

MINUTES OF THE
UTAH STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Thursday, October 13, 2022

USB E Board Rooms

250 East 500 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84111

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
Member Erik Olson
Member Rabecca Cisneros
Member Michelle Smith (online)

Staff Present:

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

Others Present:

Assistant Attorney General David Jones
USB E Deputy Superintendent Angie Stallings
USB E Member Matt Hymas
Tim Gustavason
Michelle Johnson

Call to Order

Meeting began at 10:06am

Public Comment (10:09am)

Chair Bowles indicated comments are to be limited to 3 minutes.

Tim Gustavason and Michelle Johnson spoke on Vanguard Academy

Board Member Thought (10:15am)

Vice Chair Phillips shared on Civility as Politeness, Civility as Responsiveness, and how they must be an intentional and essential feature of our public discourse.

Public Comment (continued)

Marianne Robinson spoke on Vanguard Academy.

Board Chair Report

Chair Bowles previewed the Agenda and updated the Board regarding the assignments that the Board gave to the Executive Committee. Chair Bowles stated that Attorney Rachel Anderson with Fabian VanCott will serve as a Board Member Mentor for Vanguard Academy. Additionally, Chair Bowles stated that Michael Clark will serve as an Interim Co-Director for Vanguard Academy. Finally, Chair Bowles stated that the business manager originally selected had to withdraw. Chair Bowles drew the Members' attention to the Consent Calendar which stated a motion to authorize the Executive Committee to appoint an interim Co-Finance Officer for Vanguard Academy. Chair Bowles emphasized that the mentors were not being appointed to solve any probation deficiencies and that those deficiencies must be solved by individuals at Vanguard Academy. Chair Bowles expressed appreciation for the third-party reviewers who met with the SCSB Board Members and Staff in previous months.

Executive Director Report

Director Lambert shared how the artwork for the Annual Report would be changed: It would be chosen from a number of entries sent to the SCSB by students from the schools they authorize. Director Lambert spoke on the enthusiastic community response. Director Lambert spoke on the significance of having a Charter School Teacher be runner-up in the USBE Teacher of the Year Award. That teacher and other charter school nominees were mentioned. Director Lambert shared the results of training surveys. Lisa Cooper was introduced as the newest member of the SCSB team as a Financial Education Specialist.

Member Speicher asked about another opportunity to work with staff on the online teacher trainings and asked that Education Support Coordinator Steffensen send her some of the topics that still need to be covered. Director Lambert asked that Board Members contact Education Support Coordinator Steffensen if they have any ideas regarding topics to be covered in the various trainings or if they wanted to participate in any of them.

Consent Calendar

Member Olson: "I move for approval of the items on the general consent calendar."

Member Speicher: "I'll second that motion."

Discussion: none

Motion Passes Unanimously

Carry Forward Spend Plan FY2023 (10:41am)

Director Lambert drew attention to the Carry Forward Spending Plan which had been given to the Members earlier and discussed in the Authorizing Committee.

Bassett: "I move to approve the Carry Forward Spend Plan"

Member Olson: "I second that motion."

Discussion: none

Motion Passes Unanimously

Staff Presentation On Organization and School Annual and Comprehensive Reviews Presentation, Discussion, and Consideration Of Board Mission, Vision, and Values (11:52am)

Director Lambert presented on how staff takes the mission and vision of the Board seriously and how staff has been reorganized around it using some of the information presented by the evaluators. Chair Bowles expressed appreciation for the new organizational structure. Vice Chair Phillips expressed how the new structure clarifies and normalizes the remediation process. Director Lambert emphasized that staff will not shy away from holding schools accountable when needed and how the new structure helps staff identify a need for training and a need for a school-specific concern. School Performance Director Evans presented on the Annual Reviews and the Comprehensive Reviews introducing both historical background and what changes have been implemented over the summer. Dr. Evans explained how the two Reviews were going to be approached differently, why staff felt the approaches needed to be changed, and proposed that the practice of assurances be ended. Chair Bowles suggested looking at trends when conducting the comprehensive reviews. Director Lambert clarified how the processes for the comprehensive review worked with and was different from the processes and outcomes of the annual review. Chair Bowles introduced the parallels between the process change in the comprehensive review and Competency-Based Education. Vice Chair Phillips introduced conversation regarding how the findings in a comprehensive report would interact with the Remediation Team. Director Lambert reframed the purpose of the comprehensive Review. Member Cisneros requested clarification and began conversation on how the reviews are being used. Director Lambert identified what was required of the SCSB in Statute and in Board Rule and specified which review was an evaluation and which one was to be a simple review. Member Cisneros continued discussion on how the information gathered was being used. Dr. Evans introduced conversation on the Board Rule requirement that charter agreements need to be reviewed at least once every 5 years and how staff will be addressing this need. Chair Bowles began conversation regarding which assurances would no longer be required. USBE Deputy Superintendent Stallings introduced how USBE identified similar compliance issues with respect to assurances and how USBE is addressing them. Director Lambert presented on proposed changes to the Mission and Values of the SCSB.

