

MINUTES OF THE
UTAH STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Thursday, December 14, 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

Jenna Magnetti

Others Present:

AAG Kevin Olsen

Deputy Superintendent Angela Stallings

(10:04 am) MEETING BEGINS

Public Comment

None

Member Thought -Brian Bowles

Chair Bowles spoke about the significance of continuous improvement, drawing comparisons between educational goals and the achievements of Olympic swimmers like Charles Daniels and Michael Phelps.

Executive Director Report

Dr. Kramer and Marie Steffensen discussed their collaborative work, emphasizing the value of school visits, a new podcast project, and the development of performance measures for authorizing roles.

Strategic Plan Discussion:

Staff and board discussed the strategic plan, focusing on goals, continuous improvement, productive partnerships with charter schools through personal visits and exchanges of ideas. They highlighted their initiatives to develop customized performance measures, refine their authorizing and review structures, hire a strategic growth and innovation specialist, and adopt a book study to establish clear 90-day goals and priorities.

School Visits and Reports:

Staff visited various charter schools, including Itineris Early College High School, Early Light Academy, Hawthorne Academy, NorthStar Academy, Excel Academy, and Beehive Academy of Science and Technology. Each school demonstrated unique approaches to address students' needs and interests.

Consent Calendar

Member Cisneros: "I'd like to make a motion to remove item c, the continuation of waiver for Itineris Early College Highschool so it removes the conflict for me, and if I also could remove item f, start-up grant for American Principles Academy, please."

Member Smith: "I'll second that motion"

Motion Passes Unanimously

Member Olsen: "I move that we approve the remaining items on the consent calendar."

Member Smith: "I'll also second that motion"

Motion Passes Unanimously

Motion for Continued Waiver for Itineris:

Member Olsen: "I'll go ahead and move that the board provides a favorable recommendation of the continued waiver that Itineris intends to prepare to present to USBE from board rule as listed on the consent agenda."

Member Phillips: "I second that motion"

Member Cisneros abstained

Motion Passes unanimously

Motion for Startup Grant for American Principals Academy:

Member Cisneros: "I'd like to make a motion to approve the startup grant for American Principals Academy as outlined in the backup."

Member Bassett: "I'll second"

Member Olsen abstained

Motion Passes unanimously

Discussion on Charter School Expansion Policy

Discussion on Charter School Expansion Policies: Detailed deliberation on small school expansion policies, emphasizing the need for balance between flexibility and consistency. The board discussed updates to charter school expansion application processes to remove prescriptive language and give more flexibility to accommodate minor changes aligned to parent preferences or building configurations. This included shifting the small expansions definition from 50 students or fewer to between 50-100 students. They adopted an updated policy and procedure for small expansions to balance flexibility with clear standards.

Motion for Small Expansion Application Approval:

Member Smith: "I would like to adopt the proposed changes to the small expansion application."

Member Olsen: "Yes, I'll second that"

Motion Passes unanimously

Motion for Small Expansion Policy:

Member Smith: "I'd like to move that we adopt the updated small expansion policy."

Member Phillips: "I'll second that"

Motion Passes unanimously

Clarification requested by the board on criteria the board can consider during the approval process. Due for February board meeting

Motion for Small Expansion Procedure:

Member Smith: "I'd like to move that we adopt the proposed changes to the small expansion procedure with directive to staff to consider adjustments that would be necessary in light of a revised policy."

Member Bassett: "I'll second that"

Motion Passes unanimously

Roles and Responsibilities Clarification

Discussion clarifying the distinct roles and responsibilities between the Utah State Board of Education and the State Charter School Board. The boards aim to establish an MOU to delineate their roles and responsibilities to improve charter school monitoring and support.

(12:02 pm) RECESS FOR LUNCH

(1:05 pm) RECONVENE

(3:15pm) Member Smith: “I motion to adjourn the meeting”