



Liberty STEAM Charter

Minutes

LIBERTY STEAM CHARTER FOUNDING BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Date and Time

Monday June 27, 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, Elayne Brunson (remote), Jenny Knopf, Ken Lee, Kimberly Rauschenbach, Marion Newton, Rodney Thompson

Directors Absent

Greg Thompson

Guests Present

Trevor Ivey, Tyler Hamilton

I. Opening Items

A.

Call the Meeting to Order

Dexter WJ Davis called a meeting of the board of directors of Liberty STEAM Charter to order on Monday Jun 27, 2022 at 6:03 PM.

B. Invocation

Dr. Marion Newton provided an invocation.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Dexter Davis led the committee in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. Vice-Chairman's Opening Remarks

II. Reading of the Mission & Vision Statement

A. LSC Mission Statement

Cammy Chandler read aloud the mission statement.

B. LSC Vision Statement

Ken Lee read aloud the vision statement.

III. Approval of Consent Agenda

A. Today's Meeting Agenda

Dexter WJ Davis 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 (May 23, 2022)

Cameron Chandler made a motion to approve the minutes from LIBERTY STEAM CHARTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS on 05-23-22.

Kimberly Rauschenbach seconded the motion.

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

IV. Board Recognition

A. Staff Recognition

The board is hosting a "farewell party" for Dr. Graham on 7/14 from 6-8 pm at Rafters (above Hamptons). All board members are invited to attend.

V. Executive Director's Report

A.

Updates from the Executive Director & Network Team

- Dr. Graham reviewed of Driver goals for K-2.
- LSC's results are exceedingly above levels compared to the local schools in Sumter School District.
- Happy with the growth but not content and continuing to push to do better.
- LSC is above the local average for SPED.
- For critical students, you want 50% of students to hit their growth goals and LSC is above that 50% in reading and math.
- 81% employee retention although the goal is 90%. LSC is a certified great place to work. Some teachers are choosing different career pathways, going back to school to get advanced degrees, and logistics weren't ideal for some teachers.
- Attendance was finished at 95% and the goal was 97%. The biggest factor was accountability tracking and covid issues. Accountability will be higher in the upcoming year.
- Our persistence was 93% and parent satisfaction is 100%.
- Dr. Graham reviewed LSC finances as far as debt, credit worthiness, and cash flow.
- Gantt Williams, Harmony Gadson, and Dave Loadholt are closing out our books for the year.
- LSC met the socioeconomic status for SY 21-22.
- LSC wants to stay above 85% parent satisfaction with as diverse a population as us.
- College and career readiness will be complete by the next SY.
- LSC completed our operational excellence.
- LSC is on track to be fully enrolled for SY 22-23.
- Dr. Graham will meet with Simmons Lettre on 6/28 to discuss next years school plan.

VI. Academy Highlights

A. Academy Highlights

Dr. Ivey shared a short presentation in the following highlights from the Primary Academy campus since the last board meeting.

- 18,742 breakfast meals served. 21,338 lunches served.
- \$116,885.25 has been received in reimbursement from USDA for meals served this year.
- \$1,500 has been raised to purchase ukeleles for the 2022-23 music enrichment program.
- \$982 was received for picnic tables just from parents. The total needed is \$20,000.
- LSC is looking for a local option for uniforms. Audri J's boutique is where parents can go to get LSC shirts embroidered.

- August 4th is the back-to-school bash and there will be a room where parents can go anonymously and get the supplies they need.
- LSC did a time capsule project with the Scholars in the Spring and the 12 of the original Liberty Alumni came to talk to the Scholars.
- The final Community Culture Celebration occurred and the staff got their own shirts as a surprise.
- Yearbooks were provided for all founding Scholars and a signing party through raising \$2,500 from the community.
- Field Day was a great success and parent turnout was incredible. It was run almost completely by parents.
- Scholars have started being exposed to dance initiatives for 7 days at the end of the school year which was an extra enrichment class.
- End of Year Parent Focus Groups that parents were able to join. Parents were able to complete a SWOT analysis for LSC.
- Every Wednesday, LSC had a spirit night at restaurants in town and raised a little over \$2,000.
- Every child got a million-word reading shirt for meeting the yearlong challenge.
- Kindergarten and 1st grade graduation was memorable for our families. 600 family individuals came out to graduation.
- All scholars got an instructional challenge for the summer 2022 reading challenge.
- LSC will have a locked-in location, off-campus for next year for HYPE program at the Birnie HOPE Center.

