

APPROVED



Liberty STEAM Charter

Minutes

LIBERTY STEAM CHARTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NOTIFICATION OF REGULARLY SCHEDULED MONTHLY MEETING

Date and Time

Monday May 23, 2022 at 6:00 PM

Location

Liberty STEAM Charter School
15 School Street
Sumter, SC 29150

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

Cameron Chandler, Dexter WJ Davis (remote), Elayne Brunson (remote), Greg Thompson, Jenny Knopf, Ken Lee, Kimberly Rauschenbach, Rodney Thompson (remote)

Directors Absent

Marion Newton

Guests Present

Dixie DuRant, Khalil Graham, Trevor Ivey

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 May 23, 2022 at 6:00 PM.

B. Invocation

Chairman Thompson provided an invocation.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

A group of 13 founding scholars led the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Afterward, the scholars also recited the Eagle Scholar Pledge, one of the Community Culture Celebration chants, and the lunchtime "Gratitude Poem."

D. Chairman's Opening Remarks

Chairman Thompson opened his remarks with his enthusiasm for having tonight's board meeting at the campus and hopes that it will continue, noting the huge crowd of parents, staff, and scholars. He also shared with everyone his excitement in the Quixote Club's grand opening, of which over two dozen LSC staff and parents were able to participate in. He specifically noted that one of the members donated \$35,000 in prize earnings from the grand opening tournament to the Quixote Foundation, LSC's philanthropic arm.

II. Reading of the Mission & Vision Statement

A. LSC Mission Statement

Mrs. Cammy Chandler read aloud the mission statement.,

B. LSC Vision Statement

Vice-Chairman Dexter Davis read aloud the vision statement.

III. Approval of Consent Agenda

A. Today's Meeting Agenda

Cameron Chandler made a motion to approve the agenda as presented by staff. Kimberly Rauschenbach seconded the motion. The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Approve Minutes from Previous Meeting (March 28, 2022).

Kimberly Rauschenbach made a motion to approve the minutes from LIBERTY STEAM CHARTER FOUNDING BOARD OF DIRECTORS on 03-28-22. Dexter WJ Davis seconded the motion. The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IV. Board Recognition

A. Staff Recognition

The board recognized five staff members for being named Staff Members of the Month as well as the entire academy leadership team for their efforts this year. Additionally, the board recognized Shasta Smith on being named a Top 5 Finalist for SCPSCD Teacher of the Year as well as Kate Weschler for her field trip leadership.

B. Parent Partner Recognition

The board recognized a group of 21 parents for their "above and beyond" support provided in LSC's inaugural year.

C. Community Partner Recognition

The board recognized the Midlands Fatherhood Coalition & Team Robinson MMA for their efforts in providing additional enrichment opportunities to scholars this year.

V. Executive Director's Report

A. Updates from the Executive Director & Network Team

During this portion of the agenda, Dr. Graham provided a Director's Update on the school's progress towards meeting the organizational goals.

1. College and Career Readiness: According to the end-of-year MAP data, roughly 75% of scholars in both grade levels are on track to meet grade-level proficiency goals. A group of 30 scholars was identified for intensive intervention with daily pull-outs and a retest period taking place May 25-26. Summer PRIDE has been scheduled for July 18-22 and will be offered to 50 scholars in the greatest need of additional academic & cultural support during the summer months. The STEM scholar profile has not yet been created.
2. Operational Excellence: Scholar attendance and persistence are on track even due to Covid-19. Out of 23 projected hires for the 2022-23 school year, 22 individuals have been hired with the search continuing for one additional lead teacher. End-of-the-year evaluation conferences will soon begin with campus & network staff. We are two applications away from meeting the 2:1 application ratio for next year's recruitment goal. A total of 21 families are still in the process of completing their enrollment paperwork. Approximately 82% of newly enrolled families attended the annual Welcome to Liberty event.
3. Mission Alignment: All financial goals are on track to be met with end-of-the-year closeout procedures soon beginning with Smart Fusion, Organizational health surveys for each stakeholder group (staff, parents, & students) will be administered during the first week of June. Staff and parents will complete the same survey

utilized for baseline data while scholars will be taking an SEL survey. Dr. Ivey added to Dr. Graham's report that LSC's poverty index is 65% for its founding year, as this was clarified in a recent state compliance report.

VI. Academy Highlights

A. Academy Highlights

During this portion of the agenda, Dr. Ivey reviewed the following academy highlights with the board through a variety of pictures & video stories.