Member Cisneros: "I'm willing to make a motion that we add the word 'quality' to our mission statement as outlined by staff."

Member Olson: "Yes, I'll second that."

Discussion: none.

Motion passes unanimously.

Director Lambert continued to propose changes to the SCSB values, why the changes were deemed necessary, and what the values needed to encompass and reflect. Member Cisneros began conversations on whether or not "moving the needle" is within the SCSB box. Member Speicher continued conversation on the Impact value and expressed appreciation for the Compassion value.

Vice Chair Phillips: "I would like to move that this Board adopt the values as they have been presented with perhaps some adjustments to language for our SCSB values."

Member Bassett: "I second that motion."

Discussion: None.

Motion passes unanimously.

Strategic Plan (1:30PM)

Chair Bowles informed the Members of a possible scheduling conflict that might necessitate his leaving early in which event Vice Chair Phillips would continue to run the meeting. Vice Chair Phillips introduced the contents of the current draft of the Strategic Plan document. Member Speicher introduced conversation regarding the Innovation & Choice goal and expressed a desire for conversation regarding the differences between competency and innovation. Member Speicher suggested that the 3-year goal of micro-credentialing might fit in another domain. Vice Chair Phillips agreed that micro-credentialing should be moved to the Year 1 column of the Supporting School Operators Domain. Member Olson introduced conversation around charter school classification in the interest of identifying what is currently not offered in the SCSB portfolio. Member Smith expressed appreciation for the change in the definition of “Authorizer” as delineated in the “Quality Authorizing” portion of the document. Member Smith voiced the challenges in identifying actively pursuing currently-under-represented models of schools. Member Cisneros suggested that innovation is already encouraged in existing schools by allowing them to be nimble in the changes they seek to enact as the needs of the students and the communities change. Member Cisneros opened conversation on the definition of innovation versus choice and which definition reflects what the SCSB wants. Chair Bowles suggested that this question might be a good NACSA goal. Chair Bowles suggested that the Members interact with folks from other states to see how they identify holes in their portfolios and encourage the applications of charter schools whose models fit those holes. Chair Bowles asked that this specific kind of goal be reviewed at the next Board Meeting. Member Olson cited 53G-5-301 to continue conversation on requesting applications. Director Lambert described how staff currently abides by this statute. Member Speicher suggested a specific word change in the innovative goal. Member Basset suggested moving the 10-year micro-credentialing target from innovation to the 1-year “Supporting School Operators” 1-2 Year column. USBE Member Hymas requested clarification on the “Improving the Relationship Between the SCSB and USBE” domain. Language in the year 1 goal was modified, the SCSB Legislative Committee’s role in the first Year 3 goal was clarified, and the year 5 role was stricken.

Member Olson: “I would move that we go ahead and approve the Strategic Plan as it’s been outlined subject to the changes that I believe Vice Chair Phillips has been tracking.”

Member Smith: “I would love to second that motion.”

Discussion: none

Motion passes unanimously.

Member Smith is excused.

(2:32pm)

Member Olson: “I would Move that we go ahead and convene a closed session to address one of the purposes in section 52-4-205 pending litigation.”

Member Speicher: “I’ll second that.”

Roll Call

Member Speicher: "Aye."

Member Cisneros: "Aye."

Vice Chair Phillips: "Aye."

Member Bassett: "Aye."

Member Olson: "Aye."

Chair Bowles: "Aye."

Closed session begins @ 2:43pm

(2:57pm)

Member Speicher: "I'd like to make a motion to move out of closed session."

Vice Chair Phillips: "I'll second that."

Roll Call

Member Speicher: "Aye."

Member Cisneros: "Aye."

Vice Chair Phillips: "Aye."

Member Bassett: "Aye."

Member Olson: "Aye."

Chair Bowles: "Aye."

Meeting adjourned at 3:01pm

Member Bassett: "I move to adjourn."