

Scholar Academy

Board of Directors Meeting

Date: March 27, 2025

Location: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85436752330?pwd=WDVpsRwS16P4J56mSXTElt4dJxxaRA.1>

In Attendance: Dusty Griffith, Johanna Leonelli, Caitlin Shumway, Traelle Gailey, Sandra Shepard

Others In Attendance: Jeff Hall, Jon McQueary, Nicole Jones, Alicia Ady, Ashley Tignor, Aaron Pratt, Platte Nielson, Liz Gaultier

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

At 5:01pm Dusty Griffith called the meeting to order.

PUBLIC COMMENT (limited to three minutes each)

- Literacy Curriculum: Into Reading
- 2025-2026 Fee Schedule and Fee Waiver Policy

This was the second comment period for the Literacy Curriculum: Into Reading, and the 2025-2026 Fee Schedule and Fee Waiver Policy. There was no public comment. Sandra Shepard asked how much of the literacy curriculum was going to take place online. She also asked about implementation methods for the new literacy curriculum.

Nicole Jones joined the meeting at 5:06pm

Jon McQueary joined the meeting at 5:08pm

Liz Gaultier introduced herself to the board as a board candidate. She has family at the school. She would like to be involved with the school. She is a realtor in the community. Aaron Pratt reported that Liz has volunteered in his classroom more than any other parent.

REPORTS

- Director's Report

- Gifted and Talented Report
 - Positive Behaviors Plan

Jeff Hall provided the director's report. He reported that there are a lot of exciting things that have come to a completion at the school. The Teton Science trip concluded last week. The students talked about all the experiences they had. The staff reported that this has been one of their favorite years going to the Tetons. Jeff also reported that hope week has been great. It has been great to see all the students making friends with each other. He also reported that the school has been working on the school play. He reported that this will be the last year the current teacher will be doing the play. They have an upcoming lunch where students can bring someone they want to lunch. This year the theme is "A minion reasons why we love our school". Enrollment is the highest this year that they have ever seen. He reported a few reasons why he believes the enrollment has been higher. Jeff

Hall also reported on the Positive Behaviors Plan. He discussed that they have had the counselor going into classes teaching courses about resilience, trauma, and mental health. They have also taught bullying prevention. He reported that the school held a health and safety fair that was a success. The school has also provided life skills training. They are also using and encouraging the use of the SafeUT app. They are going to start doing Red Ribbon Week more consistently. They also have conflict resolution training weekly. They focus their student of the term on the skills they are learning, and teachers nominate students who exemplify that skill. He reported that tomorrow is the HOPE gala. The school also provides Service-Learning opportunities. The are giving students an opportunity to present what Service-Learning they participated in this school year. They have added “buddy crew”. He reported that the students really love this, as do the elderly that they visit. Jeff Hall also reported on the Mid-Year Data for the school. He discussed how these goals tie into TSSA plan and other plans that require goals associated with test scores. He reviewed the test scores and how to read the data. He discussed that literacy scores with the state won’t be posted until next year. He discussed the percentage of proficiency scores this year versus last year for both language arts and math. He discussed what the scores mean with the RISE testing. He reported that the school has a positive trend overall. Dusty Griffith asked what the biggest hurdle is that is holding them back. Jeff reported that last year in math they had a couple of math coaches that were not as effective as they should be. He discussed a few other challenges they are trying to mitigate at the school. Dusty asked if he could report back to the board on things that they find in their data review. He would like the board to be able to support the school in any way necessary. Jeff also reviewed their School Land Trust Plan Goals. Ashley Tignor helped clarify some of the data/goals that were used. The have an increase of 4.1% of student at or above benchmark. She showed the board the increase that the school has seen in kindergarten scores. They discussed that the middle of the year testing is not a good reflection on the beginning of the year testing. It will be far more accurate to compare the Middle of the Year test scores to the End of Year test scores. Sandra Shepard asked how many of the students were receiving after school tutoring. Dusty Griffith asked how many students took advantage of the after-school tutoring. They discussed other ideas that they might be able to implement interventions for students who are below benchmark. Jeff reviewed their Land Trust goal for their 7th and 8th grade classes. Ashley Tignor reported that the gifted and talented program is an after-school program for the upper grades. The students are nominated by their teachers for being exceptional. They can be nominated for academics or critical thinking. She reviewed a few goals/activities that the student participated in that challenged them. Sandra Shepard asked if they had been to any of the state gifted and talented meetings. Ashley reported that they stopped doing state meetings during covid and have not started them back up again. Sandra Shepard reported that in the past, students could be nominated three different ways with teacher nomination only being one of the ways. She discussed other ways students can be nominated and or identified as gifted and talented. Ashley also discussed the literacy

