

APPROVED



## STEM School Highlands Ranch

### Minutes

#### Board of Directors Meeting

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**Date and Time**

Tuesday November 7, 2023 at 5:30 PM

**Location**

P-tech Building

8920 Barrons Blvd

Highlands Ranch, CO 80129

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Webinar Link: Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device: Please click this URL to join. <https://zoom.us/j/97049693895?pwd=RSxvcVh2ay8rSVdvWTFJRHExaFNLUT09>

Passcode: 919339

Link to Meeting Presentation Slides

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**Directors Present**

C. Gustafson, E. Quigley, G. Shick, I. Kalra, K. Reyna, L. Davison, M. Horne, R. Lukez, R. Theret (remote)

**Directors Absent**

None

**Ex Officio Members Present**

M. Cartier

**Non Voting Members Present**

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M. Cartier

**Guests Present**

A. Westfall, L. Kovalesky, M. Gasser, N. Bostel, S. Ake

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**I. Opening Items**

**A. Record Attendance**

Rudy arrived at 6:10pm.

**B. Call the Meeting to Order**

K. Reyna called a meeting of the board of directors of STEM School Highlands Ranch to order on Tuesday Nov 7, 2023 at 5:31 PM.

**C. Pledge of Allegiance**

**D. Reciting of the Mission Statement**

**E. Approve Minutes**

I. Kalra made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Directors Meeting on 10-03-23.

C. Gustafson seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

G. Shick	Abstain
K. Reyna	Abstain
E. Quigley	Aye
I. Kalra	Aye
C. Gustafson	Aye
R. Lukez	Aye
R. Theret	Aye
M. Horne	Aye
L. Davison	Aye

**II. Academic Excellence**

**A. Student Updates**

Student Government presented past and upcoming Events: Homecoming, pep rally, spirit week, powderpuff, and trunk or treat.

MS has their food drive and dance coming.

**B. STEM FRC Team IMPULSE**

Moved to next month.

**C. Executive Director Report - STEM**

L. Kovalesky-

Prospective Spartan Night was a success.

DEI Committee and Access- Continue building safety and inclusivity.

Building needs- Heating and cooling in the HS rooms, plumbing issues continue to be worked out.

**D. 2024-25 Curriculum Approval**

M. Gasser-

Went through all the course proposal - surveys were submitted. If there is not enough interest in it, we will not be able to run that class next year.

BOD Question: What are the differences between the presentation and the information that was sent to the BOD.

Answer- In the surveys we are looking toward trends that may mitigate some of the loss of girls in MS and HS and instead encourage retention.

Elementary are moving forward with a pilot in math and this will be revisited in January to see if they want to continue with Eureka Math or try something different.

M. Gasser has submitted an 22.5 M Electric Vehicle Grant. If approved, we will have the EV Pathway and would be the first HS in USA with Electric Vehicle training - We will know whether we have the grant in early Jan 2024.

This grant is for Opportunity Now which is workforce readiness. Our students would be able to be employable at graduation, so it is a trade pathway but can also branch off into other areas and partnerships. Once we have an EV pathway set up, ACC does not have the ability to grow, so we can rent that space to them and grow to biomedical engineering.

C. Gustafson made a motion to approve the list of courses as presented.

G. Shick seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

R. Lukez Absent

**III. Community Updates**

**A. Center for Strength**

Center for Strength, Jess Monda

Center for Strength filed an extension to get us through the school year. It will end May 2024.

Some of the programs we offer include:

EMERGE: 3-6th gr.- 8 kids consistently attend

Parenting Skills for STEM families

Solace: LGBTQ Support

Green Leaf Society: Grounding through gardening

Referrals for therapy are increasing.

The Continuum of a Trauma-Informed Life

How do we help our community through the closing of Center for Strength?

PTO- adopt events and support commemoration.

SAC- helping the Enrichment Program fundraise to grow these programs.

Consider who is doing some of the things mentioned above and transition to working with them.

## **B. PTO Bi-annual Updates**

Jeanie Brevoort and Irene Shick- Current PTO Positions

Ongoing Yearly Fundraisers- Bubble run, STEM Gives, Colorado Gives Day, Skate City, King Soopers App, and Silent Auction (still working).

We also have Grant Funds to School from last year for Fall and Spring Grants.

Yearly Events- Swim event, Picnic in the Park, Back to School Nights, Movie on the Green, STEM blast Off, Bubble Run, Skate City, Cookie exchange, Sweetheart Dance, Skate City, Wish Week, After Prom, STEM Fest.

## **IV. KOSON Schools**

### **A. CIO Updates**

M. Cartier-

Examined what we are working on to encourage student retention and budget planning.

Net Promoter Score measures "How likely am I to refer STEM To a friend or family member"

Strategic Thinking and Budgeting process- Operational plans to look at 5-year plans, and budget forward.

Support and evaluation process - Looking at what it takes to be a successful leader.

Bellweather will be beneficial here.

Hiring of HR and Facilities Director

Enrollment Review-1401 total enrolled- macro and micro reasons that he has found to explain our declining enrollment.

Board Question and Answer

> For the enrollment Plan, we can look at hiring a PR Firm?

