

**Reach Cyber Charter School
BOARD MEETING**

Pursuant to the Pennsylvania Open Meeting Laws, notice is hereby given to the members of the Reach Cyber Charter School Board and the general public that the Board will hold a meeting open to the public on:

Date and Time:
Wednesday, April 27, 2016 at 9:00 a.m.

Held via teleconference

Below is an agenda of all items scheduled to be considered. Unless otherwise stated, items may be taken out of the order presented on the agenda at the discretion of the Chair.

Reasonable efforts will be made to assist and accommodate persons with a disability. Please contact David Taylor at 717-649-6980.

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call – D. Taylor
- II. Routine Business – D. Taylor
 - a. Approval of Agenda
 - b. Approval of Minutes from the February 24, 2016 Board Meeting (attached)
- III. Oral Reports
 - a. Update on Charter and Next Steps – D. Taylor/P. Hennessy
 - b. Update on Statement of Agreement with Connections – D. Taylor
 - c. Implementation Timeline – J. Ragley
 - d. Update on Facility – J. Ragley
- IV. Action Items
 - a. Approval of Charter with PDE (attached) – D. Taylor
 - b. Consideration of Job Description and Recruitment Plan for School Leader and Authorization for Connections to Post the Job Description and Begin Recruitment for School Leader (attached) – R. Graver
 - c. Approval of Board Meeting Schedule through June 2016 – H. Woodward
- V. Adjournment and Next Meeting at the Call of the Chair

DRAFT
Reach Cyber Charter School
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Wednesday, February 24, 2016 at 9:00 a.m.

Held via teleconference

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Mr. Taylor called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m. when all participants were present and able to hear each other.

Board Members Present: David Taylor, Gail Hawkins-Bush, Paul Donecker, Brian Leinhauser, Joe Harford and Alex Schuh (via phone);

Guests via Phone: Patricia Hennessy, Board Counsel; Dennis Tulli, Lyn McCullen, Jay W. Ragley, Rachel Graver and Heather Woodward, Connections staff.

II. Routine Business

a. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Taylor asked the Board to review the Agenda distributed prior to the meeting. The Board was asked to add Action Item (b) Approval of Amended Articles of Incorporation Rider and Authorization for Board Counsel to Finalize and Submit All Necessary Documents on Behalf of the Board. There being no further changes, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the February 24, 2016 meeting of the Reach Cyber Charter School Board of Directors, as amended, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

b. Approval of Minutes from the September 17, 2015 Board Meeting

Board members briefly discussed the draft minutes from the September meeting, as included in the Board materials. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Minutes from the September 17, 2015 Board Meeting, as presented, are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

c. Approval of Minutes from the January 26, 2016 Board Meeting

Board members briefly discussed the draft minutes from the last meeting, as included in the Board materials. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Minutes from the January 26, 2016 Board Meeting, as presented, are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

[Ms. Hawkins Bush joined the meeting at 9:13 a.m.]

III. Oral Reports

a. Update on Revised Charter Application and Next Steps

Mr. Taylor provided the Board with an update on the work completed to date on the revised charter application. Ms. Hennessy reviewed the Executive Summary with the Board and the changes made in the submission. The Board thanked all involved in the drafting and production of the application. Ms. Hennessy and the Board reviewed the filing timeline, the application review process and timing, the appeals process, political climate in Pennsylvania and other factors that could carry weight on the review process and charter application process.

Ms. Hennessy provided the Board with an update on the relationship that the Board has had with Charter Choices throughout the charter application process. She noted that in accordance with prior action by the Board, Mr. Taylor recently signed the agreement.

