APPROVED

Liberty STEAM Charter

Minutes

LSC Board of Directors Meeting

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Date and Time
Monday June 22, 2026 at 5:30 PM

Location
Thompson Training Center
110 N. Main 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 (remote), Kimberly Rauschenbach, Marion Newton, Shafara Douglas

Directors Absent
Rodney Thompson

Ex Officio Members Present
Trevor Ivey

Guests Present
Amy Hansen, Gifford Shaw, Michelle McDonald

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 Jun 22, 2026 at 5:30 PM.

B. Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, Reading of Mission and Vision Statements

Marion Newton gave an invocation.
Greg Thompson led the Pledge of Allegiance.
Greg Thompson read the mission statement.
Cameron Chandler read the vision statement.

II. Approval of Consent Agenda

A. Meeting Agenda and Minutes from Previous Meeting

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

III. Charter School Accountability S. 454

A. Director Resignation

Cameron Chandler shared that the Board had received notice of the South Carolina Charter School Accountability Act and its signing into law by the Governor on May 15, 2026. In accordance with this legislation and applicable Board governance requirements, this matter requires compliance with statutory conflict of interest provisions governing Board membership.

The Board acknowledged receipt of notice regarding the South Carolina Charter School Accountability Act, and due to statutory compliance requirements, the Board received the resignation of Director LaShea Davis.

LaShea Davis provided remarks reflecting on her service, commitment to the organization's mission, and appreciation for the Board and leadership.
Cameron Chandler made a motion to Accept the resignation of Director LaShea Davis.
Marion Newton seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

B. Director Appointment and Oath of Office

A motion was made and approved to appoint Dr. Bill Bennett to the vacated Board seat.

Dr. Bennett took the oath of office and was officially sworn in as a Board Director.
Cameron Chandler made a motion to appoint Rev. Dr. Bill Bennett to the seat vacated by LaShea Davis.
Marion Newton seconded the motion.
Bill Bennett was administered the Oath of Office by Dr. Ivey.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

C. Director Officer Election

Nominations were opened for Board Secretary.

- Kimberly Rauschenbach nominated Shafara Douglas
- No additional nominations were received

Cameron Chandler made a motion to elect Shafara Douglas to the office of secretary of the Board.
Marion Newton seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

IV. Public Participation

A. Public Participation

There was none.

V. Executive Director's Report

A. Monthly Update

Dr. Ivey provided the executive director's report covering:

- Summer school program (“Pride Pathways for Respect, Innovation, Discipline, and Excellence”) with 103 scholars served
- FY27 budget priorities and alignment with organizational goals
- 30/60/90-day leadership transition plan with incoming superintendent
- Board evaluation summary process and transparency reporting

Dr. Michelle McDonald presented Cognia accreditation results.

Key highlights:

- Liberty Steam Charter School achieved **Cognia Accreditation with Distinction**
- Overall score: **3.61**
- Cognia network average: **2.97**
- Strong performance across:
  - Stakeholder feedback (Level 4)
  - Student performance (Level 4)
  - Learning environment (Level 4)
  - Leadership, engagement, and growth domains exceeding network averages

Strengths Identified:

- Continuous improvement culture
- Strong respect and learning culture
- Data-driven instructional excellence

Areas for Improvement:

- Strengthen PLC implementation
- Enhance professional development alignment
- Increase student agency in learning
- Improve coaching cycle consistency

Outcome:
The organization was formally recognized as **Accredited with Distinction**, the highest level of Cognia accreditation.
Next steps include:

- PD plan alignment
- PLC restructuring
- Coaching model improvements
- Pursuit of STEM accreditation

VI. Board Committee Updates

A. Executive Committee Update

Executive Committee
Consent agenda approved including:

- FY27 organizational goals
- Committee meeting schedule
- Campus expansion lease ratification

Cameron Chandler made a motion to approve the consent agenda consisting of FY27 Organizational Goals FY27 Board/Committee Meeting Schedule and To ratify the June 16 action of the Executive Committee that approved the final Mall Campus expansion lease agreement and authorized the Executive Director to execute and deliver the agreement on behalf of the organization effective immediately as of that date June 16, 2026.
Marion Newton seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