VII. Board Committee Updates

A. Executive Committee

- During Executive Committee, there was a recommendation for additional campus security measures in response to the Uvalde incident. Local law enforcement came onto campus a day after Uvalde. LSC's weak spot is the gates, so there is a bid for heightened security on the gates. A security gate could add another layer that will help the facility be safer. It would protect cars and foot traffic. Could be an inconvenience for staff members and visitors, but it is necessary for safety purposes. The front desk person would monitor the gate.
- LSC is entitled to funding for SRO but the city does not have someone available. It will not be available for us for next year due to the deadline passing.
- LSC can use general funds wisely to get the gate we need. Parents were very concerned about campus security, especially after Uvalde.
- Potentially put in a maintenance agreement for the gates as they are heavy and would need some upkeep.
- Possibly ask parents their perspective on heightened security measures.

Kimberly Rauschenbach made a motion to the board to unanimously gave preliminary approval to school leaders moving forward with the installation of security gates at the

Primary Academy campus not to exceed \$40,000 with the following contingencies being met & reviewed with the executive committee by July 15. A. confirm additional costs associated with a quality maintenance plan B. confirm safety measures if the gates become without power C. collect data from parents to assess support & concerns from parents D. confirm additional costs associated with additional electric wiring being installed.

Marion Newton seconded the motion.

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

Rodney Thompson made a motion to approve the meeting schedule for the 22-23 school year.

Kimberly Rauschenbach seconded the motion.

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

B. Finance Committee

- The reserve fund has stayed the same all year.
- LSC has never missed a payroll or failed to pay any of its bills this year on time.
- Harmony and Gantt are reviewing the bills to ensure there is nothing outstanding.
- Harmony will go through final p-card reconciliation in the month of July.
- Review how the p-card is used and potentially go back to the purchase orders system.
- LSC ran financials this year like a checking account and have it run more like a business next year.
- Final numbers will come in at the 10-day count for the new funding proposal for school year 22-23. LSC would be on track for \$3.9M which is more money than we originally assumed.
- The current 22-23 budget has no donations in it.
- Dr. Graham will go over all of this one more time with Dr. Ivey prior to Dr. Graham's transition.
- As a Title I school, we have to submit a needs assessment to the state. Title I will be around \$74,000 and Title II is about \$7300. Title II can be used for teacher reimbursements for sign-on bonuses. The academic Counselor in Residence will be paid out of ESSER.

Cameron Chandler made a motion to approve the 2022-23 Title I and Title II plans as presented for this staff.

Jenny Knopf seconded the motion.

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

C. Academic Excellence Committee

- Jenny Knopf reviewed MAP data for the year, noting that 7 out of 10 scholars in the school, on average, are meeting grade-level standards in reading & math.
- Staffing and plans for next year. Looking at 5 enrichment teachers for next year.

- Recommends teaching fellow salary be to automatically receive the max cap that will be leading the classroom as the official teacher of record.
- LSC is the first school in the state to receive preliminary approval for an alternative teacher evaluation instrument from the SC Department of Education. Dr. Ivey shared that the instrument is the Guideposts for Excellent Teaching from IDEA Public Schools, which is ssentially incorporated under the existing SC ADEPT teacher evaluation business rules. There are four additional criteria to be met with revisions being due to SCDE by July 8 for final approval.

Jenny Knopf made a motion to revise the existing instructional staffing salary schedule to reflect that any non-certified teaching fellow who serves as the teacher of record for a cohort of students be automatically offered a starting salary at the maximum band of the current schedule.

Ken Lee seconded the motion.