1. Update on the Million Word Reading Challenge
2. Welcome to Liberty New Family Orientation
3. Spring Service Learning Projects
4. Staff Appreciation Week Activities
5. Spring Family Engagement Events
6. New Staff Profile
7. Possip Feedback from Families
8. Invitational Tour Outcomes
9. Eagle Gentleman's Brunch
10. SCPCSD Amendment Hearing for Enrollment Expansion
11. SCPCSD Top 5 Finalist - Teacher of the Year
12. Charter Alliance Presentation
13. Best of Sumter Elementary School Award

VII. Board Committee Updates

A. Executive Committee

- Summary of Key Points
 - Dr. Graham reviewed roles and responsibilities with everyone on the committee. Will be set to everyone for their own review.
 - The Executive committee has acted like a Governance committee in the last year. The recommendation is a mini representation of the Board and can speak to the Board and for the Board.
 - The Executive committee has decision-making power and uses it sparingly. Ensuring that communication is a priority with other committees.
 - We could add a facilities ad hoc task force within the Executive committee.
 - Possibly invite Ken Lee to some Executive committee meetings to discuss future facilities
 - The secretary will meet with Tyler Hamilton and Trevor Ivey about the minutes to approve or adjust as needed.
 - Dave Loadholt and Gantt Williams will be able to speak about the financial health of the school under the Treasurer's umbrella.

- If the chair is not available for a committee meeting, the vice-chair can take the lead. The vice-chair would have a huge voice if we don't have strong board members.
 - In July, the goal is to complete a transition where the committees are running independently. Dr. Graham will continue to be a non-voting member and he will become an active participant and no longer facilitate.
 - Facilities task force overview: we need to forward plan. Budget planning: we must have a number of children who will be in the building. The better we know ahead of time how much the school can hold, that will allow our budget to be more aligned. Community and brand awareness: the better and earlier we can do this, the better it is for our brand. It all has to be aligned with the original building, staff, and leadership.
 - The best option financially is Aldersgate and it looks very different than School Street. We will need to plan strategically about how to communicate with our parents, tell our teams, and collaborate with church staff.
 - LSC needs to put together a one-page document as to what we need to propose to Jim McCain for Lincoln - We need a firm answer about where we will put the school. Critical 3-week deadline.
 - Cammy thinks that West End Community Association would be very supportive of LSC
 - Every leader is filling out a monthly document to discuss their priority for the quarter. Next year, teachers and operations staff will start filling theirs out.
 - At mid-year, our Scholars are on track and on grade level in reading and math
 - Reviewing all of our scholars' academic goals (conferences).
 - Gantt has prioritized our financial systems and flows. Big things: Payroll. Accounts Payable. Budgeting. Forecasting.
 - All account codes have been updated through the month of March.
 - We've spent more on Leadership Development, SPED, and Misc. We have saved on transportation.
 - Our line of credit works as long as you pay it. It does not work like a credit card and must be paid down. It will be paid by the fiscal year. We have 100k that's outstanding. We need to re-underwrite it.
 - All salary schedules for SY 22-23 have been finalized.
- Final Action Items
 - Dr. Graham, Greg Thompson, and Jim McCain to get a meeting the week of 5/2. Dr. Graham will follow up with Dexter and Jimmy after the Executive committee meeting.
 - Dr. Graham to follow up with Dr. Ivey about a one-pager for Jim McCain
 - Board Recommendations
 - Chairman Thompson asked Mr. Davis to take the lead on Lincoln (reach out to Jim McCain) which could be 2nd-8th grade. Need to have a proposal in hand. Clear membership on our board. We would need a lease structure

that would allow us to be there long-term. Emphasizing to them the commitment we have to diversity and inclusion.

B. Finance Committee

Summary of Key Points

- Dr. Khalil Graham met with Harmony and Melissa at the bank. She recommended that we would not do best with having a revolving line of credit. LSC needs to reapply for next year from 500k to 750k. It would be a one-time usage to have for the entire year. It would help until we get state and federal money later in the year.
- The finance committee will request the adjusted line of credit at the upcoming Board meeting and if approved, Dr. Graham and Harmony Gadson will go to the bank next week to complete the application.
- Harmony and Gantt Williams went to a SmartFusions training last week to learn the system more. Gantt gave an update on how the training went.
- The EOY closeout will start in 2-weeks. We will close our books by the end of the school year. We are freezing all purchase orders in the first week of June.
- Ms. Gadson and Dr. Graham will take all day on 6/1 and 6/2 to close out the books.
- Ms. Gadson gave a high-level review of the Finance one-pager for April financials.
- LSC must spend \$50,000 per quarter in order to get a rebate on our p-card purchases. Melissa at Synovus will give LSC an update within the next week.
- Dr. Graham is predicting that in mid-July we will have a confirmed state allocation.
- At 115 students per grade, our max budget would be \$3.4M. Recruitment and enrollment would have to be year-round. We would continue bringing in children until the 135th day of school.
- We are reviewing 4 separate scenarios of how the LSC budget would work next year.
- Staff salaries account for 74% of the LSC budget.
- All schools, not just charter, are responsible for the facilities cost and none are reimbursable.
- Final Action Items
 - How much revenue do we expect for the next school year? Bring this topic to the next Executive Committee meeting.
 - Working within these scenarios, Dr. Graham will work with Gantt and Ms. Gadson to get as best an idea as possible of our next school year budget.
 - Dr. Graham will fill in Kim about this meeting.
- Board Recommendations
 - None

