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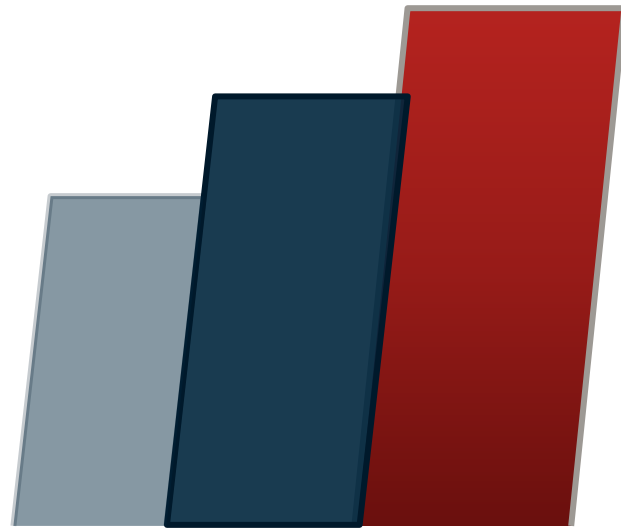
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# National Board of Trustees Growth & Development Summit Meeting Minutes July 28-29, 2024

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National Board of Trustees  
Growth & Development Summit Meeting Minutes  
July 28-29, 2024

**Call to Order**

Board Chair, Devin Alexander called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM ET.

**Roll Call & Determination of Quorum**

Secretary, Andrea Sutherland conducted the roll call and a quorum was established.

**Present:** Devin Alexander, Breezy Gutierrez, Andrea Sutherland, Athena Frank, Layan Ahmed, Victoria Pinarreta, Amy McClure, Brenda Menahan, Lisa Parker, Terry Carrera

**Absent:** Sonya Russell

**Ex-Officio:** Dr. Steven Mitchell, Executive Director/CEO; Paxton Cavin

**Guests:** Jonathan Smith, Kristina Kerns, LaQuanda Paschal, Michele Gordon, Patrick Schultz, Ric Cowles, Dr. Shelia Morris, Kelly Munro, CJ Cavin

**Welcome**

Chair, Devin welcomed the Board and guests to the 2024 Growth & Development Summit (GDS).

**Approval of Agenda**



Chair, Devin stated that the timing of the agenda will be flexible during GDS, and we will continue to the next session, if we end a session early. Andrea Sutherland notated a few updates needed to the agenda. These updates include correcting the spelling of Victoria's last name and adding the approval of the Alumni bylaws to the *Reconvene Regular Board Meeting* on Monday, July 29<sup>th</sup>. Lisa Parker moved to approve the agenda with modifications. Breezy Gutierrez seconded the motion. Chair, Devin called for a no objection vote to approve the agenda, with modifications. The agenda was approved with modifications.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Chair, Devin shared that there were several outstanding meeting minutes that needed to be approved by the Board due to a lapse in Secretary during the 2023-2024 membership year. These minutes were shared with the Board on July 28th. To allow time for review, Chair, Devin asked for a motion to move the approval of minutes to July 29<sup>th</sup> at 9:05 AM ET. Lisa Parker made the motion to table the approval of minutes until July 29<sup>th</sup> at 9:05 AM ET. Breezy Gutierrez seconded the motion. Chair, Devin called for a no objection vote to table the approval of minutes. The minutes were tabled.

## **2024-2025 Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule**

Chair, Devin stated that based on availability, Board of Trustees (BOT) meetings will be held at 6 PM ET on the second Tuesday of every other month, starting in September. Terry Carrera moved to approve the BOT meeting series. Amy McClure seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Chair, Devin noted this will be added to the Board calendar, along with all committee meetings to allow board members to attend additional committee meetings as desired.

## **Committee Charges**

Chair, Devin shared committee charged during the Committee Chairs meeting previously. Our goal as a Board is to improve wherever possible.

## **Stakeholder Group Reports**

### Classroom Educators Advisory Council

Chair, Devin introduced Kelly Munro, the CEAC Chair for her presentation. Kelly shared that she was elected to serve as Chair for another year, while training John Dawson, the 100s Chair from Indiana to take over. Amy McClure was elected as Secretary of CEAC.

Kelly shared that there was one recommendation that did have contention amongst the advisory group. Recommendation #331 was a recommendation to change from Rocket League to Fortnite for eSports. It was discussed that the contention was that Fortnite is a shooting game and some states would not allow this event, feedback from students shows support of this change.

Kelly shared that one great recommendation was to only require paper forms to be submitted for competitive events that did not have a pre-submit.

