

APPROVED



Liberty STEAM Charter

Minutes

LIBERTY STEAM CHARTER FOUNDING BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AGENDA FOR REGULARLY SCHEDULED MONTHLY MEETING

Date and Time

Monday November 29, 2021 at 6:00 PM

Location

CCTC Advanced Manufacturing Training Center
Room A101
853 Broad Street
Sumter, SC 29150

[Google Map of Meeting Location](#)

This meeting is held in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. A copy of the agenda has been made available to the local media & general public.

Directors Present

Ben Griffith, Jr., Cameron Chandler, Dexter WJ Davis, Greg Thompson, Ken Lee, Kimberly Rauschenbach, Marion Newton, Steve Creech

Directors Absent

Rodney Thompson

Guests Present

Khalil Graham, Trevor Ivey, Tyler Hamilton, joangama@gmail.com (remote), mlajesguiteras@chartergrowthfund.org (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

Greg Thompson called a meeting of the board of directors of Liberty STEAM Charter to order on Monday Nov 29, 2021 at 6:00 PM.

B. Invocation

Rev. Newton led the Board in an invocation.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Two founding scholars led the Board in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. Chairman's Opening Remarks

During this time, Mr. Thompson opened the meeting by thanking directors for their continued service. He particularly welcomed Mr. Lee to his first Board meeting.

II. Reading of the Mission & Vision Statement

A. LSC Mission Statement

Ken Lee read aloud the mission statement.

B. LSC Vision Statement

Dexter Davis read aloud the vision statement.

III. Approval of Consent Agenda

A. Today's Meeting Agenda

Ben Griffith, Jr. made a motion to Approve the agenda as presented.

Cameron Chandler seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Minutes from Previous Meeting (August 30, 2021)

Ben Griffith, Jr. made a motion to approve the minutes from LIBERTY STEAM CHARTER FOUNDING BOARD OF DIRECTORS on 09-27-21.

Ken Lee seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IV. Board Recognition

A. Staff Recognition

During this portion of the meeting, Dr. Graham joined Mr. Thompson in recognizing the October and November Staff Members of the Month for the Network Team and Primary Academy Campus. The Staff members recognized include: Russell Whitaker, Lauren Hansen, Cassie Castleberry, Tyler Hamilton, Josie Cox, Shasta Smith, and Deneshia Dinkins.

B. Parent Recognition

In addition, Mrs. Shafara Douglas was recognized for her service on the Covid council.

C. Call Me MiSTER Partnership

Also, at this time, representatives from the Call Me MiSTER Program were recognized for the new partnership between USC Sumter and Liberty STEAM Charter School. The individuals that were recognized included: Micah Vaughn, Jordan Blanding, and Gwenden Baldwin.

V. Executive Director's Report

A. Executive Director's Update

Dr. Graham provided the Executive Director's report with updates on teaching & learning, talent, family & community engagement, communication & external affairs, and operations & business administration. He noted that the school had a very successful opening but continues to refine its Covid-19 mitigation strategies.

1. College & Career Readiness (In Progress)
2. Operational Excellence (all on track except for ADA)
3. Mission Alignment (all on track except for number of low SES students enrolled and total enrollment)
4. Stakeholder Updates (Continuing collaboration with Simmons Lettre, NSVF, CSGF, and SCPCSD)
5. Q2 Priorities (MAP testing, leader coaching, curriculum implementation, GPTW execution and follow-up, budget alignments, 22-23 recruitment, and 10-year strategic planning).

After Dr. Graham's update, Dr. Ivey referred the Board to his one page leader update in the Board meeting packet noting that all 10 priorities from the last 2 months have been completed or are on track.