C. Academic Excellence Committee

Summary of Key Points

- Completed MAP testing at the beginning of May.
- Dr. Khalil Graham gave a high-level overview of how MAP retesting would look for Scholars who would need it. MAP retesting would happen May 25th and 26th
- 1st grade is doing better in math but Kinder is roughly in the same place.
- Teachers must identify priority students for next year. Also looking to see who our priority teachers are and who will need additional support.
- If a Scholar is going down in their learning, teachers and leaders look closely as to why this is happening and what LSC can do to support that child.
- More first graders should be falling into a critical category due to Covid last year and being out of school.
- LSC utilizes Whetstone, a video-sharing platform, to give feedback to our teachers and clear teaching practices.
- Teachers are able to leverage Whetstone and utilize the feedback and implement it the next time they are in class.
- In terms of outcomes for teachers, the leaders give them a “glow” and a “grow” as part of their feedback process.
- Sherman Logan and Tanya Peckham are the individuals who focus on the teachers who need the most support.
- 75% of the coaching they are coaching are in classrooms that have first-year teachers.
- 10.3% of the student population will be SPED in 22-23 and the budget for SPED services has been raised to \$100,000 for next year.
- Class sizes would have to be 25-28 students per class to best set up the budget
- Current budget is set at 27.5 children per class.
- If the state passes the budget that we want for funding, we would not have to bring in new children to help the budget when children leave mid-year.
- LSC will decide on 5/31 about which students would benefit most from summer school. It will be offered the week of July 18th.
- LSC is 95% staffed and all we need is one more lead teacher for next school year.
- Final Action Items
 - Dr. Graham will have a number of critical students for math and reading in Kinder and 1st grade. He will have that ready for the Board meeting on Monday, 5/23.
- Board Recommendations
 - Jenny Knopf suggests that we would have to really support the teachers next school year due to adding more children in the classrooms.

D. Development Committee

Summary of Key Points

- Dr. Graham has created a budget that will be presented to the Board on Monday, 5/23. We can work our budget with no new donations for the next SY.
- This year and potentially next year will be harder years because we are not growing as fast.
- If you want the school to raise money, we need to have a person to do that. However, we do not have that person in the budget for this school year.
- For every 500k you want to raise, you should allocate 100k in salary for a fundraiser.
- LSC can also pay a fundraiser per grant that is written.
- Possibly look into a student who wants to learn grant writing or a retired person who is willing to help LSC more.
- LSC will pass the budget mid-July at the board retreat which gives this committee more time to decide on a FTE fundraiser.
- The Williams Brice Edwards Foundation gave \$1M over the course of 3 years. They may be a company that could continue to help LSC.
- LSC has gotten donations from CSGF, NSVF and they have their own formal process on how they want to give again.
- LSC is set to get more from CSGF and NSVF but we would have to do more relationship building.
- The Darla Moore Foundation President will be here Monday, 5/23 afternoon.
- Ken Lee suggested the Bloomberg Foundation for fundraising.
- Ken Lee says BD will be able to help LSC try to find introductions in the community. Make it very clear that we are not asking LSC for money.
- Final Action Items
 - Elayne will send Dr. Graham her contact for a grant writer by the end of the day 5/18.
 - Dr. Graham will have an update for this committee about a fundraiser by Monday, 5/23.
 - Dr. Graham will reach out to the Superintendent about the cost of a fundraiser.
- Board Recommendations
- Dr. Graham says the school is the best leverage for fundraising. Dr. Graham also recommends having a fundraiser to do tours and get the LSC name out in the community. The Board could potentially take 100% ownership of fundraising.
- Hire an FTE fundraiser for LSC.
- Or do not fundraise at all and wait for Quixote to help LSC eventually.

