

MINUTES OF THE
UTAH STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Thursday, November 9, 2023

USBE Board Rooms

250 East 500 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84111

www.youtube.com/utahscsb

Members Present:

Chair Bryan Bowles

Vice Chair Cynthia Phillips

Member Krystle Bassett

Member Stephanie Speicher

Member Erik Olson

Member Rabecca Cisneros

Member Michelle Smith

Staff Present:

Paul Kremer

Marie Steffensen

Lisa Cooper

Smriti Dhakal

Andrew Vardas-Doane

Brendan McGinn

Amber Hellstrom

Others Present:

AAG Kevin Olsen

USBE Liaison Joseph Kerry

(10:03 am) MEETING BEGINS

Public Comment

None

Member Thought -Stephanie Speicher

Member Speicher spoke on the experiences she had as an Outward-Bound instructor. She showed notebooks she kept while on expeditions in the woods. She read a poem called Each Second We Live.

Board Chair Report

Chair Bowles welcomes Executive director Dr. Paul Kremer. He also recognized Wasatch Waldorf who recently became a member of the Alliance of Public Waldorf Education.

Executive Director Report

Executive Director Dr. Paul Kremer spoke to the personal nature of today's report. He stated he has received a warm welcome to Utah, and has enjoyed getting to know the team. He spoke about relationships he has begun to build, office logistics, and ideas he has for the future. Highlights were shared from a few schools.

Consent Calendar

Member Smith: "I motion to adopt the consent calendar"

Member Bassett: "I'll second that."

Motion passes unanimously.

Update on SCSB FY24 Budget

Executive Director Dr. Kremer explained that staffing has been in flux, so changes are natural for the current fiscal year. He also addressed the need to reflect current market adjustments, as well as sustainability for the future. He spoke to ensuring all were using common vocabulary when addressing the budget, and that working with USBE has been very helpful to make sure the SCSB is fiscally sound.

Member Smith: "I would like to move that we adopt the proposed budget recommendations."

Member Cisneros: "Second."

Motion passes unanimously.

Third Party Survey Update

Associate Executive Director Marie Steffensen shares the goals that the staff has been trying to address under the direction of the board when seeking a third-party survey to administer to stakeholders. She shares that staff believes they have found a solution with Pingboard that not only administers survey data but has a whole dashboard to interact with schools and meet individual needs. The board expresses appreciation for the idea of being a "people-first authorizer."

Board Retreat Update

Associate Executive Director Marie Steffensen shares the goals that the staff has been trying to address under the direction of the board when planning a board retreat. Staff would like to suggest a retreat be held on December 14, which is the typical board meeting day. Staff states that the retreat will be built around a “Hollywood game night” theme.

Rewording Update to Strategic Plan

Vice Chair Phillips describes the update as “the smallest thing ever and yet it could be large.” The update is that instead of saying “creative, articulation agreements”, it says “articulation agreements and other creative agreements.”

NACSA Conference Sharing

Chair Bowles explains that staff and board members who attended NACSA will be sharing things they learned and key takeaways from the conference. Staff member Dhakal shared about questions that we could ask finance teams about their practices that may uncover potential problems in advance. Staff member Steffensen shared how she was impressed about looking for the AND. We should measure academics AND _____. Enrichment matters. Board member Cisneros spoke about looking for boards who are hungry, humble, and smart, as well as thinking about the audience of your contract. Board member Bassett shared about having our values underscore all of the decisions we make. Vice Chair Phillips spoke about how qualitative data can support renewal decisions, because it contextualizes data. She also spoke about potential impacts SCOTUS decisions may have on charter school authorizing. Finally, Chair Bowles spoke about how we work with other people’s children and other people’s money—two things that are very important, so it makes sense that people sometimes get upset, and that keeping this in mind can be useful in helping us move forward. He also spoke about a school dashboard and the usefulness that could offer to schools and the community.

(12:05 pm) ADJOURN FOR LUNCH

(1:06 pm) RECONVENE

School Spotlight: Promontory School of Expeditionary Learning

Associate Executive Director Marie Steffensen gave a presentation about Promontory School of Expeditionary Learning, highlighting a recent expansion to the building, as well as how the school is able to work with the SCSB after the loss of their Executive Director in an accident.

Review of New School, Large Expansion and New Satellite Processes

Associate Executive Director Marie Steffensen was able to provide a short training and overview of the process for new school, large expansion and new satellite application processes. She addressed training applications have received, as well as timelines board members should expect between now and January’s board meeting.

Legislative Session Review

Vice Chair Phillips and Executive Director Van Tassel (UAPCS) were able to provide a review of the upcoming legislative session and speak to high level work they have been engaged in with key stakeholders. They addressed how the SCSB strategic plan aligns with legislative work, and expressed optimism about the upcoming session.

(2:16 pm) *Member Smith: "I'll motion to adjourn."*

PENDING