VI. Academy Highlights

A. Academy Highlights

During this time, Dr. Ivey provided the following highlights from the Primary Academy Campus:

1. Possip text messaging feedback survey
2. GPTW certification and follow-up
3. Invitational Tour
4. Million Word reading challenge
5. Organizational Video updates
6. Day in the life of an LSC teacher news coverage

VII. Board Committee Updates

A. Executive Committee

November 2021 Meeting:

- **Summary of Key Points**
 - **Exec Committee reviewed strategic planning updates with consultant Simmons Lettre**
 - **The presentation consisted of:**
 - **Review of current findings of research**
 - **Comparison of relevant schools/financial models**
 - **Deep dive into the foundation relationships and potential next steps**
 - **Exec Committee discussed budget notes regarding next semester and potential next steps**
 - **Update of next steps with Liberty attorney Mary Allison Caudell**

Final Action Items

- **Khalil Graham will send invite for conference call with Mary Allison Caudell**
- **Khalil Graham will make updates to finance 1 pager and have ready for board review 11/29**
- **Board Recommendations**
 - **None**

B. Finance Committee

October 2021 Meeting:

- **Summary of Key Points**
 - **Title Reimbursements are coming from the Federal gov't**

- **Students in poverty, we do not get paid for this year**
- **Claimed money on July 1st, 2021 once we became an official school**
- **Need to limit using p-cards with Federal money**
- **Still have not received Title II money we applied for last year. We have turned everything in our end.**
- **\$8,000 per pupil (average Charter school is getting) and that will be recurring. 10% to go towards projects.**
- **Debt capacity based on 300 students.**
- **Need total square footage of the facility. Based on the total max of the building capacity.**
- **Each square foot purchased will be \$214/sq ft per pupil.**
- **We need roughly \$20M worth of facilities to service 1,000 students and we are halfway to where we need to be. This covers grades 2-8.**
- **Building out Smart Fusion system for paying bills, accounting, etc.**
- **Now receiving an allocation for school nurse. Will have it for the next 9 months. Roughly \$2300/month. Will be added into June lump-sum payment**
- **\$800/teacher will not be added until January. Needs the 45-day count and will back pay us.**
- **We have allocation for Tanya Peckham that is \$700/mo until the end of the year**
- **ESOL -- funded for 1 scholar in the building who is receiving services. 2 scholars are being monitored.**
- **SEI - spreadsheet done by state department including children on medicare, fringe, poverty, etc.**
- **Have not received pupils in poverty funding and will not receive until January**
- **\$1,000/week for snacks**
- **Snacks cannot be reimbursed due to the time of children leaving the school.**
- **If everything goes according to plan, we will have a surplus of \$200,000**
- **To build cash on hand, we need more money coming in or less money going out**
- **Final Action Items**
 - **No action items.**
- **Board Recommendations**
 - **No recommendations.**

November 2021 Meeting:

- **Summary of Key Points**
 - **We need to pay the \$150,000 bill from Quixote ASAP. Use the line of credit to pay for it possibly**
 - **Need to close the gap between Liberty and Quixote Foundation**

- **\$1,000/week for snacks so we will cancel the afternoon snack. Instead, snacks are available in each classroom so if ever a student is hungry, they will have that option**
- **The Charter School District gave us access to funds based on our special education needs. Roughly \$15,000**
- **ESSER is finalizing funds and working on reimbursements. We will be reimbursed for P&I now**
- **Still waiting on the first disbursement of ESSER funds.**
- **Budget has not changed since last Finance meeting**
- **Liberty gets roughly \$6500 per pupil vs the state has as their best schools. Those per pupil are on average \$10,000**
- **We will have to fully finance site two**
- **Possibly go through a developer for our next building. Project could be completed in 18 months**
- **\$20 million to build the next building.**
- **Key decisions in January and posting jobs that are competitive**
- **Stay mindful of how we spend our money and be as frugal as possible**
- **Final Action Items**
 - **Khalil Graham to reach out to Tracie Sweet about when ESSER reimbursements will be sent**
 - **Harmony Gadson will work on transfer to give to Meagan and it will be documented in our system**
- **Board Recommendations**
 - **No recommendations at this time.**

C. Academic Excellence Committee

October 2021 Meeting:

- **Summary of Key Points**
 - **Reading and Math are on track so far for both grades**
 - **1st grade data is where it is expected to be for reading and math**
 - **3 strategies of offering support: instructional support (ESSER funding), culture support, and teacher use of data**
 - **AmeriCorps volunteers will offer 650 hours of additional support. Meeting next week for orientation. Volunteers are paid through the AmeriCorps program.**
 - **No deviation from current instructional plan**
 - **Covid Council -- strong positive changes, tracking data for masking by going classroom to classroom weekly and then inputting data into google masking sheet. Incentive is fair tickets if over 80% success with mask wearing**
 - **Transitioning to using cafeteria in November and fully functioning around Christmas break**