IV. Action Items

a. Approval of Revised Charter Application and Authorization for Board President to Submit All Correspondence on Behalf of the Board

The Board reviewed the desire for the Board President to act on the Board's behalf regarding revision of the Charter Application. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Revised Charter Application and authorization for the Board President to submit all correspondence on behalf of the Board, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

b. Approval of Amended Articles of Incorporation Rider and Authorization for Board Counsel to Finalize and Submit All Necessary Documents on Behalf of the Board

Ms. Hennessy reviewed the proposed changes to the Articles of Incorporation Rider with the Board. She noted the prior comments from the Pennsylvania Department of Education on the Board's Articles. The Board was supportive of the proposed changes and Ms. Hennessy filing them on behalf of the Board. There being no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Amended Articles of Incorporation Rider and authorization for Board Counsel to finalize and submit all necessary documents on behalf of the Board, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

V. Adjournment and Next Meeting at the Call of the Chair

Mr. Taylor inquired if there was any other business or discussion. There being no further business or discussion, he noted that the next meeting would be scheduled at a later time. The Board being at the end of its agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 9:36 a.m.



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

April 21, 2016

Mr. David Taylor
3715 Roundtop Road
Elizabethtown, PA 17022

SENT VIA CERTIFIED MAIL AND E-MAIL

Dear Mr. Taylor:

Thank you for submitting responses to the deficiencies set forth in the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (Department) January 21, 2016 decision denying the original application of Reach Cyber Charter School (initially named Advance Cyber Charter School). After reviewing the Reach Cyber Charter School's Revised Application, it is the decision of the Pennsylvania Department of Education (Department) to grant your application. The signed decision is enclosed.

Also enclosed is a copy of the charter to be signed by all members of Reach Cyber Charter School's Board of Trustees. After all signatures have been affixed, please return the charter addressed to:

Steven P. Carney
Special Assistant
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street, 10th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Upon receipt, I will also sign the charter and you will be sent a copy of the fully executed charter.

If you have any questions, please contact Steve Carney at (717) 214-5708 or stevcarney@pa.gov.

Sincerely,



Pedro A. Rivera

Enclosures

**Reach Cyber Charter School
2015 Cyber Charter School Application**

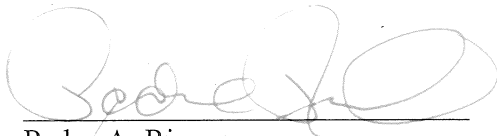
Decision to Grant Revised Application

Pursuant to the Charter School Law (CSL), 24 P.S. §§ 17-1701-A *et seq.*, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (Department) has the authority and responsibility to receive, review, and act on applications for the establishment of a cyber charter school. 24 P.S. § 17-1741-A(a)(1). A cyber charter school applicant must submit its application to the Department by October 1 of the school year preceding the school year in which the applicant proposes to commence operation. 24 P.S. § 17-1745-A(d). After submission of an application, the Department is required to hold at least one public hearing and grant or deny the application within 120 days of its receipt. 24 P.S. § 17-1745-A(e).

The Advance Cyber Charter School, renamed Reach Cyber Charter School (Reach), submitted an application on September 23, 2015, to establish a cyber charter school (Application). After review of the Application, and a public hearing, the Department denied Reach's Application by written decision issued January 21, 2016. Pursuant to section 1745-A(g) of the CSL, 24 P.S. § 17-1745-A(g), Reach revised and resubmitted its application (Revised Application) to the Department on February 26, 2016. Within 60 days of receipt of the Revised Application, the Department must grant or deny the Revised Application.

Based on review of the Revised Application, the Department is granting Reach's Revised Application. Therefore, Reach is authorized to operate as a cyber charter school pursuant to a charter that shall be for a term of three (3) years beginning July 1, 2016, and ending June 30, 2019.

During its charter term, the Department will review, *inter alia*, Reach's curriculum, English as a Second Language (ESL) program, and finances. The Department expects the review to include the following: (1) required planned instruction in 22 Pa. Code §§ 4.21-4.23 and its alignment with academic standards in 22 Pa. Code § 4.12 for grades K-12; (2) an explanation of how the ESL curriculum corresponds to the English Language Arts curriculum; and, (3) budgets and financial statements with supporting documentation that evidence reasonable budget estimates and actual financial activity.



Pedro A. Rivera
Secretary of Education

21 April 2016
Date Mailed

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
CHARTER
to operate a public school known as
Reach Cyber Charter School

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Pennsylvania Department of Education under the Public School Code of 1949, as amended, and specifically under 24 P.S. § 17-1745-A, the Board of Trustees of **Reach Cyber Charter School** is hereby granted a Charter to operate a public cyber charter school for the period commencing on **July 1, 2016**, and ending on **June 30, 2019**. The grant of this Charter was approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education on **April 21, 2016**.

