

**MINUTES OF THE**  
**UTAH STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD MEETING**

Thursday, August 22, 2022  
USBE Board Rooms  
[www.youtube.com/utahscsb](http://www.youtube.com/utahscsb)

**Members Present:**

Chair Bryan Bowles (\*refrains from voting, unless otherwise noted)  
Vice Chair Cynthia Phillips  
Member Krystle Bassett  
Member Stephanie Speicher (online)  
Member Erik Olson  
Member Rabecca Cisneros (online)

**Staff Present:**

Jennifer Lambert, Director SCSB  
Liz Bunker  
Joanne Castillo  
William Evans  
Marie Steffensen

**Others Present:**

Angie Stallings (USBE), Deputy Superintendent  
Matt Hymas (USBE)  
David Jones, Assistant Attorney General  
Andrea Oliver (Board Member, American Leadership Academy [online])  
Brenda Peterson (Board Member, American Leadership Academy)  
Eric Hogenson (Board Member, American Leadership Academy)  
Krystin Morley (Vice President, American Leadership Academy)  
Nick Ward (Board Chair, Providence Hall)  
Liz Starley (Board Member, Providence Hall)  
Kim Crandall (Board Vice Chair, Providence Hall [online])  
Christine Compain (Board Member, Providence Hall [online])  
Michael Livsey, (Board Member, Providence Hall [online])  
Mary Nattress (Board Treasurer, Providence Hall [online])  
Charles Reynolds (Director, Vanguard Academy)  
David Mortensen, Attorney for Vanguard Academy  
Grace Mitchell (Treasurer and Founding Member, Vanguard Academy)  
Kent Johnson, (Board Chair, Vanguard Academy)  
John Williams (Business Manager, Vanguard Academy)

## **Call to Order**

Meeting began at 3:18pm

## **Public Comment**

No Comments Made

## **Amendment Request – American Leadership Academy**

School Support Specialist Steffensen presented on the background and materiality of the amendment request. Chair Bowles asked which language was being targeted in the school's DLI program. Chair Bowles identified and clarified the two pieces that were being voted on today. ALA presented on their process to get to this Amendment request. Vice Chair Phillips introduced discussion of what the school would need to do next from an administrative standpoint. Director Lambert reiterated Staff's support for the amendment and began discussion of the benefit of a fully-executed Amendment reflecting the material change to a clean charter. Director Lambert identified what elements may have caused confusion and what steps have been taken to address those missed connections. Chair Bowles started discussion on the second part of ALA's appearance before the Board.

*Member Olson: "I'll go ahead and move that we approve ALA's amendment request as outlined today."*

*Chair Bowles: "The motion is to approve ALA's amendment request to their charter and that... it will now be part of that piece that we've approved earlier that we're waiting for final execution on."*

*Member Bassett: "I'll second that"*

*Discussion – none*

*Motion passes unanimously.*

## **Amendment Request – Providence Hall**

School Support Specialist Steffensen presented on the background and materiality of the proposed Providence Hall amendment. Ms. Steffensen presented staff's recommendation. Director Lambert identified how this plan could prove to be a way of moving forward with other schools pursuant to the Board's Innovation goal. Chair Bowles clarified the procedural concern that the Board had in previous meetings. Providence Hall Board Chair Ward clarified community position and expressed support for SCSB staff suggestions. Chair Ward described the process. Director Lambert expressed appreciation for the school board's responsiveness. Vice Chair Phillips indicated admiration for the way the school board and community members received and acted on the feedback that had been given to them.

*Member Bassett: "I move to approve the amendment request for 3 years with Providence Hall with also the request that Providence Hall returns to us no later than June 2025 if they would like to make that amendment change permanent."*

