MOUNTAIN SUNRISE ACADEMY

Charter Council

Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 18, 2026 · 3:45 pm

Meeting	Regular meeting of the Charter Council (governing board) of Mountain Sunrise Academy
Location	1802 E 145 N, Saratoga Springs, UT 84045, with electronic participation via Zoom
Called to order	3:49 pm by Chair Carlos VacaGuzman
Adjourned	5:31 pm
Presiding	Carlos VacaGuzman, Chair
Minutes taken by	Tayler Palfreyman, Secretary
Recording	The meeting was recorded. The audio recording is posted on the Utah Public Notice Website and is the complete record of the open meeting.

Attendance

Council members present	Role	Attended
Carlos VacaGuzman	Chair	In person
Emilee Krupa	Vice Chair	In person
Tayler Palfreyman	Secretary	In person
Ryan Larson	Treasurer	Electronically (Zoom)
Steve Southwick	Member	Electronically (Zoom)

Council members absent: None. A quorum was present.

Staff and guests: Patrick Freeman, Executive Director (Zoom); Carrie Brock, Assistant Director; Cam Maxon, Facilities; Brian Cates, Red Apple Finance (Zoom); Lybbie Pavlowich, Parent Community Council (PCC) President; Jake Backues, guest (appointed to the Council under Item 14); and members of the public.

This was Steve Southwick's final meeting as a Council member; he rolled off the Council at the close of the meeting.

1. Call to Order

Chair Carlos VacaGuzman called the meeting to order at 3:49 pm. Roll was taken, all five Council members were present, and a quorum was confirmed.

2. Public Comment Period

The Chair opened the public comment period at 3:50 pm, reminded

attendees of the two-minute limit and the request not to identify individuals, and noted that the Council may not take action on items raised during public comment that are not on the agenda (Utah Code 52-4-202(6)(b)). No members of the public offered comment. The comment period was closed.

3. Waldorf Moment

Vice Chair Emilee Krupa shared a reflection from the foreword to Rudolf Steiner's *The Study of Man*, noting that the first Waldorf school was founded in 1919 for the children of workers at the Waldorf-Astoria factory, and that Steiner was asked not simply to build a curriculum but to help heal a society after the First World War. She encouraged the Council, as a newly composed board beginning a new school year with a new Executive Director, to keep Waldorf philosophy present in its work and to welcome deep philosophical discussion. She proposed that each Council meeting include a brief Waldorf moment. Information only; no action taken.

4. Financial Review — Brian, Red Apple Finance

Brian presented the financial review for the period ending July 31, 2026. Fiscal year 2025–26 closed June 30, and the annual audit has begun; nothing has been raised that requires Council attention at this time. Highlights:

- **PTIF statement.** Reserves held in the Public Treasurers' Investment Fund are just over $2.9 million, earning slightly under 4%.
- **Budget summary.** One month into the fiscal year, the forecasted operating margin is just under 4.4%. Forecasts are based on the budget approved in June.
- **Enrollment and revenue.** The October 1 enrollment count is reported to the state; if enrollment exceeds budget, state revenue will true up later in the fall, largely in November.
- **Notable expense.** The large July expenditure in the 700-series accounts was a progress invoice from the Slade Group for construction of the new classroom.
- Brian will provide a training on charter school finance and accounting, including key financial metrics and ratios, at an upcoming Council meeting. He is also working closely with the Executive Director on financial onboarding.

The Chair noted a follow-up conversation with Libby (PCC President) regarding the process for submitting PCC-related expenses, raised by Treasurer Ryan Larson at the finance committee meeting; that discussion will continue offline. Information only; no action taken.

5. Update: Construction Above the Library

Cam reported that construction of the new classroom above the library is essentially complete and the space may be occupied; only the fire marshal's final approval remains outstanding. The classroom and library project came in at $196,215, in line with the original bid despite redrawn plans and re-approvals. The additional space created beneath the stairs cost $9,800. Both projects remain within the budget the Council approved.