- **Talent reviews -- supporting performance management. Goal setting meetings utilizing leadership competencies. Each staff member sets their goals and aligns with functional goals within their workstream. All information is in the Namely system.**
- **LSC is automatically put into Tier III and have to work up to Tier I**
- **Liberty Connect -- platform for staff to go to in order to get school based information**
- **Get org chart together for 2022-2023 staff needs**
- **Final Action Items**
 - **Khalil Graham to inquire about what it means to stay in Tier III and what those consequences may be**
 - **Trevor Ivey to get phone numbers from teachers to put on website so parents can call directly to the classroom**
- **Board Recommendations**

None at this time.

November 2021 Meeting:

- **Summary of Key Points**
 - **Looking at the top 10 Elementary schools in the state and, on average, 10% of kids receive free and reduced lunch**
 - **In all of SC, students are below 25% in passing English Language Arts and Math**
 - **No charter school in the state is good when looking at the data**
 - **Our academic data is showing that we are doing the right thing and we are ahead of other schools so far**
 - **Liberty STEAM is the 6th charter school in the country that made GPTW**
 - **Optimistic about our data and where we are going**
 - **Share the we are a GPTW at the upcoming Board meeting**
 - **Utilizing Whetstone Education so the teachers can learn more about their teaching methods**
 - **Teachers will do “Get Norming” via Khalil Graham to understand the things we are supposed to be doing**
 - **Pushing teachers with planning and delivery. Coaching teachers throughout the process**
 - **Development Committee to go out and close the educational gap**
 - **Focus on building people systems which will lead to results and encourage people to stay**
 - **Board Retreat in January to really narrow down next steps**
- **Final Action Items**
 - **Cammy Chandler will attend Invitational Tour 11/30**

- **Cammy Chandler will get the contact information for the person at Wells Fargo**
- **Khalil Graham will follow up about our Giving Tree from 11/16 Invitation Tour attendees to donate**
- **Board Recommendations**

No recommendations at this time.

D. Development Committee

October 2021 Meeting:

- **Summary of Key Points**
 - **Approved previous meeting minutes**
 - **Very impressed with the Invitational Tour and turnout.**
 - **Have Greg send a thank-you letter/video for the Invitational Tour. Circle up with Teresa to see what Greg prefers. Send it out sooner rather than later.**
 - **1st or 2nd week of December for the next Invitational Tour. November 30th is ideal for bankers. Frank Edwards recommended reaching out to William Hodge out of Columbia.**
 - **Follow up with Trevor Ivey to see who from SHAW came to the Invitational Tour on 10.19.**
 - **Possibly contact the person at SHAW AFB in charge of families moving to Sumter.**
 - **Try to get Boo White and Bob Smith at First Citizens Bank to come to the next tour.**
 - **Faith leaders group -- have a single night invitational for them. Possibly November 16th.**
 - **Network For Good will work with LSC from January 2022 - January 2023 for free. Roughly \$400/mo to continue their fundraising support.**
 - **Doing research around grants. Total fundraising goal is \$2.5 million.**
 - **Federal government sees LSC as 1 entity with 4 academies. We need to adjust so the Federal Government can recognize LSC as independent entities so we can get access to funding. Biggest funder should be the state and government.**
 - **Recruiting this week at the Sumter Fair to get more scholars to apply. Dinasy Uoy is a point of contact for parents and new families. Possibly recruit at the YMCA, Dillon Park, Patriot Park and Burney Hope Center.**
 - **Continue to leverage where kids go on evenings and weekends.**
 - **As a board, let members know if there is additional support needed.**
- **Final Action Items**
 - **Reach out to Teresa so Greg Thompson can send a thank-you letter/video by next week for folks who came to Invitational Tour**