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

D. Development Committee

- LSC has raised roughly \$30,000 over the last year.
- The Fundraising goal is \$100,000 for LSC for this school year.
- LSC had many meetings with Pilgrims prior to them donating to us.
- LSC has the metric for how many Pilgrims employees who have children who are going to school.
- Grants may become more specialized as we move forward and expand our campuses which is why having a grant writer is more important now.
- The Development Committee could do a gala to raise money for LSC. Winter could be a good time to do so.
- The school staff could be leveraged if we would do a Gala in order to raise more money. Table seats, raffles, etc.
- If LSC can get grant writing and a meeting with Pilgrims by the next Development Committee meeting, it will be something to share at board retreat on July 14th. These could be driver goals for the year to be reported out.
- In Q1, Trevor can let Victoria know what grants to apply for then let her go on her own afterward and find the grants for us. She will have check-ins with Trevor to give updates on what she's found or not.
- Federal grants come with a lot of paperwork, but with the line of credit, we will have cash.
- Final Action Items
 - The development committee agrees to move forward with Victoria Lamar with Securing Degrees about a grant writing service under a 6-month proposal. Trevor will follow up by close of business by 6/24.
 - Trevor to meet with Pilgrims and Williams Brice Edwards to give a year-end report.

- Trevor to give Dexter Davis Prisma contact information.
- Trevor to follow up with Steve to follow up with Continental.
- Khalil sends the venture capital list to Trevor by close of business 6/23.
- Trevor set up a new meeting with Keith Martin, plant manager and Dexter Davis on 6/28.
- When Shake Foundation (Chick Fil A) is something that Dexter can take the lead on.

E. Governance Committee

- Dr. Graham reviewed the board retreat for next month as the board will own the retreat.
- Greg met with Dave, Gantt, and Dr. Thompson about the finances to get more clarity on where LSC is.
- Dave Loadholt would stay on to help LSC until December 2022.
- Dave and Gantt should report to Dr. Thompson as he is the board chair of Finance.
- Greg is looking to have minimal use on p-cards moving forward for the next school year.
- Biggest roadblock on p-cards is the Synovus system. It isn't as user-friendly and very difficult to use.
- LSC met with the elder group 3 times from Aldersgate and a few tweaks have been made for the architect. Once Aldersgate signs the lease, hopefully by July 31st, for 5 years.
- The portables that are added to Aldersgate will be owned by LSC.
- \$300,000 over the life of the lease which is \$5,000/month for 5 years and full renovations covered by Liberty.
- LSC to either rent or buy the land behind Aldersgate to use for portables so that it does not interfere with the pumpkin patch.
- 16 classrooms plus the building to spread out in year one and will get LSC through 5th grade. 2nd, 3rd, and 4th will be at Aldersgate.
- Leave grade sizes the same one children leave school street location.
- To carry on the tradition and legacy of the future location of Lincoln, LSC could call it Lincoln high school. "Liberty at Lincoln" is a possibility.
- \$2M cost for Aldersgate including the modulares. Buying used modulares is the better option due to the delay times for the new ones. LSC wants modulares and not portables.
- Church meeting scheduled for July 25th from 6-6:30 pm to sign off on it and they have to take it to their church leader to sign off on. Church wants to hear from a board member, teacher, Greg, etc. which will be similar to an Invitational Tour.
- LSC will not change the spending side of the budget even though we have more money.

- LSC will have 345 kids on the first day of school. On the 100th day is when that number may change. Whether LSC decides to backfill the positions or not. Balance the roster on the 10th day of school.
- LSC wants to keep the 2:1 ratio in the classrooms for SY22-23.
- LSC is now a Title I school and receiving 73k next year due to our pupils in poverty percentage.
- A school leader and an Operations person need to be an FTE.
- The more kids we bring in will generate more income.
- Final Action Items
 - Trevor to inquire about the land behind Aldersgate by 6/25.
 - Greg to do a video recorded message for the July 25th church meeting.
 - If there needs to be an advocate for LSC, Kim Rauschebach is more than happy to go out and do so in case there are naysayers.
 - Trevor to get with the attorney to get his contract updated to present to the executive committee tomorrow, 6/23.
- Board Recommendations
 - New board member mentors. Dexter will be a mentor for Elayne and Cammy will be the mentor to Jenny. Will be discussed at the board retreat.
 - Possibly go into the public charter school alliance policy manual and approve what will work for LSC and just do the bare minimum to ensure we can grow with a document we like and can move forward with by July 14th. The draft should be available by July 14th. Kim to take the HR portion and Rodney to take the finance portion.
 - Update Trevor's contract to reflect his interim status by the June 27th board meeting.
 - Co-teachers through the 4th grade are what is really needed. Smaller class size and two teachers through the 4th grade.

