Leadership Preparatory Academy

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LPA Response to:

**Governing Board Meeting Observation Form** Date of Observation: 23 February 2017 Observer: K. Peterson

The Governance Board of LPA respectfully provides the following response to the Mandatory Feedback and to the Optional Recommendations.

# Mandatory Feedback:

## MEETING AGENDAS:

The administrative assistant has begun posting agendas to the school’s official website for historic meetings that may not already have been posted. Updates to the website should be completed by 20 June 2017.

## MEETING MINUTES:

The administrative assistant has begun posting minutes to the school’s official website for historic meetings that may not already have been posted. Updates to the website should be completed by 20 June 2017.

## ACTION SUMMARY:

In addition to posting the meeting minutes, the Board Secretary and the administrative assistant will coordinate their efforts to insure that a *summary of the action* from the recent meeting (or a draft of the minutes) is posted to the official school website in a timely manner. We are exploring formatting methods for an “Action Summary”, the distribution of which would precede the posting of minutes of meetings.

## PUBLIC COMMENT:

We have revised our Public Comment Application sheet to include the “discretionary statement” which will refer to the requirement that names of students, other parents (or guardians), staff, or other individuals associated with the school will NOT be included in any remarks. Further, public comment will be under a time limitation of three minutes per speaker. Of course, all speakers are subject to the Governance Board’s Civility Policy.

# Optional Recommendations:

## FINANCIAL REPORTS:

We have discussed revising the Financial Statements with the CFO and their staff. Although the monthly collection of Financial Statements is comprehensive, including Summary Income Statements, Profit and Loss (Budget vs. Actuals - YTD by the month), Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss YTD Comparison, the SCSC Comprehensive Performance Framework (*used to measure our financial performance in comparison to standards recommended by the state of* ***Georgia Charter School Commission***) and finally YTD Expense Ratios (*as compared against the* ***NCSA Best Practice Model*** *and reported separately*). We will review these various documents to see where we may be able to make improvements in readability and comprehensiveness without diminishing the quantity and quality of the financial analysis. These documents are

included in the Governance Board Informational Packets (along with reports from the CEO, CAO, CLO, and other documentation), typically sent to each Board member in advance of the Board meeting, or in some instances, delivered to the Board Member ahead of the start of the meeting. I have included samples from the Board Information Packets for your review.

## GOVERNING BOARD DECISION MAKING AUTHORITY and ACADEMIC REPORTING:

Consistent with our mission and vision and with our Strategic Goals, reprinted on each meeting agenda, typically significant portions of our Board meetings are focused on global (gross) student academic progress, understanding that increasing successful student performance is the keystone of our operations. However, as we move through Strategic Goal achievement at the Board Meeting, we sometimes must focus on foundational operational issues, and the revision of operational policy, to insure the adequate and necessary support for the primary mission as stated. Accordingly, discussions sometimes center on the operational aspects. We do recognize the need for communication among, and to, the Board Members, sufficient disaggregated student performance data in an effort to insure early detection of trends or target achievement indicators. We are anxiously anticipating the authorization from the DeKalb District to open portals at the beginning of the semester in order for us to establish benchmark data at the outset of the school year, instead of mid semester (or later). Since LPA will open school with students returning in late July, our CLO is focused on earlier, and more frequent, periodic assessments in order to target and tailor individualized learning. More comprehensive and detailed academic reporting is delivered to the Board by the CLO twice per semester. Based on recommendations from the CAO, any request for reallocation or augmentation of resources follows the periodic re- evaluation of academic programming. We do, however, also recognize a need for a more frequent, periodic review of our charter contract goals. Beginning with our June 2017 Academic Year Review, we will incorporate our charter goal review in our academic assessment which will then be reported to our Board at the summer Governance Board Retreat.

## GOVERNANCE BOARD DISCUSSION and COMMUNICATION:

In 2014, after conferencing with external consultants as a part of our continuous improvement process, we determined the need for Board Informational Packets in order to provide more comprehensive information to Governance Board Members. Accordingly, we routinely developed such packets that are delivered to Board Members in advance of the Board Meetings. Doing so has greatly improved the level of informed decision making and had served to foster greater communication among Board Members that occurs outside of formal Board meetings and training sessions. As a result, there is less updating and review and more efficient decision making at the Board level. Board packets include the Agenda (Draft), Board Meeting Minutes (Draft,) reports from the CEO, CLO, CAO, CFO (sometimes termed the Consolidated Chief’s Reports), various exhibits and documents, communications from the District and State, documents or recommendations from the CPA, Committee Meetings or Reports, Human Resource Reports, CCRPI Reports, Updates on SBOE rules and OCGA related to Charter Schools, etc.

We always appreciate feedback and critical review because such discourse always serves to improve our performance and supports our mission and vision. We recognize that continuous school improvement is essential to our growth and strong posture, with that strong posture supported by a vibrant and forward looking Governance Board. Our vigorous engagement and student success driven focus can only serve to give greater academic exposure to the students of DeKalb when we openly embrace any and every occasion and opportunity for growth. Thank you for your input and critical assessment.

Lonnie D . Hall

Lonnie D. Hall, CEO and Founder Leadership Preparatory Academy