APPROVED

Liberty STEAM Charter

Minutes

LSC Board of Directors Meeting

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Date and Time
Tuesday May 26, 2026 at 5:30 PM

Location
Junior Academy
1057 Broad 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.

MISSION: Liberty STEAM Charter works to provide all students with equal access to a world-class K-12 education in an academically rigorous and student-centered learning environment, creating graduates who will be thoughtful and engaged citizens prepared to take on the leadership challenges of the 21st century.

VISION: In partnership with our families and community, our vision is to provide real-world interdisciplinary, personalized, and project-based learning experiences through a STEAM-based academic program where graduates become the next generation of leaders, employers, and employees who contribute to the economic well-being of their communities and families.

Directors Present

(Tajma) LaShea Davis, Cameron Chandler, Greg Thompson, Heather Bass, Jenny Knopf, Marion Newton, Rodney Thompson, Shafara Douglas

Directors Absent
Kimberly Rauschenbach

Ex Officio Members Present
Trevor Ivey

Guests Present
Amy Hansen, Gifford Shaw

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 Tuesday May 26, 2026 at 5:30 PM.

B. Invocation

Marion Newton gave an invocation.

C. Pledge of Allegiance Led by Primary Academy Eagle Ambassadors

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Primary Academy Eagle Ambassadors.

D. Reading of the Mission and Vision Statements

Greg Thompson read the mission statement, and Cammy Chandler read the vision statement.

II. Approval of Consent Agenda

A. Meeting Agenda and Minutes from Previous Meeting

Motion to approve the consent agenda consisting of the meeting agenda and the minutes from the previous meeting LSC Board of Directors Meeting Special Called Meeting on 05-13-26.
With no objections, the consent agenda was approved.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

B. Consent Agenda Previous Meeting Meetings

Motion to approve the consent agenda consisting of the meeting agenda and minutes from previous meetings LSC Board of Directors Special Called Meeting on 03-30-26.

With no objections, the consent agenda consisting of the meeting agenda and minutes from the May 13, May 30 Special, and May 30 regular meeting was approved.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

C. Consent Agenda Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the consent agenda consisting of the meeting agenda and minutes from LSC Board of Directors Meeting on 03-30-26.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

III. Board Recognition

A. Amazing Shake Scholar Recognition

Dr. Ivey led the recognition of our LSC Amazing Shake Finalists. This initiative focuses on developing scholars' public speaking, communication, and workplace readiness skills. Scholars participated in classroom activities, impromptu speaking exercises, professional introductions, memorized speeches, and mock interviews. The program concluded with a competitive "Gauntlet Round," where finalists demonstrated a variety of communication and problem-solving skills. Seven finalists were in attendance and recognized for their outstanding performance.

IV. Public Participation

A. Public Participation

There was no registered public participation.

V. Executive Director's Report

A. Monthly Update

The board received a presentation from Primary Academy Director LeAndrea Montgomery highlighting organizational progress, staff development initiatives, leadership coaching outcomes, and instructional pathway opportunities during the school year.

Mr. Montgomery shared updates on efficiency and performance goals, noting continued progress toward the organizational target for scholar achievement of 85%, with current performance at 82%. Staff survey results reflected strong levels of pride, meaningful engagement in work, and positive perceptions of the learning and working environment, while also identifying opportunities for continued growth in staff support and recognition.

The presentation also included updates regarding executive coaching and CLI performance data, which reflected measurable growth and performance above participating school averages. Additionally,

Mr. Montgomery highlighted opportunities provided to scholars through the instruction pathway program, including hands-on learning experiences connected to technical skills and higher education pathways.

Mr. Montgomery concluded by emphasizing the importance of teamwork, collaboration, and maintaining a culture focused on continuous improvement and scholar success.
Elementary Academy Director Sally Harris presented an academic, operational, and culture update highlighting continued scholar growth and organizational progress across the elementary academy.

The board was informed that fifth grade math achieved 77% proficiency, with 86% of scholars meeting growth targets. Additional data showed strong growth among CFI scholars in reading and math, with fourth and fifth grades approaching the organization's 80% proficiency benchmark. Administration also highlighted measurable SPARK assessment growth across all categories from December through May. Language arts data was unavailable for some grade levels due to changes in testing standards.