B. Academic Excellence Committee Update

Academic Committee
Highlights included:

- Strong special populations programming
- National Unified Champion School recognition
- Summer programming success
- Nearly full staffing for upcoming year
- Continued strong academic growth
- Expansion of PATH program (42 partners)

The Academic Committee received a year end update on Special Populations programming and celebrated several notable accomplishments, including National Unified Champion School recognition, continued success of Liberty's full inclusion model, and strong academic growth among scholars receiving specialized services. The committee also reviewed staffing additions for the 2026-2027 school year and discussed priorities focused on strengthening instructional rigor, increasing accountability and compliance, building staff capacity, and closing achievement gaps while maintaining Liberty's commitment to full inclusion.

The committee received updates on summer programming, including Summer CREATE and Summer PRIDE, both of which experienced strong participation and positive family engagement. Members also reviewed upcoming policy changes related to Read to Succeed requirements, attendance expectations, and Attendance Success Plans for scholars with chronic absenteeism.

Dr. Ivey reported that Liberty is nearly fully staffed for the upcoming school year, with recruitment continuing for a part time Physical Therapist. He also shared that Liberty

continues to demonstrate strong academic growth and remains among the highest growth charter schools measured by Charter School Growth Fund metrics. Organizational goals for 2026-2027 were reviewed and will be presented to the Board for approval.

The committee received a budget update indicating a projected contribution of approximately $400,000 to reserves and anticipated achievement of the 60 day cash on hand benchmark. An update was also provided on the PATH Program, which has expanded to 42 PATH Partners, with year round engagement activities planned.

C. Development Committee Update

Development Committee
Highlights included:

- Strong family engagement and satisfaction
- Continued enrollment outreach efforts
- Proposal for after-school program
- Grant updates and PATH partner expansion
- Athletics and enrichment planning

The Development Committee received a year end update on family and community engagement efforts, highlighting strong parent satisfaction, high participation in volunteer and family engagement programs, and continued success in supporting scholars through meaningful PATH experiences such as Hopes and Dreams, Reality Town, and college visits. Committee members discussed opportunities to strengthen systems, increase family accountability, and enhance communication as Liberty continues to grow.

The committee reviewed enrollment updates and ongoing efforts to fill available seats for the upcoming school year while welcoming new families through onboarding activities and Hopes and Dreams sessions.

Ms. Chambers presented an initial proposal for a Liberty operated after school program designed to provide scholars with a safe, structured environment that includes academic support, enrichment opportunities, and STEAM experiences. The committee expressed support for continued exploration of the concept and recommended gathering additional family feedback to assess interest and long term sustainability.

Dr. Ivey provided an update on development and grant activities, including the receipt of a Summer Reading Camp Grant, continued planning for the Congressional Community Project Grant, and the submission of several additional grant applications to support school initiatives and PATH programming.

The committee also received an update on the PATH Program, noting that nearly all PATH partners have confirmed participation for the 2026-2027 school year. Efforts are underway to strengthen partner engagement through standardized partnership agreements, year long

collaboration plans, and participation in upcoming events such as the Chairman's Reception. Committee members commended the continued growth of the PATH program and its impact on scholar career exploration.

The committee reviewed proposed athletics and enrichment offerings, preliminary FY27 budget information, organizational goals, and the draft Board and Committee meeting schedule.

D. Finance Committee Update

Key updates included:

- Revenue approximately $11M vs $11.2M budget
- Projected positive reserve contribution (~$200,000–$400,000 range discussed)
- Lease agreement finalized for mall campus expansion
- Insurance policy updates and renewal recommendations
- Signing authority updates for FY27
- FY27 budget progression and federal program authorizations

A motion was made and approved for:

- Insurance policy renewal
- Signing authority updates
- FY27 budget approval (final reading)
- Federal program authorizations (Titles I–IV)

The Finance Committee reviewed the school's current financial position and year-to-date performance. The school ended May with approximately 45 days cash on hand and enrollment nearing 913 scholars. Revenue is tracking slightly below budget at about $11 million compared to $11.2 million, while expenses in salaries, benefits, and operating costs are projected to come in under budget. Although philanthropic revenue is expected to fall short, more than $600,000 in contributions is anticipated before year end, with net reserves expected to increase modestly by under $200,000.