Kelly shared that the GDS timing is difficult for CEAC due to the August 15<sup>th</sup> release date and when authors are paid. It doesn't allow much time to make changes to events based on the current year's recommendation approvals and CEAC is reviewing some events for the first time after authors' have already received their stipend. CEAC would like to see GDS being held in June. Kelly shared that due to issues with authorship, there are three events that still need to be written or are missing support materials. CEAC will continue to work on this after GDS. There was discussion around the authorship contract deadlines, when authors are paid and what happens if the tests are delivered and reviewed for the first time after the stipend has already been paid. Shelia Morris shared that authors are paid on June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year and that the deadline to receive events was March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, this year. First reviews should be completed, and a second deadline should be provided to the authors. It was discussed that the deadline for tests should be in December or January to allow CEAC more time to provide feedback to authors. Athena Frank suggested Kelly Munro review the CEAC Handbook, as there are deadlines listed in this handbook that could aid in this process.

#### State Association Advisory Council

Chair, Devin introduced Lisa Parker, the SAAC representative for her presentation. Lisa shared that SAAC met virtually on July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, to review recommendations. SAAC arrived on July 24<sup>th</sup> for GDS with fourteen states represented in person and two represented virtually. During their sessions, the SAAC handbook was reviewed for changes and a recommendation was made to add a calendar of events and an addendum with resources. This will be reviewed further during their September virtual meeting. A roundtable discussion was held discussing best practices and resources that were shared via Google Drive amongst SAAC.

Lisa shared that SAAC had two presentations. The first was by Patrick Schultz and Kristina Kerns discussing marketing and membership resources coming from National BPA to support the state associations. The second presentation was by Ben O'Grady from the Mastery Coding and United States Academic Esports League (USAEL) on how to present Esports on a state level. Three states plan to host these events at the state level for the 2024-2025 membership year.

Lisa shared that SAAC continued their discussion around NLC Strategies and Solutions. Per Policies and Procedures Summer Meeting, Section IV SAAC of the Policies and Procedures Manual which states, "*Written recommendations shall be presented, in writing, to the Board of Trustees at the Summer Board Meeting.*", Lisa shared the below recommendations on behalf of their local advisors.

- QR Codes are still present on name badges for some advisors: It is recommended that only membership numbers are included.

- Torch Awards: There are concerns about the review process, overall handbook and Ambassador Awards' recognition. It was recommended to provide a stipend for resume review, for the Torch Handbook to be reviewed by the Programs Committee and for a greater recognition be evaluated for Ambassador recipients.
- Competitive Events: Immediate action is needed, and it is recommended that a Competitive Events Committee be formed for review.
- Executive Officer Caucus: This is a long and lengthy process. It was recommended that the schedule be re-aligned and that state associations see candidates as soon as they are ready for the next session so that it isn't so late in the evening for our members.
- Executive Officer Election Procedures: All required travel dates were not provided for the 2024-2025 officer term in the *Executive Officer Candidate Guide*. Additionally, this year we saw three officers no longer a part of the team, prior to the June Officer Training. It was recommended that all required travel dates are included in this handbook, and that the Policies and Procedures committee develop a policy for replacing an officer if they leave or are removed from the team prior to training.
- *Ready to Launch* workshop: This was a great workshop session presented by Scott Mathie! It is recommended that this event be promoted earlier in the year so that it could be used as a State Officer networking opportunity with Executive Officer candidates also in attendance.
- National Business Panel: This was an excellent event! The engagement was great to see, and it is recommended that this event continue in the future.
- Opening Session: This was an improvement on the 2023 NLC Opening Session and not having a keynote speaker was well received. It was recommended that the Executive Officers have more input on how this session is hosted and for the script to be updated.
- NLC Responsibilities: SAAC members were happy to assist in a defined way at NLC. It is recommended that this continues.
- National Showcase: This event was great for all attendees.
- Awards Session: This session was tough due to the facilities. It is recommended that members stay in the same room, so they are not disconnected during the session. It is understood that this is not always possible.
- Middle Level Growth: As the Middle Level continues to grow, the awards session length continues to expand. It is recommended that the Middle Level be given their own awards session or be added to the Post-secondary awards session.
- Judge Recruitment: There was a lack of judges, leading to some events only having one judge and there were knowledge gaps for Admins, Proctors and Graders. It is recommended that additional training be provided virtually prior to NLC.
- 2027 NLC Location: We do not have judges in Colorado and the overflow housing will be difficult for the event. It is recommended that the contract be reviewed, and we remain

in the same city, but at a different location, as the current NLC location would be detrimental to our organization.