Other summer projects: a dishwasher for the culinary room (approximately $2,200, funded from last year's fundraising); 14 projectors and 11 whiteboards installed in classrooms with ceiling power; three basketball hoops in the multi-purpose room; a kindergarten pergola (fundraising funds) with new sand and mulch; painting of offices and classrooms; and new locks and additional cameras, including coverage of the expanded kindergarten playground, funded by the remaining safety grant.

The Council thanked Cam for his work over the summer. Information only; no action taken.

Recognition. The Chair thanked Steve Southwick for his years of service on the Council, including his service as Treasurer prior to Ryan Larson. This was Steve's final meeting.

6. Executive Director's Report — Patrick Freeman

The Executive Director presented his first report, organized around the three objectives the Council set for the year.

Strengthen community connection and engagement. Systems are being put in place for staff-to-administration, staff-to-Council, staff-to-staff, and staff-to-family communication; teachers will use GroupMe as a neutral platform for family communication. Schoolwide expectations and responsibilities were reviewed with staff using the recently shared handbook. Recent family engagement included the Rose Ceremony. The partnership with the PCC has been strong. Enrollment was 488 as of Friday, August 14, with some growth expected. Culture and retention are in a good place; most turnover has been in paraprofessional roles rather than classroom teachers.

Elevate educational quality and holistic growth. A revised master schedule is intended to give teachers adequate instructional time, autonomy, and consistency across grade levels, with clear documentation of how student needs (particularly special education) are met. "WIN" (What I Need) time provides enrichment and intervention. Priorities include grade-level collaboration, instructional coaching, classroom-management systems, sharing back the Waldorf professional development attended in Arizona, and evaluating how Singapore Math is meeting student needs. Forest Days will be held consistently on Fridays with all staff available to support them.

Prepare every student for lifelong success. Class sizes are high. The Harmony and Pedagogical committees are active. Professional learning community time will be protected from administrative business, staff meetings are being rebalanced, and student achievement will be reported transparently to families. The school nurse will provide monthly hygiene lessons and the social workers will provide social-emotional learning lessons.

The Chair noted that the PCC President attended the July board retreat and that a recurring monthly check-in among the PCC President, the Chair, and the Executive Director is planned. Assistant Director Carrie briefly previewed the LEA-specific license items to be considered under Item 10. Information only; no action taken.

7. Board Discussion and Action Items

Items 8 through 14 below were taken up as the Council's discussion and action items.

8. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

MOTION 4:45 pm

To approve the minutes of the June 16, 2026 regular meeting as presented.

Moved by: Carlos VacaGuzman

Seconded by: Tayler Palfreyman

Vote: Unanimous

Motion carried.

MOTION 4:46 pm

To approve the minutes of the July 30, 2026 board retreat as presented.

Moved by: Carlos VacaGuzman

Seconded by: Tayler Palfreyman

Vote: Unanimous

Motion carried.

9. Election of Council Officers for 2026–2027

The Chair opened nominations for each office in turn. No additional nominations were made for any office.

ELECTION — SECRETARY 4:47 pm

Carlos VacaGuzman nominated Tayler Palfreyman to serve as Secretary for 2026–2027.

Seconded by: Ryan Larson

Vote: Unanimous

Tayler Palfreyman was elected Secretary (4:49 pm).

ELECTION — TREASURER 4:49 pm

Carlos VacaGuzman nominated Ryan Larson to serve as Treasurer for 2026–2027.

Seconded by: Steve Southwick

Vote: Unanimous

Ryan Larson was elected Treasurer (4:50 pm).

ELECTION — VICE CHAIR 4:50 pm

Carlos VacaGuzman nominated Emilee Krupa to serve as Vice Chair for 2026–2027.

Seconded by: Tayler Palfreyman

Vote: Unanimous

Emilee Krupa was elected Vice Chair (4:51 pm).

ELECTION — CHAIR 4:51 pm

Tayler Palfreyman nominated Carlos VacaGuzman to serve as Chair for 2026–2027.

Seconded by: Ryan Larson

Vote: Unanimous

Carlos VacaGuzman was elected Chair (4:51 pm).