curriculum. She reported to the board the process they went through to choose the curriculum. She discussed how the different literacy curriculums were evaluated and rated.

Johanna Leonelli joined the meeting at 5:11pm

- Budget Report

Jon McQueary provided the budget report. He reported that the financials in the packet are as of February 28. They are approximately 67% into the budget. He reported on the local, state, and federal revenue. He discussed different expenses that are higher or lower than the 67%. He discussed a few adjustments that will need to be made for the year-end budget. Jon reported a discussion with Dusty about moving more money into the PTIF. He discussed how he determines how much to move into the PTIF. He discussed that the school has some big debt service payments coming up in April. He reported that he would be comfortable moving and additional \$300k-\$400k to the PTIF. Jeff Hall asked if the repairs they are looking at, including the playground and the carpet at the school would impact that transfer. Jon reported that they will still have access to that money it just won't be in the PTIF long-term. He discussed it would just draw more interest until it's used. They discussed that it only takes about two days to pull that money out of the PTIF.

VOTING ITEMS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

- Board Member Positions

Dusty discussed that he would like to establish a committee to help with the Capital Improvement Plan. He would also like to establish a finance committee and audit committee. Jon McQueary discussed that at a lot of schools have their finance committee serve as the audit committee as well. Dusty would like to give the board members the option based on the state training that Sandra Shepard just reviewed. She voiced some reasons why she feels like it would be beneficial to have a separate committee. Dusty Griffith would like the committees to be separate. Caitlin asked some clarifying questions about what the difference in committees would be. Jon McQueary expressed concern that there would be duplication of effort. He feels that the school has already accomplished a lot of what is needed in finance committee. They discussed what the audit committee's responsibilities are. They discussed the differences between the audit and finance committee.

- Strategic Planning Discussion

Sandra Shepard discussed the school's strategic planning that they have been undertaking. She discussed that it is not required for charter schools. She reported that you usually choose 1-5 goals and then benchmark over the 5 years goals in each area. She discussed that you don't want a big goal, but something precise and attainable. She discussed some of the suggestions that she made to Jeff Hall for the goals. The goals are all data driven. She discussed what setting the goals might look like. She described what this strategic plan would entail and how they would create it. She asked if the board was interested in doing this strategic plan. If the board is interested, she will create a timeline. She reported that if they want the plan in place by fall it will require work this spring. She asked if the school is still doing parent surveys.

Dusty Griffith left the meeting at 6:27pm

CONSENT ITEMS

- January 23, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes

Traelle Gailey made a motion to approve January 23, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes.

Johanna Leonelli seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Votes were as follows: Johanna Leonelli, Aye; Caitlin Shumway, Aye; Sandra Shepard, Aye; Traelle Gailey, Aye.

VOTING ITEMS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

- Literacy Curriculum: Into Reading

Jeff Hall discussed the proposed literacy curriculum during the director's report.

- 2025-2026 Fee Schedule and Fee Waiver Policy

The board discussed the Fee schedule and Fee waiver Policy. There were no major fee changes this year.

- Positive Behaviors Plan

Jeff Hall discussed this during the director's report.

- Policies to Approve:

- Rescind Library Materials Policy

- Amended Travel Policy

The board reviewed the summaries for the above listed policies. The board received a redline version of the Travel Policy. Platte Nielsen also described the summary of changes for both policies.