Ms. Harris shared updates regarding instructional alignment and academic planning, including dedicated teacher planning days next year focused on pacing, assessment checkpoints, and curriculum rigor. She emphasized continued efforts to align instructional expectations across grade levels.

Operational metrics shared included strong attendance, meal participation, staff retention, parent satisfaction, and low chronic absenteeism rates. She reported 68 discipline referrals across the academy, including 25 from fifth grade, and discussed continued efforts to strengthen scholar culture, mental health supports, and middle school readiness.

Other highlights included intentional family and community engagement efforts through monthly touchpoints and partnerships, as well as continued focus on classroom organization, scholar leadership, and shared accountability for campus culture.

The board was informed that expanded family orientation sessions will be implemented next year to support updated standards, communicate expectations, and strengthen scholar success.
Dr. Ivey presented the Executive Director's May update, reporting that 34 of 48 benchmarks are currently on track to be fully met, reflecting 92% overall progress toward organizational goals. He highlighted strong performance in teaching and learning, family engagement, and strategic priorities, including achievement of the organization's 3-to-1 application ratio target with 1,912 applications received for the 2026–2027 school year.

Dr. Ivey reported that 100% of teaching and learning goals remain on track, including completion of state testing, end-of-year assessments, and SEL initiatives. Leadership also reviewed priority focus areas and identified challenges for the upcoming school year, including areas where additional support may be needed.

The board was informed that LSC received a United States Department of Education grant totaling $1,752,000 to support higher education initiatives for sixth grade scholars. The funding will be incorporated into the FY27 budget. Dr. Ivey noted that this marks the fourth time the organization has received the federal grant award and recognized staff for their efforts in securing the funding.

Dr. Ivey also shared excitement regarding the organization's readiness to serve 1,061 scholars across three campuses next school year, noting that staffing is nearly complete with only a physical therapist position remaining open.

VI. Board Committee Updates

A. Executive Committee Update

Cameron Chandler made a motion to accept and approve the Emergency Action Plans as submitted for both Liberty STEAM Charter School campuses, 1057 Broad Street and 15 School Street.
(Tajma) LaShea Davis seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

B. Academic Excellence Committee Update

Committee members received comprehensive academic and organizational updates from Ms. Smiling, Dr. McDonald, and Dr. Ivey that focused on student achievement, instructional improvement, organizational culture, and planning for the 2026–27 school year. Updates included kindergarten and first-grade academic performance, CSI scholar growth outcomes, intervention implementation, differentiated instructional supports, progress monitoring structures, instructional coaching and co-teaching models, staffing and academic forecasting, Cognia feedback, professional development planning, PLC development, teacher-led instructional planning initiatives, and leadership alignment efforts.

Dr. Ivey reviewed organizational goal progress, reporting continued improvement in reading and math proficiency rates, positive student and staff culture indicators, and strong SPARK staff survey results ranking at or above the 95th percentile across measured domains. Additional discussion included curriculum and technology planning, inclusion classroom review findings, staffing projections, climate survey considerations, FY27 budget preparation, and upcoming graduation planning and announcements.

Dr. McDonald presented an instructional curricula request for board approval recommending adoption and it is noted that the proposed curricula align with organizational academic priorities, instructional improvement efforts, and South Carolina Public Charter School District requirements for formal board approval of new instructional materials.

Jenny Knopf made a motion to approve the instructional curricula resolution: National Geographic (NG) Learning/Cenage-NG World History Great Civilizations, 1st Edition, Grade 6 Houghton Mifflin-Into Literature-Grades 6-8 Everfi Platform-Eagles Excel-Grades K-12.
Cameron Chandler seconded the motion.
WHEREAS, Liberty STEAM Charter School is committed to providing high-quality, standards-aligned instructional materials that support student achievement and whole-child development; and

WHEREAS, the South Carolina Public Charter School District requires formal board approval for the adoption of new instructional curriculum; and

WHEREAS, school leadership has reviewed and recommended the following curricula to support academic excellence and student growth:

- National Geographic (NG) Learning/Cenage-NG World History Great Civilizations, 1st Edition, Grade 6
- Houghton Mifflin-Into Literature-Grades 6-8
- Everfi Platform-Eagles Excel-Grades K-12

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of Liberty STEAM Charter School hereby approves the adoption and implementation of the above-listed curricula, effective for the upcoming academic term, as presented by school leadership.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be submitted to the South Carolina Public Charter School District in compliance with all applicable requirements.