Lisa shared that there were additional presentations by the Executive Council, DLG and Certiport. Additionally, she shared that SAAC members were able to help CEAC during GDS. SAAC is scheduled to meet on the first Tuesday of every month at 11 AM ET starting in September. Lastly, SAAC received a tour of the 2025 NLC overflow sites.

There was discussion on how to improve judging which included planning to have an overflow of judges which are held in a room and pulled into sessions as needed. These standby judges could be recommended by State Advisors based on advisors and chaperones who will be in attendance at NLC. It was also recommended that save the dates are sent to prior judges. To recruit new judges, recruitment efforts should be made to the Chamber of Commerce, religious groups, local colleges, VFWs, American Legions and Lions Clubs as they are likely to support community outreach. Additionally, it was asked if continuing education credits could be given to volunteers, or if judges could serve for a morning and afternoon session as they have already taken the day off from work. Lastly, it was asked if a list of advisors who do not complete their assignments is provided to the State Advisor, as they could follow up further.

## **Recess**

The meeting recessed at 10:22 AM ET on Sunday, July 28<sup>th</sup> and continued at 10:31 AM ET.

## **National Center Update**

Steven Mitchell shared successes and challenges from this past year. This year BPA presented scholarships totaling \$70,000 and BPA welcomed Kristina Kerns to staff in January to continue to support our fundraising efforts. We completed FY24 with a balanced budget. NLC 2024 posed financial challenges due to the union fees and alternative venue sites being outside our budget, but NLC 2025 will allow general sessions to be in one location. A new HR payroll system was implemented in 2023, allowing staff to have more autonomy on entering their information this past year. We have migrated to Chase bank to pay bills digitally and save time spent on accounts payable. The Group 990 has been posing challenges as states are not providing input timely causing past due notifications. Lastly, the BPA Mall has seen an increase in sales and are more offering more products with the help of a new vendor.

The 2023-2024 membership year saw the highest membership numbers totaling 51,775 members. This success is contributed to the affiliate group membership and chapter minimums. Additional international members joined this year including members from South Korea, China and Canada. Additionally, a new dress code policy was implemented that is gender neutral and fluid.

For member experiences, NLC 2024 was the second highest attended conference with 6,526 attendees. A new Opening Session engagement activity and State Officer Networking event were introduced during NLC and were well received. The 2023 Student Leadership Summit was the first annual conference held in Oklahoma City with 35 attendees. The 2024-2025 Membership Theme of “Capture the Moment” was announced at the Awards Session. There was a 27% increase in Torch Awards and 24% increase in BPA Cares Awards this year. Lastly, our social media has gained 2,000 new followers since January of this year.

A WSAP committee was created to improve the overall process. This committee is made up of Shelia Morris, LaQuanda Paschal, Patrick Schultz, Kelly Munro, Renee Davidson and Barb Brown. This committee met from October 2023 through May 2024. There is also a Competitive Events Taskforce to tie competitive events back to curriculum and ensure events are meeting industry standards. This taskforce is made up of Shelia Morris, LaQuanda Paschal, Patrick Schultz, Steven Mitchell, Jeannette Barretto, Diana Weber, Ty Kenworth and Angela Campbell. They began meeting in January of 2024 and have met twice a month since then. Additionally, an NLC judge text message notification system was implemented this year. Lastly, AI was used to generate objective test questions for over twenty-three competitions this year and reduced authorship costs by \$12,500.

## **Recess**

The meeting recessed at 1:11 PM ET on Sunday, July 28<sup>th</sup> and continued at 2:20 M ET. CJ Cavin joined as a new guest for this session.

## **FY25 Budget Update**

Treasurer, Athena Frank shared that the original budget reflected a net surplus of \$2,929. Due to the use of AI, \$10,000 was reduced from the Education. Contributions/Special Events was reduced by \$15,000 to account for the projected cost of the 2024 Student Leadership Summit. Offering a virtual option for the 2024 SLS was discussed to offset the projected loss. Lastly, it was noted that the Leadership Development Specialist contract was moved from General & Admin to National Officer Training.

## **Recess**

The meeting recessed at 3:03 PM ET on Sunday, July 28<sup>th</sup> for committee meetings and continued at 9:06 AM ET on Monday, July 29<sup>th</sup>.

## **Board of Trustees Member Updates**

Secretary, Andrea Sutherland moved to make a friendly amendment to the roll call previously taken to mark Sonya Russell as absence from GDS. Chair, Devin called for a no objection vote. There were no objections and Sonya Russell was marked absent.