- **Dr. Marion Newton to come up with a list of faith-based leaders along with Trevor Ivey. Also see if Cammy knows anyone that could join. Have the list ready by 10.26.**
- **Dr. Graham to get a solid update on progress of fundraising on the Quixote side. Ensure we are keeping strong relationships.**
- **Trevor Ivey to reach out to Burney Hope Center to see if they are doing a Halloween activity for kids**
- **Get the sign-in sheet from Invitational Tour to send to Cammy Chandler so she can compare to who came vs did not come.**
- **Board Recommendations**
 - **November 16th Invitational Tour for faith-based leaders**

November 30th Invitational Tour for bankers

November 2021 Meeting:

- **Summary of Key Points**
 - **Enthusiasm at Invitational Tour on 11/16**
 - **A lot of curiosity in community surrounding the school**
 - **Possibly change the upcoming Invitational Tours to 5:30pm but may need to figure out how to clean the classroom in between visits**
 - **Possibly get some parents to speak at Invitational Tours**
 - **Practice with the children more for their speeches**
 - **Trying to get more bankers to come to the 11/30 Invitational Tour**
 - **Invitational Tours at least once a month moving forward. Realtors can be a target group for January**
 - **Reach out more to small businesses to get our name out there**
 - **The Eagle Giving tree goal is \$60,000. Donations range from \$10-10,000**
 - **Partnered with Wreaths for America for wreath-laying service. Possibly explore other cemeteries other than the Sumter Cemetery.**
 - **School building will be in the hands of the Quixote Foundation and they will be responsible for fundraising to pay off the building.**
 - **Get the list Greg said he would take 10 months ago and look to raise some money from potential donors**
- **Final Action Items**
 - **Cammy Chandler will reach out to Roy at Wells Fargo**
 - **Khalil Graham and Trevor Ivey to get back to JP Nixon to explore next steps with him and fundraising**
- **Board Recommendations**

Greg Thompson should try to get a dinner with Darla Moore and Marion Fowler

VIII. Scaling up Best Practices: Lessons Learned from a High-Performing Charter Network

A.

Joann Gama - Former CEO of IDEA Network Public Schools

During this portion of the meeting, the Board received a presentation highlighting best practices learned from Joann Gama from IDEA Network Public Schools. She assured the Board was headed in the right direction but encouraged them to aggressively pursue fundraising to raise the necessary capital to match their expansion plan.

IX. 10-Year Strategic Planning, Phase 1

A. Simmons Lettre - Strategic Planning Coach

During this portion of the meeting agenda, the Board received an update on the 10-year strategic planning efforts that included a review of current findings of research, comparison of relevant schools/financial models, and a deep dive into the foundation relationships and potential next steps. Mrs. Lettre encouraged the Board to read over the full presentation in its entirety in preparation for the January 5th strategic planning committee meeting.

X. Public Participation

A. Public Participation

No one participated in Public Participation.

XI. Executive Session

A. Purposes of Discussion of Negotiations Incident to Proposed Contractual Arrangements

Kimberly Rauschenbach made a motion to enter into executive session at 7:15 pm for the Purposes of Discussion of Negotiations Incident to Proposed Contractual Arrangements. Steve Creech seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Purposes of Receipt of Legal Advice

Marion Newton made a motion to enter into executive session at 7:16 pm for the Purposes of Discussion of Purposes of Receipt of Legal Advice. Cameron Chandler seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

XII. Action Items

A. Return from Executive Session

Steve Creech made a motion to return from executive session at 7:20 pm. Cameron Chandler seconded the motion.
No action was taken during Executive Session.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Item (s) Related to Discussion of Negotiations Incident to Proposed Contractual Arrangements

No action was taken.

C. Item (s) Related to Discussion of Employment, Appointment, Compensation, Promotion, Demotion, Discipline or Release of an Employee, or an Appointment to a Public Body

No action was taken.

XIII. Closing Items

A. Chairman's Closing Remarks

During this time, Chairman Thompson reminded Board members of the following upcoming events: Invitational Tour on 11/30, enrollment lottery on 12/6, shower Shaw with goodies on 12/13, and the wreath laying service on 12/18.

B. Good of the Order

During the portion of the agenda, no additional comments were made.

C. Adjourn Meeting

Ken Lee made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:29pm.

Kimberly Rauschenbach seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Tyler Hamilton