ADOPTED this 26th day of May 2026.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

C. Development Committee Update

The Development Committee received a monthly report from Ms. Chambers providing updates on enrollment, attendance, family engagement, scholar programming, and community partnerships. End-of-year enrollment closed at 911 students with a 97% retention rate, and attendance outcomes showed significant improvement over the prior year, with ADA finishing at 96%.

Also shared was positive family engagement results, including more than 10,800 volunteer hours completed and strong parent satisfaction survey feedback. Updates were also provided on the incoming kindergarten class, continued demand for enrollment, and ongoing implementation of the PATH career development initiative, including expanded career exploration opportunities and community service learning projects.

Dr. Ivey presented updates on grants, partnerships, sixth-grade expansion planning, early college discussions, safety compliance, and FY27 budget development. Leadership reported receipt of the $250,000 Yass grant installment and the $30,000 Summer Reading Camp Grant, along with submission of a $1.752 million Congressional Community Grant application to support sixth-grade expansion efforts. Additional updates included ongoing PATH partnership development, workforce readiness planning with Central Carolina Technical College, and continued preparation for FY27 budget approval.
Heather Bass made a motion to approve and accept the Congressional Community Grant application and any associated award funding in support of the school's sixth-grade expansion initiative, and authorize school leadership to execute all necessary documents and actions related to the grant in accordance with applicable requirements.
(Tajma) LaShea Davis seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

D. Finance Committee Update

The finance committee reviewed FY26 year-end projections, including approximately $11 million in recurring revenue, $9.7 million in salaries and benefits, and operating expenses projected below budget at approximately $3 million. Leadership projected approximately $200,000 in positive cash flow and improvement from 25 to 44 days cash on hand. Current enrollment stands at 912 students, with FY27 enrollment projected at 1,065 students.

Food Services presented operational updates highlighting strong breakfast and lunch participation, 100% ServSafe certification for staff, positive state recognition, and preparation for an additional 150 students next year. Discussion included staffing needs, training opportunities, long-term planning for future high school operations, and a proposed transition to a new meal management system to improve compliance tracking, inventory management, student allergy alerts, reporting, and operational efficiency.

The proposed FY27 budget projects approximately $17.16 million in revenue and $16.69 million in expenses, with an estimated $428,000 contribution to cash reserves. Following approval of the budget at first reading, projected revenues have increased by approximately $700,000 due to the addition of recently awarded grants. Salary and benefits expenses have increased by approximately $450,000, and overall projected expenses have increased by approximately $300,000.

Rodney Thompson added that the committee will review PCS/PCA vendor proposals and budget impact, continue planning for food service staffing, operational growth, and equipment replacement reserves.

The administration and committee has also begun the annual review of our financial policies and procedures to bring before the board for consideration at the June board meeting. The committee discussed potential expansion of the existing mall campus by up to 5,300 square feet to support chorus, drama, dance, and expanded arts programming. Proposed lease

terms would remain at or below the current lease rate, with an estimated annual budget implications of approximately $53,000 beginning in FY28. It is important that negotiations begin soon due to lease renewal timelines and future space availability.
Rodney Thompson made a motion to approve the finance consent agenda consisting of the Second Reading of the FY27 Budget and that the Board authorize the Finance Committee to negotiate a lease expansion agreement for additional space at the mall campus location, not to exceed 5,300 square feet and at a lease rate not to exceed the current lease rate, with final execution authority delegated to the Executive Committee.
Marion Newton seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

E. Governance Committee

The Governance Committee received presentations regarding athletics expansion planning and amendments to the attendance procedures.

Athletics discussion included projected timelines, required documentation, anticipated 1A classification, and possible future consideration of 2A placement based on geographic fit and travel considerations.

Attendance updates reflected continued improvement, with chronic absenteeism decreasing from 55 scholars to 31 scholars this year. Additional Attendance Success Plans and interventions for chronically absent scholars were discussed.

The committee began the annual LSC policy review process and discussed proposed amendments. Policies under review include Board Governance Policies, Financial Policies and Procedures, Operational Policies, Personnel Policies Handbook, Human Resources Policies, and the Scholar and Family Handbook, including proposed revisions to Code of Conduct and scholar attendance procedures.