Chair, Devin presented Sabrina Taylor’s letter of resignation to the Board. Lisa Parker moved to accept the resignation. Amy McClure seconded the motion. Chair, Devin called for a no objection vote. There were no objections and Sabrina’s resignation was accepted.

Secretary, Andrea Sutherland stated that with her absence at GDS, Sonya Russell had now missed two in person Board of Trustees meetings. Amy McClure moved to declare Sonya Russell’s position on the Board vacant. Victoria Pinarreta seconded the motion. Chair, Devin called for a no objection vote. There were no objections and Sonya’s position was declared vacant.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Chair, Devin introduced the approval of Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes from meetings held on January 8, February 20, March 11, April 8, May 14, and May 29. Andrea Sutherland moved to approve all minutes as presented. Athena Frank stated there were formatting issues on the minutes. Andrea Sutherland moved to amend her motion to approve all minutes, with reformatting and branding updated made by the National Staff. Victoria Pinarreta seconded the motion. Chair, Devin called for a no objection vote to approve all minutes as corrected. There were no objections minutes from January 8, February 20, March 11, April 8, May 14, and May 29 were approved as corrected.

### **FY25 Budget Update**

Treasurer, Athena Frank shared an increase of \$2,000 from a new virtual events’ income. It was discussed to allocate \$7,500 for the Strategic and Long-Range Planning committee for vendor costs.

The committee will meet on the first Friday of every other month at 5:30 PM ET beginning in September. All financial statements will be provided to the whole board via Board Effect. Lastly, Victoria Pinarreta joined the Finance Committee.

### **Executive Officer Program of Work Update**

Secondary President, Layan Ahmed and Post-secondary President, Victoria Pinarreta presented their Program of Work which focused on growing in six goal areas. These areas include membership, enthusiasm, engagement, leadership, recognition and capital. This will be accomplished by recommending a new BPA Cares award for the Emerging Chapter of the Year, monthly highlights for their “Humans of BPA” campaign, refresh the Student Certification Series, promoting running for office, hosting an alumni spotlight, discussing additional Ambassador Torch Awards recognition and hosting their annual scholarship.

### **Roundtable Discussion**

#### **Office Relocation**



Chair, Devin introduced the Office Relocation for discussion amongst the Board. Steven Mitchell made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss items that were not on the agenda. Paxton Cavin seconded the motion. Chair, Devin called for a vote to enter Executive Session. The vote failed with seven in opposition and three abstaining.

Chair, Devin stated our national center lease was set to lapse on October 31<sup>st</sup> and BPA needs to provide 90-days notice to renew and not renew the lease. There is a proposed lease agreement for office space in the ACTE building in Washington D.C., but an amendment to Article X Administrative Operations, Section 1, Subsection National Center of the Code of Regulations, which reads “The National Center shall be located in Franklin County, Ohio, at a place selected by the Board of Trustees.”, was previously rejected by Corporate. This amendment was rejected as Corporate wanted to retain the authority over the national center location.

A relocation is needed due to the current national center not being ADA compliant. The option to maintain the same address, but relocate to the first floor suite was discussed. Lisa Parker moved to for the national center to remain at the current address, moving to the first floor with a two-year lease agreement including the landlord making renovations. Athena Frank seconded the motion. There was discussion on the motion that the unit may no longer be available and the landlord would need to be contacted. It was also stated that the move to Washington D.C. posed a significant benefit to the organization in terms of advocacy and Corporate was not against the move, but the language used in the proposed amendment and that no financials were provided. It was stated that it was not in the purview of Corporate to review the finances, but as a Board, we have a fiduciary obligation to review the financials.

Lisa Parker removed her motion to remain at the current address, moving to the first floor with a two-year lease agreement including the landlord making renovations. Steven shared the estimated financial totals for the current national center lease and equipment rental fees, which were comparable to the ACTE lease estimate. Alternative options, such as maintaining a PO Box in Franklin County, digitizing and destroying physical records and hosting a special Corporate meeting to inform the Corporate body of the relocation were discussed.

As there is not a large financial surplus for FY25, the financial impact of moving was discussed. It was stated that the ACTE office space may no longer be available, and landlords for both locations would need to be contacted. Amy McClure moved to table the discussion until later in the afternoon. Breezy Gutierrez seconded the motion. Chair, Devin called for a no objection vote to table the discussion of the office relocation. The discussion was tabled.

