staff (via videoconference).

II. Public Comment

There were no public comments at this time.

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 further changes noted, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for August 19, 2025, Arkansas Connections Academy, Inc. Board Meeting, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Oral Reports

(Ms. Arthur, Ms. Johnson, and Ms. McKee joined the meeting at 10:01 a.m.)

a. Executive Director's Report

1. Update on Back-to-School Activities, Enrollment, Staffing, and Training

Ms. Lieblong presented the Executive Director's Report on behalf of Ms. Nicole Stephens. Ms. Lieblong discussed recent back-to-school events that provided students and teachers with the opportunity to meet in person. She also reported that the school is planning a field trip to the Little Rock Zoo next month.

Ms. Lieblong reviewed the school's current enrollment numbers with the Board as well as recent trends in enrollment. She provided an overview of staffing numbers and shared an update about hiring activities to fill open positions. She also noted that staff are working to complete the required training at this time.

2. Update on School Improvement Plan

Ms. Lieblong presented the School Improvement Plan, as included in the Board meeting materials. She reported that the plan has been updated to include final data from the 2024-2025 school year, and that the plan has been posted on the school website.

b. Director of School Operations Update

Dr. Rosta discussed with the Board his recent travel to ARCA's staff back-to-school event, and he thanked the Board for their dedication to the school and presence at the event. The Board commended the school leadership team for creating a positive school culture.

Dr. Rosta also reviewed the school's progress on student onboarding tasks such as welcome calls, highlighting the school's commitment to building strong student-teacher relationships.

c. Financial Report

1. Unaudited 2024-2025 Financial Results

Mr. O'Brien presented the unaudited 2024-2025 financial results to the Board, as included in the Board meeting materials. He reviewed the balance sheet in detail, including fund balance expectations, and he highlighted key aspects in the school's revenue and expense statements.

V. 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 requested, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, the Consent Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the July 22, 2025 Board Meeting;

- b. Approval of Staffing Report;
- c. Approval of Pearson Invoices for June and July; and
- d. Approval of Membership with the Arkansas Public School Resource Center (APSRC); are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Action Items

There were no action items at this time.

VII. Information Items

a. Pearson Virtual Schools (PVS) Update

Ms. Johnson echoed Dr. Rosta's comments about the recent back-to-school event, sharing her appreciation for having been able to participate. She congratulated the school leadership team on the planning that went into the successful event.

Ms. Johnson provided an update on enrollment, highlighting the strong progress towards the school's enrollment goal. She also reviewed recent platform enhancements and expanded college and career offerings.

The Board discussed the possibility of offering career courses for parents of enrolled students, and Ms. Johnson reviewed future goals of the program. The Board also discussed opportunities for students and families to receive updates on platform and curriculum enhancements, and Dr. Rosta reviewed existing communication plans to keep users informed. Discussion followed regarding focus groups comprised of students and teachers to gather feedback on desired enhancements. Ms. Johnson confirmed PVS's continued commitment to gather and act on feedback provided by platform and curriculum users.

VIII. Adjournment and Confirmation of Next Meeting Date - September 16, 2025, 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 September 16, 2025, at 10:00 am. At 10:21 a.m. a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the adjournment of the Arkansas Connections Academy, Inc. August 19, 2025, Board meeting, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion was approved unanimously.