*Member Olson: "I'll second that, Chair"*

*Discussion – none*

*Motion passes unanimously.*

### **Warning Status, Compliance, Deficiencies, and Remedies – Vanguard Academy**

Director Lambert presented on Vanguard Academy's warning status, compliance, deficiencies, and remedies. Director Lambert presented staff's concerns and recommendations. Vanguard Chair Johnson presented on school performance. Treasurer Mitchell presented on the school's responses to audit deficiencies. Both Attorney Mortensen and Treasurer Mitchell presented on each SCSB-identified deficiency. Chair Johnson presented on the DCCS. Attorney Mortensen presented on USBE's CNP deficiency. Vice Chair Phillips identified that there had been discussions between the school and the AG's office regarding why the conflict-of-interest language in the bylaws would need to be beefed-up. Vice Chair Phillips initiated discussion on whether the school board had enough non-conflicted Members to allow the new procurement process to function as it should, citing the differences between the cooperative and other financial institutions which submit to government oversight. Attorney Mortensen responded. Director Lambert responded to representations of the DCCS made by Attorney Mortensen and identified how the new procurement process revealed concerning issues with the RFP for the food contract as presented in the SCSB slides. Vice Chair Phillips began discussions regarding the lack of the ability to independently verify statements made by the school regarding procurement and businesses withing the cooperative. Attorney Mortensen responded. Chair Bowles recognized the presence of Representative Weight and Representative Rohner and acknowledged that Public Comment is only heard at the beginning of these meetings as noticed in the Agenda. Chair Bowles expressed appreciation for their presence, their opinions, and their service. Chair Bowles acknowledged Member Cisneros. Member Cisneros disclosed a conflict of interest and recused herself from the discussion and the vote. Chair Bowles announced a short break.

*Session adjourned (5:35 pm)*

*Session resumed (5:45 pm)*

Vice Chair Phillips identified what would qualify as compelling evidence to the Board and reiterated the responsibility of the Board to the taxpayers of Utah when it comes to the financial interests of the taxpayers. Member Olson identified the directive given to Vanguard as the purpose of the meeting and expressed specific concerns about the lack of independently verified information which would allow the Board to test the statements made by the school. Member Olson began discussion on how lack of transparency and the failure to address some of the initial deficiencies in a timely manner may have contributed to situation the school currently faces. Member Bassett addressed the assertions regarding the Board's fairness and reasonableness. Member Bassett identified issues that the school had not yet addressed as concerning. Treasurer Mitchell responded. Director Lambert identified where the staff derived numbers on how much

the school was spending on instruction and whether the vendors are education-based or serve other district or government entities in response to Treasurer Mitchell's request. Director Lambert identified other discrepancies and oddities between the school's vendors and expenses in relation to other charter schools which could warrant further investigation. Chair Bowles emphasized that the conclusions drawn by the Board and Staff are based on publicly available documents and made a suggestion to dispel the lingering mistrust. Assistant Attorney General Jones confirmed attorney-client privilege between him and the Board and Staff and noted that nothing Director Lambert stated was accurate. Assistant Attorney General Jones addressed a few of the statements attributed to him and the Attorney General's Office by the Attorney Mortensen and Treasurer Mitchell.

*(6:09:05pm) Vice Chair Phillips: "I would like to move...that Vanguard Academy be placed on probation and that the recommendations given to us today by staff be implemented within a reasonable time frame so that Vanguard Academy is not left at any point without a board or without administration."*

*Chair Bowles: "A Motion by Vice Chair Phillips to place Vanguard Academy on Probation and to move forward with the recommendations of the Charter School Board Staff that we heard earlier. That's the motion. Is there a second?"*

*Member Olson requested clarification on the motion regarding which recommendations were included in the motion. Vice Chair Phillips indicated that both were lumped together. Director Lambert clarified what each staff recommendation encompassed.*

*Member Bassett: "I will second that motion:"*

#### *Discussion*

Member Speicher expressed appreciation for the conversation. Vice Chair Phillips introduced conversation about timelines regarding this motion. Director Lambert responded. Treasurer Mitchell gave an alternate suggestion. Chair Bowles addressed some of the concerns identified by Treasurer Mitchell. Director Lambert addressed the remainder of Treasurer Mitchell's concerns and identified how the school historically responded to mentorship as proposed by Treasurer Mitchell. Director Lambert reiterated Staff's resolution to stand behind their recommendation. Director Lambert responded to Member Olson's process question with respect to particular elements in the recommendations.

*(6:16:32pm) Motion passes unanimously.*

*Vice Chair Phillips: "I would like to move that the State Charter School Board direct the Executive Committee working with Staff to vet and bring recommendations to the Board in its next Board Meeting for ratification on Consent."*

*Member Olson: "I'll Second that."*

#### *Discussion:*

Director Lambert pointed out that the content of the motion was on the written recommendation.

*Motion passes unanimously.*

*Member Bassett: "I move to adjourn" (6:23:09 pm)*