APPROVED

Liberty STEAM Charter

Minutes

LSC Board of Directors Meeting

https://www.youtube.com/@thelibertydifference

Date and Time
Monday September 28, 2026 at 5:30 PM

Location
LSC Primary Academy, 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.

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.

Core Values: Commitment to Excellence, Lead with Integrity, Welcome and Expect Accountability

Directors Present
Bill Bennett, Cameron Chandler, Heather Bass, Jenny Knopf, Marion Newton, Rodney Thompson, Shafara Douglas

Directors Absent
Greg Thompson, Kimberly Rauschenbach

Ex Officio Members Present
Brenda Hafner

Guests Present
Amy Hansen, Gifford Shaw, Heather Green

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

Cameron Chandler called a meeting of the board of directors of Liberty STEAM Charter to order on Monday Sep 28, 2026 at 5:30 PM.

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

The invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, mission statement, vision statement, and Board core values were presented.

II. Approval of Consent Agenda

A. Meeting Agenda and Minutes from Previous Meeting

Motion to approve the consent agenda, including the previous meeting minutes and current meeting agenda LSC Board of Directors Meeting and Summer Retreat on 08-25-26.
With no objections, the consent agenda, including the previous meeting minutes and current meeting agenda, was approved.

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

III. Public Participation

A. Public Participation

No members of the public were registered to speak.

IV. Superintendent's Report

A.

Monthly Update

Dr. Brenda Hafner provided an update on progress toward the 2026 to 2027 organizational goals in the areas of college and career readiness, operational excellence, mission alignment, culture of excellence, and financial strength.

College and career readiness measures included common assessment mastery of 61.6 percent in reading and 50.14 percent in math. Additional yearlong growth and mastery measures remain in progress. Million Word goals will be reviewed at the November 6 checkpoint. The state rating will be updated following the release of October 15 reports. The current AFO rating is Tier 1.

Under operational excellence, scholar daily meal participation was reported at 97 percent, exceeding the 75 percent goal. Average daily attendance was 96.16 percent, exceeding the 95 percent target. Scholar persistence continues to be monitored throughout the school year.

Current enrollment was reported at 1,651 scholars across three campuses, exceeding the goal of 1,610. The socioeconomic percentage was reported at 72 percent compared with a goal of 70 percent. Stakeholder engagement measures continue to be collected through surveys and volunteer participation.

Staff engagement was reported at 85 percent compared with a 90 percent goal. Teacher and employee retention will continue to be evaluated throughout the year. ADP retention data was reported at 99 percent following the departure of three staff members. Future reports will separate teacher retention from overall employee retention.

In financial strength, approximately $158,500 has been raised toward the $1.5 million fundraising goal. The FY26 audit is in progress, with submission to the South Carolina Public Charter School District scheduled for October 15. Financial priorities continue to include fundraising, financial stewardship, and long term sustainability.

Possip Update

Dr. Hafner reviewed the September Possip results included in the Board packet. Possip provides an ongoing opportunity to hear from Very Important Parents, Very Important Teachers, staff, and fifth and sixth grade scholars. September feedback provided information regarding satisfaction, experiences, and areas requiring additional attention.

Campus leaders review feedback, identify trends and hot areas, and complete follow up when appropriate. The ongoing process supports listening and responding while preserving the Liberty Way, including the culture, relationships, and values foundational to Liberty. The goal remains to be forward focused, energized by the people of Liberty, and rooted in what makes Liberty Liberty.

No questions were raised regarding the superintendent report.

V. Board Committee Updates

A. Executive Committee Update

Cameron Chandler shared that the Executive Committee received monthly updates from all three Academy Directors. Updates included progress in PLCs, coaching, instructional rigor, MTSS, and culture. Identified needs included common planning, staffing transitions, Chromebook equipment, lesson plan alignment, and distributed leadership.

The committee also reviewed updates from the standing committees and noted Board action for September 28 included proposed human resources policy amendments related to Civil Air Patrol leave. A budget plan will also be developed and presented for future consideration of needed Chromebook equipment.

B. Academic Excellence Committee Update

Jenny Knopf shared that the Academic Committee reviewed instructional priorities including standards alignment, instructional rigor, common formative assessments, data driven PLCs, coaching, and professional development.

Special populations currently support 143 scholars with IEPs, 44 scholars with 504 plans, and 118 scholars receiving intervention services. Gifted and talented programming currently serves approximately 113 scholars, with continued growth in identification and enrichment opportunities.
Culture and scholar support initiatives, including Character Strong, Culture Camp, Backpack Buddy, and scholar support specialists, are underway.

All committees were informed that the FY26 A.F.O. and Annual Report have been posted on the Liberty website. The A.F.O. report reflected progress toward academic and organizational goals, including 98 percent certified staffing, 100 percent Board governance training completion, compliance with federal and IDEA requirements, completion of the annual audit without identified concerns, and 60.96 percent of expenditures directed toward instruction.

C. Development Committee Update

Heather Bass shared that the Development Committee reviewed family and community engagement, including 97.5 percent attendance, completion of all 30 Attendance Success Plans, preparations for the October lottery, and continued family engagement activities. Scholar persistence was reported at 99 percent.

Foundation and PATH updates included approximately $160,000 in philanthropic giving, continued grant activity, progress toward early college and technical high school planning, and completion of the PATH preconnect day.