### Ohio Association Concerns

Chair, Devin introduced the discussion of a prior meeting with the Ohio Association with concerns around the rising costs of membership and conference participation, concerns over the WSAP alignment with curriculum and what the students return on their investment is. It was determined a response was not provided to Ohio.

Though costs for NLC remain the same, there was a small conference gift, no special event and the general sessions were in multiple locations impacting the overall member experience. For NLC 2025, a special event has been budgeted and a four-night minimum isn't required. It was determined that Devin would contact the Ohio association to schedule a meeting to address their concerns.

## **Recess**

The meeting recessed at 11:13 AM ET on Monday, July 29<sup>th</sup> and continued at 11:27 AM ET.

## **Roundtable Discussion (Continued)**

### Corporate Proposed Action Plan

Chair, Devin introduced the proposed action plan for discussion and confirmed this would be adopted for the 2025-2026 membership year. The recommendations were discussed with key actions or edits included below.

- Recommendation #1 – Competitive Event Test Authors: The dates were evaluated and updated as follows:
  - #1 – Update October 15 to be September 15.
  - #2 – Update January 15 to be December 1 and update December 15 to be November 1.
  - #3 – Update January 15 to be December 1.
  - #4 – Update February 1 to be December 15 and update March 15 to be January 31.
- Recommendation #2 – Competitive Event Document Management – no edits.
- Recommendation #3 - Competitive Event Materials – no edits.
- Recommendation #4 – Pilot Events – It was discussed that we should strike language related to virtual events, as these are only offered at the national level and specify non-virtual events in two instances. Additionally, the example was struck, as this would be effective for pilot events approved at the 2025 GDS.
- Recommendation #5 – Additional Support for CEAC: March 15 was updated to January 31. Additionally, it was discussed that if an advisor moves to another state and their new home state is willing to sponsor their attendance at GDS, their prior membership State Advisor should be notified as they may want to sponsor their attendance. This will be managed by staff.
- Recommendation #6 – National Leadership Conference: It was discussed that this data should be released annually, so “2024” in #1 should be struck. Additionally, it was determined this

data should be shared more broadly, so “state advisors no later than July 1, 2024” was struck and replaced with “members of the Corporate Code, Board of Trustees, and State Association Advisory Council prior to the annual Growth & Development summit. In #2, “2024 GDS” was struck and replaced with “annual Growth & Development Summit”.

- Recommendation #7 – National Executive Council Candidates: This was referred to the Programs & Policies and Procedures committee.
- Recommendation #8 – National Executive Council Vacancy: This was referred to the Programs & Policies and Procedures committee.
- Recommendation #9 – Member Cost-Benefit Analysis: It was discussed that this is completed each year with our audit. It is generally accepted for a non-profit that the amount allocated for programs be between 75-85% and BPA is consistently at 85%. This should be posted on the financial transparency page of the website.
- Recommendation #10 – National Staff Evaluation: This was referred to the Personnel Committee.
- Recommendation #11 – New Strategic Plan: This was referred to the Strategic & Long-Range Planning Committee.

Victoria Pinarreta moved to accept the proposed action plan with modifications. Terry Carrera seconded the motion. Chair, Devin called for a no objection vote to approve the proposed action plan with modifications. The proposed action plan was approved with modifications and a response will be provided to the Corporate Body prior to their September 1, 2024 requested response date.

## **Recess**

The meeting recessed at 1:03 PM ET on Monday, July 29<sup>th</sup> and continued at 2:04 PM ET.

## **National Center Update**

Steven Mitchell introduced items related to staffing issues and allowed staff to exit, if they desired. It was discussed that we had a scheduled Executive Session later in the agenda when these matters could be addressed. Steven stated he wanted to begin an Executive Session earlier in the day to discuss this matter and will now share it openly. He alleged that SAAC poses a legal issue for our organization as they have created a hostile work environment where the staff no longer feels safe or respected. He asked for the immediate abolition of SAAC and shared written examples of his allegations.

## **Recess**

Andrea Sutherland asked to recess until a lawyer could be consulted. Athena Frank moved to recess to the call of the Chair. Amy McClure seconded the motion. Chair, Devin called for a no objection vote to recess. There were no objections and the meeting was recessed at 2:33 PM ET on July 29<sup>th</sup>. The meeting reconvened at 3:24 PM ET on July 29<sup>th</sup>.

## Adjournment

Andrea Sutherland moved to adjourn the meeting. Athena Frank seconded the motion. Chair, Devin called for a no objection vote to adjourn. There were no objections and the meeting was adjourned at 3:25 PM ET on July 29<sup>th</sup>.