

MINUTES OF THE UTAH STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Thursday, November 14, 2024

10008 Creek Run Way, Sandy, UT 84070

www.youtube.com/utahscsb

Members Present:

- Chair Bryan Bowles
- Vice Chair Stephanie Speicher
- Member Krystle Bassett
- Member Rabecca Cisneros
- Member Clint Biesinger
- Member Cynthia Phillips
- Member Erik Olson

Staff Present:

- Dr. Paul Kremer
- Marie Steffensen
- Andrea Jones
- Amber Hellstrom
- Amy Pace
- Lisa Cooper
- Smriti Dhakal
- Brendan McGinn

Others Present:

- USBE Board Member Joseph Kerry

(9:03 am) MEETING BEGINS

Public Comment

None

Member Thought – Board Member Krystle Bassett

Board Member Krystle Bassett gave a personal testimony on resilience and how her son has displayed this in the years that have passed as he has grown. When she thinks of resilience, she sees his face. She ends quoting Arthur Ashe, "Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can."

Consent Calendar

Member Cisneros: "I motion to accept the consent calendar."

Member Olson: "I'll second that."

Motion passes unanimously.

Executive Director Report

Executive Director Dr. Paul Kremer spoke about growth in public charter schools, Board updates, IT analysis, and the 25 in 25 event with Governor Cox. He mentioned staff updates and the importance of school warnings as support, not penalties. Lisa Cooper will take on the role of preparing financial needs, and there is a need for an IT analysis regarding the UCAP website. Dr. Kremer also discussed the MOU finalization and improvements in documentation to Board Members.

UAPCS Incubator Program

Shannon Greer and Taylor Smith discussed the Incubator Program designed to prepare new directors. Taylor Smith introduced Thrive Point Academy, a hybrid school, and emphasized the importance of collaboration between charter schools and public schools. He shared his vision for the school and the benefits of being one of the youngest directors in the state. Shannon Greer closed out the discussion by highlighting the funding through the Daniel's grant and future opportunities for other individuals.

NACSA Learning Reflections

Members shared insights from NACSA, emphasizing the importance of networking and building connections. They highlighted the significance of having a strong accountability system for charter schools. Vice Chair Speicher shared insights on the positive impact of green initiatives in schools, which benefit health, moods, and cost savings. Staff members Amy Pace and Lisa Cooper emphasized the strength of community and the importance of relationships. Lisa Cooper also shared financial insights, highlighting that highly effective authorizers spend their money on legal and staff.

(11:32 am) BREAK

Review Board Bylaws

Dr. Kremer and Board Member Phillips discussed recent changes and the need for clarity in bylaws. Vice Chair Speicher will provide updates in the December meeting.

SCSB Accountability Framework Policy Updates

Dr. Kremer outlined the focus on academic, financial, and operational frameworks. Members discussed the timing of Board notifications for school accountability issues. Member Olson made a motion for the Board to adopt a policy that notices of concern under the accountability framework be presented first to an appropriate committee before the Board as a whole. Member Phillips added that they should also allow them to have an informal hearing as well.

Member Olson: "I would like to move to make a motion."

Member Phillips: "I'll second that."

Motion passes unanimously.

(11:55 am) ADJOURN FOR LUNCH

SCSB Accountability Framework New Forms and Procedures Presentation

Staff member Smriti presented on SCSB establishing the Operational Performance procedure and gave a quick overview. Staff member Lisa talked about two financial reports pertaining to the Financial Performance procedure. In January, new data will be added and updated in UCAS. Staff member Brendan shared the Academic Performance Framework Draft update and discussed changes to the pathways for the framework.

Transfer of Authorizer for Cambridge Academy

Dr. Kremer spoke on past discussions regarding Cambridge Academy, a pre-operational school. Mr. Lockhart shared his vision for the school and addressed concerns about enrollment and location. The Board discussed the transfer request, enrollment numbers, and location issues. Member Phillips moved to motion SCSB accept the request to change authorizer for Cambridge Academy from Utah State University to Utah State Charter School Board. Second Motion from Member Biesinger but with conditions on the mindfulness of allowing to open the school with their enrollment number and their financial situation with their land purchase. Associate Executive Director Steffensen shared if approved, places Cambridge in the cohort of any other schools approved in January and then would the spring making sure they get charter bilateral agreement which will make Cambridge eligible for starter funds and start their training and have regular check-ins and breaking ground by January 1st, 2026 and hiring and policies, and if items are not met SCSB will offer support. If they cannot open, then they can ask the Board for an extension but if not granted then they will be ineligible to open. Member Cisneros shared why she will be voting against the motion, stating she is not interested in, but they have great ideas, like any other school but does not see it feasible. Chair Bowles proceeded to ask Board members their vote on the motion of transferring authorizers for Cambridge Academy.

Member Cisneros: "No"

Member Biesinger: "Yes"

Member Phillips: "Yes"

Vice Chair Speicher: "No"

Member Olson: "No"

Member Bassett: "No"

Chair Bowles: "Yes"

Motion Fails

Preparing for New School Application Reviews

Marie Steffensen provided an overview of new school applications and the criteria for approval. She emphasized the importance of considering educational models, governance, financial viability, compliance, and community support.

(2:08 pm) Chair Bowles: "I'll motion to adjourn."