It is specifically understood and agreed between the signatories hereto that:

- 1) the Board of Trustees shall operate the cyber charter school in accordance with the provisions of 24 P.S. §§ 17-1741-A – 17-1751-A, any amendments thereto enacted during the term of this Charter and any regulations or standards applicable to cyber charter schools;
- 2) pursuant to 24 P.S. § 17-1742-A(3), the Pennsylvania Department of Education has ongoing access to Reach's facility, and to all records, instructional materials, and student and staff records; therefore, Reach shall promptly comply with all requests from the Pennsylvania Department of Education for documents and information;
- 3) the granting of this Charter is specifically contingent upon operation of the cyber charter school in strict adherence to the terms of the Revised Application, submitted by the Board of Trustees on **February 26, 2016**, and approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Said Revised Application is attached hereto as Appendix A and is incorporated by reference as if fully set forth;
- 4) this Charter and the Appendix hereto constitute a legally binding agreement for the term set forth above and the terms of said agreement cannot be changed absent a written amendment to this Charter;
- 5) this Charter may be renewed for additional periods of five year durations and upon any such renewal, a new charter shall be executed by the parties; and
- 6) this Charter can only be terminated in accordance with the provisions of applicable law.

WHEREFORE, the undersigned, intending to be legally bound hereby set their hands this 21st day of April, 2016.

ATTEST:

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ATTEST:

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Pedro A. Rivera, Secretary of Education

Reach Cyber Charter School (Reach) Principal

Company Summary

Connections Education is a leading provider of high-quality, highly accountable virtual education solutions for students in grades K–12. Since 2001, the company's [Connections Academy](#) has delivered individualized learning to students through virtual public schools. In the 2014-15 school year, Connections Academy supported 29 virtual public schools in 25 states – serving more than 60,000 students. Connections Education delivers blended (online and on-site) learning in select states via [Nexus Academy](#) schools, while students worldwide seeking a private online school can attend [International Connections Academy](#). The [Connections Learning by Pearson](#) division meets the needs of schools, school districts, and other institutions looking to develop and enhance their online learning programs. Connections Learning by Pearson delivers a full range of targeted digital learning solutions to the K–12 education community including online courses, a program for homebound students, a digital learning platform, and private and public online schools. Connections Education is based in Baltimore, Maryland and was named a 2014 “Top Workplace” by the *Baltimore Sun* and a 2013 “Best Place to Work” by *Baltimore* magazine. Regularly [recognized](#) for its outstanding curriculum and leadership, Connections Education is committed to expanding quality education through technology, and helping students achieve both academic and personal success. Connections Education is part of the global education company, [Pearson](#).

School Summary

Reach Cyber Charter School is a full-time statewide virtual public charter school for grades K-9. Along with the traditional calendar option, the school offers an accelerated option for high school students and will offer a year round option to all students starting in 2017. Reach gives students the flexibility to learn at home while helping each student maximize his or her potential and meet the highest performance standards through a uniquely individualized learning program, flexible pacing, and 21st Century Learning including STEM opportunities.

Position and Responsibilities

Working from the office in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, the Principal will manage teachers as they use the phone and Internet to consult regularly with learning coaches and students, ensuring that each child successfully completes his/her instructional program. The Principal is responsible for the overall school operation working with parents, students, support staff and certified teachers who “virtually” facilitate a home-based student instructional program.

Other key responsibilities include the following:

- Manage the implementation of the proven Connections Academy curriculum and school operation protocols.
- Ensure that teachers exhibit and maintain a high level of professionalism, instructional support and customer service.
- Ensure the academic success of individual students by utilizing all levels of academic support available and by maintaining a high level of communication with parents to deliver program information and address individual student needs.
- Manage relationships with the Department of Education, and stay current on the state's policies, procedures and legislation, including specific special education procedures, etc.
- Meet regularly with the Reach Cyber Charter Board of Directors (the “Board”).
- Provide the Board with regular written and verbal reports and updates, as well as maintaining a high level of communication with other appropriate Connections Academy staff.
- Assist teaching staff with implementing any program changes and/or new software application introductions.
- Implement and manage professional learning communities within the school, to encourage teacher collaboration and high academic achievement.
- Exhibit high quality communication with all Connections Academy school staff, students and families.
- Oversee newsletter production, phone calls, regional meetings, and surveys.
- Handle any student problems escalated by parents and teachers.
- Oversee the contracting and/or delivery of special education services to ensure that the school is in compliance with state and federal laws.
- Oversee the implementation and coordination of state standardized testing process, and ensure high student participation rates.