In addition, the governor’s recently signed grading ban legislation will require amendments to our Best Practices in Grading policy manual.

The committee also received material in the meeting packet related to positive HR audit findings with minor recommendations related to employment postings, training on school platforms, and new employment reporting requirements, and continued academic growth in reading, math, and projected science performance.

All policy and procedures amendments and acceptance of any related governing material will be brought forward for Board consideration, acceptance, approval, and/or adoption at the June and/or July meeting.

VII. Executive Session

A.

Purposes of Discussion of Negotiations Incident to Proposed Property Contractual Agreements, Proposed Contractual Agreements, Individual Student Disciplinary Matter, and/or Discussion of Personnel Matters.

Cameron Chandler made a motion to enter into executive session for the discussion of negotiations incident to proposed property contractual agreements, proposed contractual agreements, individual student disciplinary matter, and/or discussion of personnel matters.
Marion Newton seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
Upon consensus, the Board returned to open session.

VIII. Action Items

A. Any Action Related to Executive Session Item(s)

B. Individual Student Disciplinary Matter

Cameron Chandler made a motion to uphold the recommendation of the administration regarding the Individual Student Disciplinary Matter as discussed in executive session.
Greg Thompson seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Jenny Knopf	Aye
Heather Bass	Aye
Kimberly Rauschenbach	Absent
Marion Newton	Abstain
Cameron Chandler	Aye
Shafara Douglas	Aye
Greg Thompson	Aye
(Tajma) LaShea Davis	Abstain

C. Executive Director's Monthly Personnel Report

Rodney Thompson made a motion to approve the monthly personnel report.
Cameron Chandler seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

D. Leadership Position Employment Agreement

Cameron Chandler made a motion to that the Board ratify and acknowledge the execution of the employment agreement previously authorized by Board action on May 13, 2026, for the leadership position effective July 1, 2026.
Rodney Thompson seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
Tonight marks an exciting and significant moment in the continued growth of Liberty STEAM Charter School.

For the past seven years, co-founder and most recent Executive Director Dr. Trevor Ivey has worked alongside the original Board of Directors since the inception of Liberty STEAM Charter School to help guide and support the vision that has brought the organization to where it is today. Together, we have worked tirelessly to transform a dream into a thriving reality for scholars, families, and the Sumter community.

Today, as our organization continues to grow and expand, our current Board of Directors, current dreamers of this vision, and Dr. Ivey remain committed to building upon that foundation and moving Liberty STEAM Charter School toward the realization of a full K–12 educational experience. As we continue this work, Dr. Ivey will remain instrumental in helping shape the future growth and long-term success of the organization.

Effective June 30, 2026, Dr. Ivey submitted his resignation as Executive Director, and the Board formally accepted his resignation effective June 30, 2026. Following this transition, he will assume the role of Chief Executive Officer of the Liberty Foundation. In this new capacity, he will continue advancing the mission of Liberty by leading efforts to cultivate partnerships, recruit support, and secure resources from across the state and nation to benefit our scholars, families, and community. We are deeply grateful for his visionary leadership, commitment, and unwavering dedication to Liberty STEAM Charter School.

The Board is pleased to announce that, following tonight’s ratification vote, Dr. Brenda Hafner will serve as the next School Leader and Superintendent of Liberty STEAM Charter School beginning July 1, 2026.

Dr. Hafner brings a tremendous wealth of educational leadership experience to this role. Most recently, she served as Superintendent of Lexington School District Two, and she is also familiar with the Sumter community through her previous service in a senior district leadership role with Sumter School District at the assistant superintendent level.
We are excited to welcome Dr. Hafner to Liberty STEAM Charter School and look forward to the leadership, experience, and commitment she will bring as we continue building toward the future envisioned for our scholars and community.

Additionally, the Board approved the personnel recommendation for Candidate A to serve as Junior Academy Director for Liberty STEAM Charter School.

This candidate brings more than 20 years of classroom experience and over a decade of educational leadership experience to the role, including service in district-level leadership and school administration positions.

We are excited about the experience, leadership, and commitment this candidate will bring to Liberty STEAM Charter School, and additional information will be shared later this week.

IX. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amy Hansen