Discussion on liquidity highlighted the ongoing goal of reaching 60 days cash on hand. The school would need approximately $498,000 to reach that benchmark, with leadership noting that anticipated contributions and remaining grant payments, including a Strategic Compensation Grant installment, are expected to help close the gap. Members emphasized the importance of strengthening reserves to reduce reliance on short-term borrowing during the early part of the fiscal year prior to state funding cycles.

Several operational updates were reviewed, including lease expansion, federal programs, food services, and insurance planning. The lease expansion was confirmed at the current rate, with a correction increasing allowable square footage from 5,300 to 5,800. Federal programs remain on track with reimbursement claims exceeding thresholds, while

additional guidance is pending on Title I allocations and grant drawdown schedules. The food services transition is progressing with implementation underway and expected savings through platform efficiencies. Insurance renewal discussions resulted in support for shifting the renewal cycle to November 1 and selecting HUB as the recommended agent, with projected coverage increases while maintaining costs within budget.

For fiscal planning and governance items, the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 budget totals approximately $15.8 million, with a projected reserve contribution of about $35,000, below the desired $400,000 target and dependent on continued fundraising and grant support. Organizational goals and year-end reporting were reviewed with no major changes, aside from updated accountability measures. The committee also supported updates to check signing authority effective July 1 and recommended approval of policy manuals, budget adoption on final reading, insurance strategy changes, and future reporting on federal funding alignment with the school's needs assessment.

Heather Bass made a motion to Insurance Policy for three year commitment with HUB international with annual renewal after 11-1-2027 Check Signing Authority Effective July 1 naming Chairman Greg Thompson, Designated Director Kimberly Rauschenbach, Superintendent Brenda Hafner, Finance Director Heather Green, and Development Director Gifford Shaw, and for our Operating and Donations accounts, naming Chairman Greg Thompson, Designated Director Kimberly Rauschenbach, Superintendent Brenda Hafner, Development Director Gifford Shaw; Finance Director Heather Green and Finance Coordinator Harmony Gadson Third and Final Reading of the FY27 Budget Title I, II, III, IV Authorizations effective July 1, 2026.

Cameron Chandler seconded the motion.

To authorize the superintendent to serve as the representative for the South Carolina Department of Education Application for Grants to meet the special educational needs of educationally deprived children under Title I of Public Law 103-382;

for Grants to increase the academic achievement of all students by helping schools and districts improve teacher and principal quality and by ensuring that all teachers are highly qualified through professional development activities for Title II;

for Grants to provide instructional activities and services to meet the special educational needs of limited English proficient and immigrant students under Title III of Public Law 107-110;

for Grants which are intended to improve the students' academic achievement by increasing the capacity of States, LEAs, schools, and local communities by (1) providing all students with access to a well-rounded education; (2) improving school conditions for student learning; and (3) improving the use of technology in order to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students. **And** to authorize the superintendent to allocate any federal programs allocations from SCPCSD to reflect the comprehensive needs assessment supervised by the boards' academic committee May 2026.

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

E. Governance Committee

The Governance Committee reported that the annual review of board policies, procedures, and bylaws has been ongoing since the May 26 Board meeting. Proposed amendments and revisions were reviewed and refined through committee-level discussions.

The majority of updates were classified as **non-material revisions**, including clarifications, operational updates, and alignment improvements across organizational documents.