Moving forward, foundation priorities include development planning, grant requirements, fundraising, communications support, and preparations for the Charter School Growth Fund site visit.

D. Finance Committee Update

Rodney Thompson invited Heather Green to present the finance committee update. The Finance Committee reviewed the current financial dashboard. Cash on hand was approximately 29 days, primarily due to the timing of state funding and reimbursements, with September receipts beginning to come in. Enrollment and recurring revenue remain on target. Salaries and operating expenses are tracking within budget.

The long term goal is to add approximately $300,000 to reserves to support approximately 60 days of cash on hand.

The committee reviewed updates to the credit card and receipt process, which is at 100 percent completion, food service technology implementation, purchase order procedures, and ADP implementation. No current financial risks were identified.

The committee also reviewed current bank debt of approximately $20.8 million. Core expenses were slightly above target but remained below the prior year. Lease payments were temporarily behind due to additional Mall Campus expenses but had caught up in September, with payments expected to increase going forward.

E. Governance Committee

Cameron Chandler shared that the Governance Committee reviewed Board governance requirements and retreat priorities. All Directors have completed required annual training. The South Carolina Public Charter School District is developing a process for annual ethics training requirements. Oath of Office and conflict of interest documentation are complete.

The committee received an athletics update regarding community partnerships currently serving approximately 120 to 130 scholars, potential future sports offerings, facility considerations, and transportation and participation requirements.

Beginning October 1, 2026, South Carolina law requires employers of all sizes to provide unpaid job protected leave to eligible employees who are members of the Civil Air Patrol, including up to 30 days per calendar year for emergency service operations and up to 10 days per calendar year for Civil Air Patrol training.

The committee reviewed Liberty’s policies and procedures to ensure alignment with the new law. Amendments were made to pages 18 and 49 of the policy manual and page 56 of the personnel handbook. Information regarding the new law was also included in the meeting packet.

Action Taken:
A motion was made and seconded to approve the governance consent agenda, including the human resources policy and personnel handbook amendments related to Civil Air Patrol leave. The motion passed without opposition.
Shafara Douglas made a motion to approve the Governance Consent Agenda, consisting of the Human Resources Policies and Personnel Handbook amendments, bringing these documents into compliance with the new South Carolina law regarding Civil Air Patrol leave.
Heather Bass seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

VI. Executive Session

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

Shafara Douglas made a motion to that the Board Enter into Executive Session for Purposes of: Discussion of Negotiations Incident to Proposed Property Contractual Agreements; Proposed Contractual Agreements; Individual Student Disciplinary Matters; and Discussion of Personnel Matters.
Bill Bennett seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
With no objections, the Board returned to open session.

VII. Action Items

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

B. Superintendent's Monthly Personnel Report

Shafara Douglas made a motion to Approve the Monthly Personnel Report.
Bill Bennett seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

C. Individual Student Disciplinary Matter A

Motion to I move to uphold the recommendation of the administration regarding the Individual Student Disciplinary Matter for Student A as discussed in executive session.
Rodney Thompson seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Greg Thompson	Absent
Cameron Chandler	Aye
Marion Newton	No
Shafara Douglas	No

Roll Call	
Rodney Thompson	Aye
Kimberly Rauschenbach	Absent
Bill Bennett	Aye
Heather Bass	Aye
Jenny Knopf	Aye

D. Individual Student Disciplinary Matter B

Heather Bass made a motion to I move to uphold the recommendation of the administration regarding the Individual Student Disciplinary Matter for Student B as discussed in executive session.
Rodney Thompson seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Shafara Douglas	No
Greg Thompson	Absent
Jenny Knopf	Aye
Kimberly Rauschenbach	Absent
Marion Newton	No
Heather Bass	Aye
Bill Bennett	Aye
Rodney Thompson	Aye
Cameron Chandler	Aye

VIII. 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 7:18 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amy Hansen

Documents used during the meeting

- 5th Scholar (SEPTEMBER) (1).pdf
- 6th Grade Scholar (Sept).pdf
- Kinder VIP SEPT (1).pdf
- 1st Grade VIP- SEPT.pdf
- 2nd grade VIP sept.pdf
- 3rd Grade VIP Sept.pdf

- 4th Grade VIP (Sept).pdf
- 5th grade VIP (SEPT).pdf
- 6th Grade VIP (SEPT).pdf
- PA Staff (Sept) (3).pdf
- EA Staff (SEPT) (4).pdf
- Ja Staff (SEpt) (3).pdf
- Network Staff (SEPT) (3).pdf
- SEPT ICON Possip 5th and 6th Scholars.pdf
- SEPT ICON Possip JA.pdf
- SEPT ICON Possip EA.pdf
- SEPT ICON Possip PA.pdf
- SEPT ICON Possip Network.pdf
- 20260922 Executive Committee Meeting One Pager.pdf
- 20260921 Academic Committee One Pager.pdf
- 20260922 Development Committee One Pager.pdf
- 20260921 Finance Committee One Pager.pdf
- 20290921 Finance Dashboard_organized (1).pdf
- Updated Aug26 RevExp New Form (2).pdf
- 20260922 Governance Committee One Pager.pdf
- 20260928 Amendment LSC Human Resources Policy Manual Board Approved.docx - Google Docs.pdf
- 20260928 Amendment Leave LSC 2026-27 Personnel Policies Handbook Board Approved - Google Docs.pdf