- Yes, I'm for it if it's in the budget. we did this in 2017 so it's something we have explored before with good results. I think the Bellweather Fund will help us as well and we should be considering the timing.

> We are in a different environment than we were 6 years ago, homeschooling, cost of living, cost of bringing up a kid, we also have some different competitive spaces as well. So, we may need to redefine for people what STEM means and how we are a good fit for the complete child. How can we differentiate ourselves?

> SBL - Spring '24 we will revisit how this is going and to present this to prospective students

## **B. Finance Quarterly Report**

S. Ake - introduced Jim Hinkle to speak about the Annual STEM Financial Audit

Jim Hinkle is presenting the audit results including the purpose, independent process, reason why is an audit is needed, and full vs modified accrual.

Opinions, Results for STEM, Transparency, Audit Summary, Highlights

An annual audit is required for any entity that requires public funds and is submitted to the school district. The procedures are created by AICPA and are in accordance with generally accepted standards for all governmental entities. The auditor looks at internal evaluation and controls and makes sure that all those controls are in place, including Segregation of Duties, checking for material weaknesses.

Based upon their review- STEM had no deficiencies or material weaknesses. All items have been accounted for correctly. There were no issues, disagreements, audit adjustments, past adjustments, evidence of management talking to another auditors. Hinkle has offered an Unmodified (Clean Opinion) of STEM Financial statements.

BOD Question and Answer:

>Do you do a risk assessment of the software that we are using?

-No, we do accounting practices or risk of misstated accounting financial statements.

>Should we add a line item saying that we are going to appoint \_\_\_\_\_ to complete the Audit in the 4th quarter of the Fiscal year?

- Hinkle and Co. is hired and fired by the BOD. If you were to vote to appoint me or anyone else as the auditor each year, that would be appropriate.

BOD noted to add voting to adopt auditors to May meeting.

S. Ake-

Included in the Board Packet: Management Discussion and Analysis, 3-year Income Statement and Balance Sheet EOY Comparisons, Industry Ratios, Previous Year

comparison, Current Year Budget Update, Ancillary Items, Guaranteed Interest investment 5-year Contract

> S. Ake encourages the board to look at the industry ratios to see how well we are doing as a school financially. DCSD Ratios will come out in February so we will be able to look at those comparisons as well.

Please note:

The audit is posted on the STEM Financial Transparency page.

Free and Reduced increased from 77-120. We are looking at how will we be supplementing this moving forward.

Budget Vs. Actuals for the period ending and the new budget will need to be approved.

## **V. Board Committee Updates**

### **A. Governance Committee - Board Policy Updates**

Policies for annual review are: IT Student Data and Electronic Device Monitoring. There were no comments or discussion on these policies from the Board.

Equal Access to Facilities has been provided to the Board as a draft and will be on the agenda for approval for the December 5th BOD meeting.

### **B. B. CIO Support and Evaluation Committee**

E. Quigley-

We were awarded a grant to work with [Bellwether Consulting](#) to help us construct a plan for future growth and development. We want everyone to have a sense of ownership in the school. We need to discover what will indicate success and how is it measured. Bellwether team members will be visiting STEM to learn about our school as part of the Colorado Strategic Growth Institute cohort.

We are taking a simplified approach to M. Cartier's evaluation this year by setting a long-term goal and instead of having too many items to evaluate him on, we focus on three items: Modeling, Strategic Planning and Budgeting, and Leadership Development.

Evaluation will be done Mid-year and a Summative Evaluation at the end of the year.

Evaluation is not to determine if his contract renews, it is to continue the relationship. The BOD will be voting on the long-term goals as well as the evaluation.

Replication will be discussed in subsequent years. For this year, we are looking at what can we assess this year, and then build upon.

C. Gustafson made a motion to approve the long term goals and medium goals as identified in the evaluation and listed here: Long-term Goals: Long-term goal (~3 years): Cultivate a culture that encourages ownership, teamwork, innovation, and an overall commitment to excellence. Medium-term goals (2023-2024): Operational Goals: Model the ownership, teamwork, innovation, and overall commitment to excellence we are

driving toward our long-term goal. Initiate campus-wide strategic thinking and budgeting process that will drive the school's strategic priorities. Develop the Shared Services Team by (re)defining roles and expectations, providing regular feedback on performance, and setting up structures for productive collaboration with each other, STEM HR, and future schools.

R. Lukez seconded the motion.

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

## VI. Board of Directors Update

### A. Upcoming Agenda Items

December 1st- We should have people appear before the new board for DCSD with positive narrative about our school for our community.

December 5th BOD Meeting- we have facilities update

December 12th- DCSD BOD charter approval. Attendance is encouraged.

## VII. Public Comment

### A. Public Comment Sign up link

No one signed up for public comment

## VIII. Closing Items

### A. Adjourn Meeting

L. Davison made a motion to adjourn public meeting at 7:39pm.

I. Kalra 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 7:39 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
M. Horne

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Never Stop Innovating! We envision a world of exponential possibilities where every child develops the innate knowledge, skills, creativity and character to thrive, lead and succeed in an ever-changing future.