

MINUTES OF THE UTAH STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Thursday, June 26, 2025

10008 Creek Run Way, Sandy, UT, 84070

www.youtube.com/utahscsb

Members Present:

- Chair Stephanie Speicher
- Vice Chair Erik Olson
- Member Krystle Bassett
- Member Rabecca Cisneros
- Member Clint Biesinger
- Member Susan Pulsipher

Staff Present:

- Dr. Paul Kremer
- Marie Steffensen
- Andrea Jones
- Amber Hellstrom
- Jenna Magnetti
- Lisa Cooper
- Smriti Dhakal
- Brendan McGinn
- Betty Jimenez
- Amy Pace (virtual)

Others Present:

- USBE Liaison Rod Hall

(9:00 AM) MEETING BEGINS

Public Comment (2)

Mandi Bartlett, a success coach at ThrivePoint Academy, highlighted the school's achievements and available opportunities. Abbey Miller also noted the team's efforts to raise public awareness through networking and advocacy.

Consent Calendar

Member Cisneros: I move to approve the consent calendar.

Member Bassett: I second.

All members say “aye”. Motion passes unanimously.

Executive Director Report

Executive Director Dr. Kremer updated the Board and staff on board meeting changes and IT matters. He discussed filling the vacancies left by former Chair Bryan Bowles and Member Rabecca Cisneros, whose last meeting will be June 6th. Dr. Kremer also reported on ongoing collaboration between SCSB and the Learning Collective to improve work with charter schools. Staff member Smriti Dhakal presented feedback from a recent survey. Dr. Kremer concluded with general SCSB updates, including charter graduations, and invited members and staff to share their experiences, as well as attending a purple star ceremony honoring a few charter schools. He included the SCSB attending and sponsoring the UAPCS conference in Layton, 25 years of charter schools. He then ended with the committee and what they are establishing and what future work they hope to achieve.

Discussion and Action Item: Readiness to Open Report Virtual Horizons Charter School

Associate Executive Director Marie Steffensen provided updates on the certification readiness of Virtual Horizons Charter School and ThrivePoint Academy, detailing their progress and compliance efforts. She also shared information about small satellite schools set to open this school year.

Vice Chair Erik Olson: “I move we certify to the superintendent of the readiness to open of Virtual Horizon Charter School.”

Member Clint Biesinger: “I second”

All members say “aye”. Motion passes unanimously.

Discussion and Action Item: Readiness to Open Report ThrivePoint Academy

Member Rabecca Cisneros did disclose a possible conflict with the voting for ThrivePoint, as she is the Administrator at Itenris Early College Charter School which has executed an MOU with ThrivePoint. Associate Executive Director Marie Steffensen gave an update on enrollment and all their work they are doing to meet the goals. ThrivePoint has prepared a presentation for the Board, William Evans introduces everyone from ThrivePoint who is in attendance in-person and virtually. Erik Clapeck is the vice president for education services for ThrivePoint and he lead and facilitated the presentation from ThrivePoint, he touched on enrollment and steps and planning that they have done and will continue to do. The Board and ThrivePoint collaborated in questions and concerns for the school, especially enrollment and the financials of going from ThrivePoint to another school as they are credit recovery school and thrive to get students to graduation, although they do offer students a enrollment for the full school years from grade 7-12.

Vice Chair Erik Olson: "I move we certify to the superintendent of the readiness to open of ThrivePoint Academy."

Chair Stephanie Speicher: "I second that motion."

The Board discussed the need for more break-even analysis on ThrivePoint, signed contracts, and additional data from Learning Matters and SCSB staff. They agreed to postpone the motion and vote for two weeks to gather this information.

Member Susan Pulsipher: "I motion to table this item to a later date."

Vice Chair Erik Olson: "I second that."

Member Clint Biesinger: "I am a yes for that motion."

Member Rabecca Cisneros: "Yes."

Member Krystle Bassett: "Yes."

Vice Chair Olson: "Yes."

Member Pulsipher: "Yes."

Chair Speicher: "Yes."

Discussion and Action Item: Transfer of Operation & Control: Moab Charter School

Member Clint Biesinger did reiterate that just as last board meeting he will be refraining from voting as his business is under contract with Athenian eAcademy and wanted to disclose again.

Chair Speicher gave an overview as Moab Charter and Athenian eAcademy were at the last board meeting in May and the board had requested more information and were given the opportunity to review. The Board will now consider the approval of the transfer of operation and control. Moab Charter School Board and Athenian eAcademy School board voted yes on the transfer as well. Both schools were in attendance and gave some insight on their recent board meetings and town hall meetings, and all the support that has been received in the proposed transfer.

Chair Stephanie Speicher asks for a motion.

Member Rabecca Cisneros: "I will make a motion to approve the transfer and control of Moab Charter School to Athenian eAcademy."

Member Krystle Bassett: "I will second that."

All remaining voting board members say "aye". Motion passes unanimously.

Report and Recommendation: School Land Trust

The Board and Executive Director Dr. Kremer has decided to move this item to the August Board Meeting due to time restraints.

Report and Recommendation: School Safety

Shauntelle Cota, Director of School Safety and Student Services at USBE, provided an update on the School Safety Center's missions, recent safety amendments, passed and pending requirements, and relevant funding. SCSB staff member Betty Jimenez is now the School Safety Center Charter School Liaison and will report all updates to the board.

Report to Board: School Start Up Funds

The Board and Executive Director Dr. Kremer has decided to move this item to the August Board Meeting due to time restraints.

Report to Board: A-GAME Convening

The Board and SCSB staff shared the networking, experience, and connections they made at the A-GAME convening conference. The SCSB was up for two awards and although did not come home with one they always strive to be the best supportive authorizers to all the charter schools.

Report and Recommendation: Revolving Loan Committee

This item is listed earlier on the agenda but due to time restraints the Board and Executive Director Dr. Kremer moved this item to the end.

Executive Director Dr. Kremer gave an overview of some of the changes to board rule, committee composition, and recommendations. Laura Wilson who is a part of the school finance team for the USBE and on the Revolving Loan Committee, gave an update on some changes to funding changes. She talked about the two charter schools which are Custom Class Charter school which is a new online charter school, and Pinnacle Canyon Academy who applied for the loan and the feedback the committee recommended. The Board engaged in a few follow up questions, clarifications, and concerns.

Member Rabecca Cisneros: "I would like to make a motion that we would make a recommendation to approve the revolving loans as stated by the committee."

Vice Chair Erik Olson: "I second."

All members say "aye". Motion passes unanimously.

(2:03PM) ADJOURN