

MINUTES OF THE
UTAH STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Thursday, March 21, 2024

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

Staff Present:

Paul Kremer

Marie Steffensen

Lisa Cooper

Smriti Dhakal

Andrew Vardas-Doane

Brendan McGinn

Amber Hellstrom

Jenna Magnetti

Amy Pace

Others Present:

AAG Kevin Olsen

(10:04 am) MEETING BEGINS

Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance

- Chair Bryan Bowles opened the meeting and welcomed everyone in attendance.
- Pledge of Allegiance led by Member Rabecca Cisneros.

Excused Absence

- Member Michelle Smith was excused due to family priorities.

Public Comment

Joylin Lincoln: Expressed gratitude to the board for their work in serving over 88,000 students across Utah, creating an environment where education thrives. Highlighted the importance of partnerships between charter schools and districts.

Member Thought -Member Kevin Olsen

Emphasized the importance of accountability and acting for the benefit of the organization and its stakeholders. Highlighted the diversity of the board and the importance of collaboration and effective communication. Encouraged board members to express their opinions and engage in robust discussions to achieve the board's mission, vision, and values.

Consent Calendar

Motion from Member Olsen, seconded by Member Speicher. Approved unanimously.

Executive Director Report

Team and Staff Updates

- **Clifton Strengths Assessment:**
 - Completed by the team to identify and incorporate strengths into their work over the next three years.
- **"Traction" Book Project:**
 - Team is completing an organizational checklist to identify areas for improvement based on the book "Traction" by Gino Wickman.

Supportive Authorizer Initiatives

- **Collaboration with Legislators and Organizations:**

- House Bill 301 and collaboration with USBE.
- **Potential Relocation of State Charter School Board Facilities:**
 - Currently in the research phase.
- **Comprehensive Review Visits:**
 - Led by Brendan McGinn.
 - Focused on a SWOT analysis framework.

Recent School Visits

- **American Academy of Innovation:**
 - Innovative counseling and guidance programs for serving special education students.
- **Spectrum Academy:**
 - Robust athletics program and focus on staffing for a low student-to-staff ratio.
- **Beehive Academy:**
 - Winner of the "Best of State" award.

ACTION ITEMS

Merger Process Language

- Dr. Paul Kremer provided an overview of the proposed merger process.
 - Suggested the process follow nonprofit merger laws.
 - Currently in the research and drafting phase.
- **Motion:** Member Erik Olson moved to approve, Member Michelle Smith seconded.
- **Motion Passes:** Unanimously.

Charter Agreement Language Update

- Dr. Kremer presented updates to the charter agreement language.
 - Goal: Simplify agreements, increase readability, and remove unnecessary references.
 - Handed over to the Authorization Committee for further review.

- **Motion:** Member Krystle Bassett moved to approve, Member Stephanie Speicher seconded.
- **Motion Passes:** Unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Integrating Technology into Staff Work

- **Presentation:** Amber Hellstrom
- Emphasized the importance of the Utah Charter Access Point (UCAP) application in improving data access and streamlining processes.
- Highlighted recent changes and improvements, including:
 - Enhanced public access to charter school information.
 - New features like the "Letter of Awareness" tool.
 - Collaboration with the Utah Education Network (UEN).

Impact of Artificial Intelligence in Education

- **Presentation:** Andrew Vardas-Doane
- Discussed the potential applications of AI in education, focusing on:
 - Supporting the creative process.
 - Improving efficiency and accuracy.
 - Enhancing decision-making processes.
 - Optimizing web and digital platforms.

ADJOURN FOR LUNCH

High-Level Budget Review

1. Finance Committee Review:

- The finance committee presented a high-level budget overview for the board's approval.
- The committee emphasized the importance of various funding programs, including startup grants, technical assistance, and professional development.

2. Budget Discussion:

- The board discussed five programs, including the consolidation of the "Startup Charter Fund Administration."

- The finance committee verified revenue amounts for five charter programs.
- Clarified the need to ensure budget approval aligns with USBE requirements.
- Board members emphasized their responsibility to ensure the organization stays within budget and within policy.

3. **Motion to Approve the High-Level Budget:**

- **Motion:** Member Bassett moved to approve the high-level budget in the general categories presented, Member Erik Olson seconded.
- **Motion Passes:** Unanimously.

Comprehensive Review Report

- **Presentation:** Brendan McGinn, Portfolio Specialist
- Comprehensive review process consists of five pillars:
 - Academic performance
 - Financial stewardship
 - Enrollment
 - Charter fidelity
 - Board governance performance
- Discussed the impact of HB301 on the review process and the need to revise charter agreements.

Additional Board Meeting Vote

Members voted to hold a Board meeting on May 30th 2024.

Motion made by Vice Chair Phillips, Seconded by Member Olsen.

ADJOURN

Motion to Adjourn made by Member Olsen