

Merit Preparatory Academy Board Meeting Minutes

Date: January 22, 2026

Time: 6:36 PM MST

Location: In-person at Merit Preparatory Academy, Springville, UT; hybrid via online platform

Call to Order: Rachel Jay called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM.

Attendees:

- **In-person:** Rachel Jay (Board President), David Jensen (Secretary), Aaron Cook, Ashley Watts
- **Online:** Jerry Mellor, Mary Howell
- **Excused:** Heidi Bingham
- **Staff/Guests:** Mike (Director), Jessica, Casey (Finance), Stephanie Healy (Marketing), David (Online/Quest Time), Tyler Palmer (Staff Award Recipient)

Recording: Meeting recorded.

Items Covered

1. **Staff Recognitions**
 - Support Staff Meritorious Award: Tyler Palmer (paraprofessional in SPED, Hope Squad advisor, de-escalated incidents, volunteers extensively).
 - Teacher Meritorious Award: Mike at Heart (CTE/computer science/German teacher; strong student rapport, program growth).
2. **Finance Report** (Casey)
 - Mid-year deficit of \$24,128 due to CTE funds adjustment. Plans to reach break-even/surplus via spending reductions and adjustments. Debt service ratio expected to meet covenant after audit corrections.
3. **Marketing Report** (Stephanie Healy)
 - Current enrollment: 418 students (377 reenrollments + 192 new). Projected ~569 next year. Campaigns, tours (52% conversion), upcoming videos, open house planning (gym performances, commons tables). Ideas for targeting homeschoolers, therapy/ABA providers, community influencers. Suggestion to form marketing committee with Mary Howell.
4. **Director's Report** (Mike)
 - 2026-2027 academic calendar presented (aligns with Nebo District, meets state guidelines). Land Trust update: current plan submitted; next year ~\$70,000 (doubled). National diversity program nomination; mentor program with Providence Hall. Strong staff; recruitment fairs upcoming.
5. **Merit Online Report** (David)
 - Quest Time progress; online course objectives development. SOEP provider application on State Board agenda for March. Discussion on pros/cons of joining SOEP vs. independent launch. Charter amendment (Schedule A) signed via DocuSign.
6. **Policy Review**
 - Outside income policy (audit finding). Financial checks/balances. Procurement/capitalization thresholds (update to state levels). Board oversight of staff hires (admin only).
7. **Bylaws Review** (Article 5)
 - Board size, appointment, 3-year terms with reappointment process, removal provisions. Suggested changes: minimum board size (e.g., 5), typo fix (5.7 reference), term tracking. Ideas for recognizing outgoing members at graduation.

Votes Taken

1. **Approve December 18, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes**

- Motion: Aaron Cook; Second: Mary Howell
 - Vote: All in favor (Rachel Jay, Aaron Cook, David Jensen, Mary Howell, Ashley Watts, Jerry Mellor)
2. **Approve 2026-2027 Academic Calendar**
 - Motion: Aaron Cook; Second: Mary Howell
 - Vote: All in favor (Rachel Jay, Aaron Cook, David Jensen, Mary Howell, Ashley Watts, Jerry Mellor)
 3. **Approve LEA-Specific Licenses** (each voted individually; motions by Aaron Cook, seconds by Mary Howell)
 - Gaynor Brunson – Technology: All in favor (Rachel Jay, Aaron Cook, David Jensen, Mary Howell, Ashley Watts, Jerry Mellor)
 - David Buckley – Earth & Space Science: All in favor (Rachel Jay, Aaron Cook, David Jensen, Mary Howell, Ashley Watts, Jerry Mellor)
 - Brandon Muhlestein – CTE Business & Marketing: All in favor (Rachel Jay, Aaron Cook, David Jensen, Mary Howell, Ashley Watts, Jerry Mellor)
 - Xanthe Hardy – Earth Science: All in favor (Rachel Jay, Aaron Cook, David Jensen, Mary Howell, Ashley Watts, Jerry Mellor)
 - Kathryn Williams – CTE & Secondary Law Enforcement & PE: All in favor (Rachel Jay, Aaron Cook, David Jensen, Mary Howell, Ashley Watts, Jerry Mellor)
 - Kimie Snapp – PE: All in favor (Rachel Jay, Aaron Cook, David Jensen, Mary Howell, Ashley Watts, Jerry Mellor)
 4. **Enter Executive Session** (character/professional competence/physical/mental health of an individual)
 - Motion: Aaron Cook; Second: Mary Howell
 - Roll Call Vote: Yes – Rachel Jay, Aaron Cook, David Jensen, Mary Howell, Ashley Watts, Jerry Mellor
 - Entered 8:28 PM; Exited 8:35 PM. No action taken.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 8:36 PM by Rachel Jay.

Action Items (summary):

- Stephanie Healy & Mary Howell to meet on marketing ideas.
- Rachel Jay to follow up on Schedule A with Marie Stephenson.
- Report back on SOEP meeting.
- Casey to email on procurement/capitalization thresholds.
- Rachel Jay, Ashley Watts, Jerry Mellor to meet on financial policies & bylaws changes.
- Resend outside income policy for next vote.
- Track board member terms for reappointment process.
- Plan outgoing board member recognition at graduation.

Minutes Prepared By: David Jensen (Secretary)

Approval: These minutes were approved by the board in the February 19th, 2026 board meeting.