- Provide local Board of Directors with support including posting of Agendas, Board communication and providing specialized reports or information as needed under the direction of the Manager of Regulatory Compliance.
- Provide assistance to families in need of additional support encourage a high level of participation.
- Participate in student recruitment efforts including in-state trips, presentations, Q & A sessions and responding to the press.
- Communicate with parent Community Coordinators to suggest social activities and relevant field trips for students.
- Devise and implement virtual methods of creating and maintaining a “school community”.
- Recruit, supervise and evaluate all school staff as required by the state.
- All other duties as assigned.

Requirements

- Pennsylvania certified with administrative certification
- Minimum of 5 years teaching experience and some administrative or management experience
- Online Teaching is preferred
- Advanced degree is preferred
- Experience/familiarity with STEM
- Excellent communication skills, both oral and written
- Customer focused approach
- Flexible
- Demonstrated ability to work well in fast paced environment
- Team player
- Technologically proficient (especially with Microsoft Office products)

www.connectionsacademy.com

PROPOSED REACH PRINCIPAL SELECTION PROCESS

- Goal is to have Principal begin work as soon as possible, but to take the time to find the right candidate.
- Search Schedule and Process is approved by the Board
 - Date for initial posting – ASAP after April Board approval
 - Target deadline for accepting applications - ASAP after April Board approval
 - Target date to bring finalists to Board meeting – early June
- School Leadership Team (SLT) member works with Talent Acquisition Team to post position.
- SLT member screens all resumes in Ultipro and determines who to move forward for a Hirevue interview. (Mark it with “digital interview requested”). HR will set up Hirevue screens.
- SLT member(s) reviews all Hirevue submissions and rates the candidates.
- References checks (minimum two) are completed for candidates who are being considered for next steps. E-skills scores are also considered.
- Candidates who do well in Hirevue will be invited to Livevue synchronous, online screening with CE HR and SLT member(s).
- Livevue committee determines which candidates to move forward to in person interviews in Pennsylvania.
- SLT member(s) will conduct in state, in person interviews. This interview may include a project on analyzing student data. (This may include board designee.)
- Candidate pool is narrowed for presentation of principal candidates to appropriate CE corporate staff for interview or via Live Lesson .
 - Interview will include a project presented by the candidate to analyze and evaluate state test scores for a school and to present a plan on how they would use the data to drive instructional decisions.
 - Interviewing committee should include:
 - Must include: Peter Robertson (Senior VP of Schools) and Missy Nelson
 - Anne Liles (Director of Talent HR) or Sarah Savage (VP of HR)
- Finalists are identified
- Board designees/Board interview finalist(s)
- Board designees/Board select individual and approves offer range
- SLT member finalizes hiring process with Human Resources including salary negotiation and background check.

- Board approves hiring of new principal

Live Lesson Interview Project –

To begin the interview, we would like you to provide us with a presentation. We will have a computer and projector available to you if you choose to use them. The presentation should be approximately 15-20 minutes in length. For your presentation, we'd like you to include the following:

- After your first few rounds of interviews, what is exciting you the most about this position and our company?
- Since Reach Cyber Charter School does not yet have student data available, we have provided you a link to view data from one of our current schools. This is typical student data from most of our schools. Following is a link to test scores from the prior school year. Please review this data and provide us with an overview of one particular area that you think needs improvement. [Insert link to scores]
- Present to us a plan for how you believe the school could successfully improve this area.
- Let us know what type of vision you would set for the school in order to support this improvement plan.
- Explain how you would support your teachers in achieving that vision.

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