VIII. Additional New Business

A. 10-Year Strategic Plan: Site 2 Updates

Dr. Ivey provided a brief update on the progress made with the location of the second site to house LSC's elementary academy. Conversations are promising with Aldersgate United Methodist church officials. A church council presentation is scheduled for July 25. If approved at that time, a lease agreement can be negotiated so that a general contractor can be hired through an RFQ process and in place to begin renovations no later than September 15.

B. B. Final Reading of the 2022-23 Budget

Dr. Graham provided an update on newly approved budget projections that have been approved by the SC General Assembly and signed into law by Governor McMaster for the new fiscal budget year. As part of the newly approved projections, charter schools will receive an additional 1.25 WPU (Weighted Per Pupil) on top of the base student cost of

1.0 WPU while the new WPU for all pupils in poverty will be .5 WPU and SPED scholars will be weighted at 2.6. Assuming we meet our maximum enrollment targets of 345 on day 10, this translates into roughly \$650-900K of additional funding for next school year. Dr. Graham stated no new positions will be added but the coteacher model would be honored for all grade levels and recommended the surplus be put in the reserve fund.

C. EOY Organizational Health Data

Dr. Ivey presented a yearend data presentation regarding staff, scholar, & family satisfaction.

- 83% of staff say LSC is a Great Place to Work
- 80% or higher of scholars feel they are safe at LSC and that their teachers care about them
- 99% of families are satisfied with the home-school relationship.

D. Looking Ahead: 2022-23 School Year

Dr. Ivey provided a short synopsis of new plans for the upcoming school year to include the revamped master schedule that allows two daily SEL learning blocks, a total of 90 minutes planning for teachers, 12 enrichment offerings, and a restructured Friday early release schedule that incorporates club offerings. One set of teacher pairs in first and second grade are scheduled to team teach in the new school year. LSC is still hiring for its in-house guest teacher pool and two additional teaching fellows.

E. EOY Academic Achievement Data

Dr. Ivey reviewed EOY academic achievement data with board directors, explaining that grade level proficiency was calculated with three data points from MAP to include the percentage of scholars meeting their NWEA set growth targets, the percentage of scholars who exceed their growth targets, and the conditional growth percentile that measures each class' growth compared to nationally normed targets. When taking those three points into consideration, grade level proficiency for both grade levels in reading & math is roughly 70%. Dr. Ivey is working to prepare subgroup data reports and will have that information to share with board directors soon. The focus now will be in ensuring that we have small group pullout intervention services beginning the first week of school.

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

Cameron Chandler made a motion to enter into executive session for the Purposes of Discussion of Negotiations Incident to Proposed Contractual Arrangements at 8 pm.

Dexter WJ Davis 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 executive session topics at 8:01 am.

Jenny Knopf seconded the motion.

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

XI. Action Items

A. Return from Executive Session

Cameron Chandler made a motion to return from executive session at 8:22 pm.

Kimberly Rauschenbach seconded the motion.

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

B. Item (s) Related to Discussion of Personnel Matters

Cameron Chandler made a motion to approve the personnel report as presented by the Chief of Staff.

Rodney Thompson seconded the motion.

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

XII. Closing Items

A. Vice-Chairman's Closing Remarks

Vice-Chairman thanked directors for their patience in a longer-than-usual board meeting tonight and the level of engagement shown. he reminded everyone of the following engagements: the summer retreat & Dr. Graham's farewell party on July 14. All directors are encouraged to participate in the July 25 Aldersgate presentation and the 2nd annual Chairman's Dinner on August 2.

B. Good of the Order

No directors commented during this portion of the agenda.

C. Adjourn Meeting

Cameron Chandler made a motion to adjourn the meeting with no further business taken.

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 8:31 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Trevor Ivey