E. Governance Committee

Summary of Key Points

- Dr. Khalil Graham reviewed roles and responsibilities

- Discussing members of each committee and deciding who would work best on each committee
 - A potential avenue could be with the Headmaster of Wilson Hall as a collaborative thought partner. LSC would also need another thought partner from SSD. Possibly looking at another Charter School to see if they can help.
 - Ed Bynum wrote a check for the Quixote Foundation.
 - The Development Committee members are good for now, we do not need to add members or adjust due to their schedules.
 - The President of the Darla Moore Foundation is still interested in helping LSC.
 - LSC needs to have at least 3-years under our belt before we consider opening schools outside of Sumter.
 - Gifford and Gantt would not have voting privileges, but they would come in to advise.
 - Gifford could connect LSC with other financial people.
 - Student to teacher ratio is 1:14 for the classrooms.
 - K-2 will be at 15 School St. Afterwards, we will need to find another building. K-2 will have a 2:1 ratio for the classrooms.
 - For 3rd grade, there will be 1 teacher per classroom
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- Final Action Items
 - The Governance Committee will meet monthly through July and then reassess to see how often the committee needs to meet
 - Kimberly Rauschenbach to become a co-chair of the Governance committee
 - Dr. Graham to reach out to Chris Navaro from Meeting St Academy to be a thought partner with LSC.
 - Chairman Thompson will take the lead on finding someone from SSD to become an academic thought partner with LSC.
 - Chairman Thompson to look for potential accounting candidates for LSC. He thinks Gifford Shaw would be ideal to help LSC as he has an accounting degree.
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- Board Recommendations
 - Have a two-page document stating who is on each committee and who is the chair of each committee to be posted in BoT.
 - Dr. Thompson to serve as the chair of the Finance committee.
 - Dr. Graham recommends that Gantt stays on the Finance committee moving forward.
 - Chairman Thompson to discuss with Dr. Thompson about which committee he can come off of, either Finance or Academic.
 - The governance committee to take over recruitment for a member for the Academic committee who is outside of LSC.
 - The Finance Committee may need a longer time to have the meeting. 90-minutes vs 60-minute meetings.

- Dr. Graham suggests that 4th grade have 2 teachers per room.

VIII. Additional New Business

A. 10-Year Strategic Plan

Dr. Graham informed the board during this time that Simmons Lettre (strategic planning consultant) has finished up the final strategic plan draft and that a copy will be shared with all board members within the next week. With regards to site two facility planning, two final options are still being vetted. The facility's ad-hoc task force will share the final recommendation soon, with it being publicly announced in the first week of June.

B. Final Reading of the Budget

Dr. Graham reviewed the final budget reading with the board. Pending the final passage of the state budget, the budget is currently built a minimal increase. With a newly established line of credit in the amount of \$750,000 and an additional \$400,000 in philanthropic donations, the budget will be fully balanced for next year. Chairman Thompson emphasized that next year will be a tough budget year.

IX. Public Participation

A. Public Participation

No individuals signed up for public participation.

X. Executive Session

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

Kimberly Rauschenbach made a motion to enter into executive session for the purposes of discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements at 7:02 pm.

Rodney Thompson seconded the motion.

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

B. Purposes of Discussion of Personnel Matters

Kimberly Rauschenbach made a motion to add purposes of discussion of personnel matters to the executive session agenda.

Cameron Chandler seconded the motion.

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

C. Purposes of Receipt of Legal Advice

Ken Lee made a motion to add receipt of legal advice to the executive session agenda.

Jenny Knopf seconded the motion.

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

XI. Action Items

A. Return from Executive Session

Jenny Knopf made a motion to return from executive session at 7:22 pm.

Dexter WJ Davis seconded the motion.

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

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

Cameron Chandler made a motion to accept the resignation of Dr. Graham as founding executive director, effective July 15, and name Dr. Ivey as interim executive director.

Rodney Thompson seconded the motion.

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

C. Item (s) Related to Discussion of Receipt of Legal Advice & Personnel Matters

No action was taken regarding this executive session topic.

XII. Closing Items

A. Chairman's Closing Remarks

Chairman Thompson shared an official press release with Mr. Mills regarding the board's action taken from executive session

B. Good of the Order

Each director in attendance took this opportunity to thank Dr. Graham for his steadfast leadership the last two years.

C. Adjourn Meeting

Kimberly Rauschenbach made a motion to adjourn the meeting without any further action at 7:30 pm.

Dexter WJ Davis 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,
Trevor Ivey