Material Policy Updates Included:

- **Check Authorization and Financial Controls**
  - Updates to check authorization procedures and account oversight responsibilities
  - Revisions reflecting updated financial signing authority tied to leadership transition and internal controls
- **Attendance Policy**
  - Revisions to attendance expectations and enforcement procedures
  - Inclusion of provisions requiring participation in summer learning opportunities for chronically absent scholars as part of attendance recovery and intervention supports
- **Scholar Code of Conduct (Grades 6–12)**
  - Updates to behavioral expectations and disciplinary language
  - Clarification of re-enrollment provisions for expelled scholars
  - Refinements to intervention pathways and disciplinary consistency
- **Grading Policies and Procedures**
  - Removal of grading floor provisions in alignment with recently enacted South Carolina legislation
  - Updates to ensure compliance with state accountability and grading requirements
  - Clarification of grading practices to reflect best practices and current law
- **Scholar and Family Handbook Updates**
  - Incorporation of revised attendance expectations
  - Updated discipline and academic progression language
  - Alignment with revised code of conduct and grading policy changes
- **Board Governance Manual and HR Policies**
  - Updates reflecting leadership title changes (including transition from Executive Director to Superintendent)
  - Compliance updates tied to the South Carolina Charter School Accountability Act
  - Refinements to personnel governance language and reporting structures
- **Financial Policies and Procedures**
  - Updated signature authority for financial transactions effective with the upcoming fiscal year
  - Revised account authorization protocols for operating and donations accounts

    - Alignment of fiscal controls with leadership transition and board oversight structure
- **Political Activity Policy**
    - Revised to allow elected officials to participate in school events in their official capacities during election periods
    - Language added to ensure compliance with applicable regulations while maintaining appropriate boundaries for political engagement

The Governance Committee emphasized that these revisions are designed to:

- Ensure compliance with newly enacted state legislation
- Strengthen internal controls and financial oversight
- Improve clarity and consistency across governance documents
- Align policies with current operational practices and leadership structure

All updated documents were presented in draft form within the board packet for full board consideration and approval.
Cameron Chandler made a motion to approve the Annual policy and handbook review completed Revisions to: the updates and amendments as reflected in the LSC Annual Policy Review for LSC Scholar and Family Handbook Code of Conduct Revisions for Grades 6–12 including Code of Conduct Language Regarding Re-enrollment of Expelled Scholars Scholar Attendance Brochure Attendance Policy Best Practices in Grading Policies and Procedures LSC Board Governance Policies LSC Financial Policies and Procedures LSC Operational Policies LSC Personnel Policies Handbook LSC Human Resources Policies.
Marion Newton seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

VII. Executive Session

A. Purposes of Discussion of Negotiations Incident to Proposed Property Contractual Agreements, Proposed Contractual Agreements, Individual Student Disciplinary Matter, Executive Director's Evaluation, and/or Discussion of Personnel Matters.

Executive Session
The Board entered executive session for:

- Contractual negotiations
- Student disciplinary matter
- Executive Director evaluation
- Personnel matters

VIII. Action Items

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

Open Session Actions
The Board approved the following:

- Memorandum of Understanding with Sheriff's Office for School Resource Officers (75% district contribution)
- Student disciplinary recommendation upheld
- Monthly personnel report approved
- Executive Director evaluation accepted
- FY27 organizational chart approved

Cameron Chandler made a motion to for Purposes of: Discussion of Negotiations Incident to Proposed Property Contractual Agreements; Proposed Contractual Agreements; An individual Student Disciplinary Matter; The Executive Director's Evaluation, and Discussion of Personnel Matters.
Marion Newton seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
Upon consensus, the board returned to open session.
Cameron Chandler made a motion to Board approve the Memorandum of Understanding with the Sheriff's Office for School Resource Officer services, with the district contributing 75 percent of the SRO base salary, effective July 1, 2026.
Kimberly Rauschenbach seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

B. Individual Student Disciplinary Matter

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

C. Executive Director's Monthly Personnel Report

Kimberly Rauschenbach made a motion to approve the monthly personnel report.
Shafara Douglas seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

D. Executive Director's Evaluation

Kimberly Rauschenbach made a motion to accept the executive director's evaluation as discussed in executive session.
Marion Newton seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

E. FY27 Organizational Chart

Cameron Chandler made a motion to accept the FY27 organizational chart.

Heather Bass seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

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 6:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amy Hansen