10. Teacher Licensing Items

Secretary Tayler Palfreyman presented the LEA-specific educator licenses required for state compliance. These licenses allow the named educators to serve in their assignments while they complete the requirements for full professional licensure. The following were presented for approval:

- Chloe Fryar — Special Education Teacher
- Morgan Chaffin — Handwork Teacher
- Alex Ballard — Fifth Grade Teacher
- Whitney Larson — Third Grade Teacher
- Ava Kelly — First Grade Teacher
- Miranda Kilpatrick — Gardening Teacher

MOTION 4:52 pm

To approve a LEA-specific educator license For Chloe Fryar for the 2026/2027 school year.

Moved by: Tayler Palfreyman

Seconded by: Carlos VacaGuzman

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Passed.

MOTION 4:52 pm

To approve a LEA-specific educator license for Morgan Chaffin for the 2026/2027 school year.

Moved by: Tayler Palfreyman

Seconded by: Emilee Krupa

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Passed.

MOTION 4:52 pm

To approve a LEA-specific educator license for Alex Ballard for the 2026/2027 school year.

Moved by: Tayler Palfreyman

Seconded by: Emilee Krupa

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Passed.

MOTION 4:52 pm

To approve a LEA-specific educator license for Whitney Larson for the 2026/2027 school year.

Moved by: Tayler Palfreyman

Seconded by: Ryan Larson

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Passed.

MOTION 4:52 pm

To approve a LEA-specific educator license for Ava Kelly for the 2026/2027 school year.

Moved by: Tayler Palfreyman

Seconded by: Carlos VacaGuzman

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Passed.

MOTION 4:52 pm

To approve the LEA-specific educator license for Miranda Kilpatrick for the 2026/2027 school year.

Moved by: Tayler Palfreyman

Seconded by: Ryan Larson

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Passed.

Secretary Tayler Palfreyman walked the Council through two new, separate grievance policies that replace the prior combined approach and are intended to make the process clearer and more efficient.

- **Family Grievance Policy** (presented 5:02 pm). Establishes an escalation path beginning with the classroom teacher, then the Executive Director, and finally the Charter Council.
- **Employee Grievance Policy** (presented 5:14 pm). Provides a structured process and timeline so that employee concerns are addressed promptly and the process cannot be misused.

MOTION 5:18 pm

To approve the Family Grievance Policy and the Employee Grievance Policy as presented.

Moved by: Carlos VacaGuzman

Seconded by: Tayler Palfreyman

Vote: Unanimous

Motion Passes (5:19 pm).

12. Charter Council Committee Structure

The Council discussed simplifying its committee structure from four committees to three, each led by a chair and a co-chair with additional members, and organized around the Waldorf "head, heart, and hands" framework. Smaller working committees will report up to these three so that the Council receives reporting at a higher level.

Committee	Chair	Co-Chair
Finance & Strategic Development Committee (Hands)	Ryan Larson	Jake Backues
Pedagogical & Culture Committee (Heart)	Emilee Krupa	Tayler Palfreyman
Governance Committee (Head)	Carlos VacaGuzman	Emilee Krupa

The Council reached consensus on the three-committee structure and leadership above. No formal action was taken; the structure will be reflected in the committee charters.

13. Conflict of Interest Policy

The Chair introduced the Charter Council Conflict of Interest Policy and the accompanying Annual Acknowledgment form (5:27 pm), intended to ensure transparency regarding any interests Council members may have in matters before the Council.

> **MOTION** 5:28 pm
>
> To approve the Charter Council Conflict of Interest Policy and Annual Acknowledgment as presented.
>
> **Moved by:** Carlos VacaGuzman
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> **Seconded by:** Ryan Larson
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> **Vote:** Unanimous
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> **Motion Passed.**

14. Board Membership

The Chair reported that Jake Backues has expressed interest in serving on the Council, has been interviewed by each Council member, and attended the July board retreat as a guest.

> **MOTION** 5:30 pm
>
> To appoint Jake Backues as a member of the Charter Council.
>
> **Moved by:** Carlos VacaGuzman
>
> **Seconded by:** Tayler Palfreyman
>
> **Vote:** Unanimous
>
> **Motion Passed.**

Jake Backues was welcomed to the Council.

15. Adjournment

There being no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:31 pm.

The next regular meeting of the Charter Council is scheduled for Tuesday, September 15, 2026 at 3:45 pm.