- Policies to Review:

- Administration of Medication Policy

- Arrest Reporting Policy

- Assessment of Student Achievement Policy

The board reviewed the above policies. No vote is needed. Platte Nielsen discussed that the Arrest Reporting Policy could use some updates that he's happy to provide for the next meeting.

- Policy Discussion

Caitlin Shumway discussed some of the events going on in the Tooele community regarding sexual misconduct in surrounding school. She asked what policies and procedures the school has in place for situations like this. Jeff Hall discussed the policies that overlap to help with situations like this. He discussed that all teachers are required to report any abuse. Caitlin asked what the procedures are for reporting. Jeff Hall discussed the procedures used at the school to handle report of any abuse. He discussed ways the schools investigate claims of abuse as well. He reported that the school has a good relationship with DCFS. He also discussed that they always support law enforcement. Caitlin Shumway asked what training the staff is required to participate in to help in these situations. Jeff Hall reported that the staff is required within 10 days of hire to complete a training on abuse, reporting etc. They discussed that best practice is that staff should not have students phone numbers and not be friends on Facebook. They discussed some complications that come with being a small community and teachers being coaches or church leaders. They described ways that can be mitigated. Caitlin Shumway asked if Jeff Hall would be willing to add this to their next staff meeting as a refresher course. Platte Nielsen discussed some of the trainings that are required for staff. He also discussed some of the state resources and state requirements. He will provide the school with links to

those resources.

- Capital Improvement Plan Discussion

Jeff Hall discussed that the carpets are badly stained after eating lunch in the classrooms during covid. He discussed the reason why he would prefer the carpet over tile. He discussed why the police would like tile better than carpet. Sandra Shepard discussed that she agrees with Jeff that with the noise of the lockers, the tile would make the hallways so much noisier. Caitlin Shumway expressed concern with the floor being slick during the winter months as well. Jeff Hall discussed the additional maintenance required with the tiles versus carpet. He discussed different types of carpet that could be better for entry ways that would hold up better. Jeff Hall also reviewed the different options for the playground. The first option will just get their current playground fixed up and ready for use. The other quote is an upgrade to their playground and help appeal to the upper grades. They discussed a potential PTO fundraiser. Jeff Hall reported that they have never raised more than around \$4000 with a fundraiser. Jon McQueary reported that this is a very common expense for schools even though the price tag is big. The board asked it would be better to do this in steps or all at once. Traelle Gailey discussed that she would prefer it all be done at once. The playground has needed updated for a long time. Sandra Shepard asked Jon McQueary if the larger amount would be negative for their budget. Jon discussed that they have the money and if these are the top two priorities it would be fine. The board discussed a few other projects that might come up in the near future.

Dusty Griffith joined the meeting at 6:59pm

Caitlin Shumway made a motion to approve the Literacy Curriculum: Into Ready, the 2025-2026 Fee Schedule and Fee Waiver Policy, the playground quote for up to \$170,000, the flooring services quote for up to \$55,000, to Rescind the Library Materials Policy, to Amend the Travel Policy, and to approve the Positive Behaviors Plan. Sandra Shepard seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Votes were as follows: Johanna Leonelli, Aye; Caitlin Shumway, Aye; Sandra Shepard, Aye; Traelle Gailey, Aye; Dusty Griffith, Aye.

CLOSED SESSION- to discuss the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual pursuant to Utah Code 52-4-205(l)(a).

This item was tabled

CALENDARING

- Next Board Meeting May 29, 2025 @ 5:00pm
- Electronic Meeting April 8, 2025 @ 5:00pm

ADJOURN

At 7:17pm Caitlin Shumway made a motion to Adjourn. Dusty Griffith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Votes were as follows: Caitlin Shumway, Aye; Dusty Griffith, Aye; Sandra Shepard, Aye; Johanna Leonelli, Aye; Traelle Gailey, Aye.