

Utah State Charter School Board Meeting
Minutes
August 16, 2007
North & South Board Rooms
Utah State Office of Education

APPROVED

Members present: Julie Adamic, Joel Wright, John Pingree, Eric Smith
Members excused: Scott Smith, Barbara Killpack, Brian Allen

Staff present: Marlies Burns, Gary Belliston, John Taggart, Jeannie Rowland, Melinda Fatani, Jo Schmitt

Others present: Superintendent Harrington, Janene Bowen, representatives from Utah Virtual Academy, Navigator Pointe Academy, and Ogden Preparatory Academy

Call to Order

Chair Julie Adamic called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Vice Chair Eric Smith and seconded by Member Joel Wright to approve the minutes from the July 19, 2007 State Charter School Board Meeting. The motion was carried unanimously.

Charter School Board Chair's Report

Chair Julie Adamic informed the SCSB of the meetings that are being held with Representative Bigelow, District Representatives and the Utah Association of Public Charter Schools, (UAPCS). UAPCS has not met with those individuals in July or August, but will be meeting in September. They are to the point in discussions to talk about line items and how funding will flow. Ms. Adamic stated she felt she would have a more complete report in the SCSB September meeting in regards to those meetings.

Board Standing Committee Reports

- Communications Committee-Director Marlies Burns informed the SCSB the Communications Committee did not meet this month, so there is nothing to report.
- Annual Conference Committee-Vice Chair Eric Smith informed the SCSB the committee had discussed potential dates for the next conference and also had discussion of the conference being put on by the UAPCS and not by the state office. Mr. Smith stated the feeling of the committee, with the SCSB's approval, to dissolve the Annual Conference Committee and he would become a liaison to the association's conference committee. Member Joel Wright questioned what benefit would there be having the association put on the conference. Mr. Smith stated the conference tends to be a fund raiser for most charter school associations, and he feels the best approach is to support the association and to allow the schools themselves to put on the conference. Vice Chair Smith suggested an action item on the next SCSB Meeting's agenda to dissolve the Annual Conference Committee, and again, he would become the liaison to support the association along with the state office's resources being available.
- Accountability Committee-Chair Julie Adamic informed the SCSB the Accountability Committee met last week and had a discussion to rename the Accountability Report to Accountability Program Review. That document literally is a program review to help hold the schools be accountable to their own charter. It is not necessarily additional paperwork, but would require a site visit, answering questions and providing evidence of compliance.
- Charter School Assistance Committee-Member Joel Wright informed the SCSB the committee has a definite goal to create a comprehensive list of providers for goods or services charter schools might need

or want. There was discussion to have the provider list information posted on the web; any provider can post their information, but the state office provides no computer support services. The providers will be listed with names of schools they have performed services for in Utah, which allows charter schools to contact other charter schools to know of their experience was with the providers. Member John Pingree questioned Mr. Wright if they will require the providers to list all the people they have given service to, or would they be able to select those they want to have people contact. Mr. Wright informed the SCSB they will be asking the providers what charter schools have they provided service for in Utah, knowing they would have no way to verify their answering truthfully. Mr. Pingree suggested listing the contact person by name at each school or organization. Mr. Wright stated the Business Manager at each school is who they are making the list for, and then the Business Manager would in turn take the list to the Principal, Director or the Board of the school. Mr. Wright also stated they hope to have this information on the web by late October or early November. The plan is to put all providers and services on this list, even if they haven't volunteered to be there, but anyone wanting to have their name taken off, their names would be removed.

Chair Julie Adamic stated because of Board Members needing to leave today's meeting early, the SCSB would move to the action items on the agenda, and address the information items at the end of the meeting.

Accountability Program Review

Director Marlies Burns informed the SCSB the Charter School Staff would like to give training and support to charter schools as much and as early as possible, and in order to do that she feels there needs to be an approval of the Accountability Program Review document before the staff starts that training and support. The staff hopes to start the accountability process next year, so if it is adopted now, it would give the staff six to eight months to introduce the schools to the process. Ms. Burns informed the SCSB that the first 20 pages of the document references how to write goals. In the middle of the document there are 15 pages that talk about what the charter school staff would be looking for at the school. Most of the items the school has already completed. The school is not asked to turn those items into the state, but rather show the Charter School Staff evidence of how those items were completed. The last 15 pages are instructions again of how to write a good goal with several pages of resources for help. Member John Pingree asked Ms. Burns if this is required in statute. Ms. Burns informed the SCSB that in R277-481, currently as it is written, it requires the State Board of Education have a team visit schools to determine accountability. Ms. Burns also stated that since the SCSB has been put in place, this requirement should really fall on them to look at charter school's accountability. Ms. Burns stated she feels the State Charter School Staff should have a process in place to help the SCSB determine accountability. Member Pingree urged this process be as simple as possible, because of all the necessary requirements the schools have to get started. Ms. Burns stated this process is for their third year of operation, so they have two years to get "geared up". The first year, their only responsibility is to write goals, if they want to have goals beyond what was written in their original charter. The second year they would be working on those goals and collecting data. The third year the state office is asking them to submit how they did on their goals, and the fourth year the office would actually go visit and follow-up making sure they accomplished their goals; it really is a five year process.

Motion was made by Member Joel Wright and seconded by Member Eric Smith to adopt the Charter School Accountability Program Review. The motion was carried unanimously.

Utah Virtual Academy Presentation and Recommendation

Representatives from Utah Virtual Academy presented to the SCSB information regarding the school and provided the SCSB the requested information and documentation from last month's meeting: 1) a budget that specified a constant student population of 500; and 2) select a curriculum provider (K-12) and have a signed conditional agreement with that provider.

Superintendent Harrington inquired as to the grades of the 500 enrollee; she was informed that the school would enroll grades K-12 students, but the first year would most likely be grades K-11. Also, Ms. Harrington asked if there was a deliberate alignment with Utah's Core and the K-12 product. She was informed they had done an

alignment exercise with grade level requirements and did a blueprint alignment to their scope and sequence at the unit, lesson and page level. An additional question by Superintendent Harrington inquired if the K-12 product is accredited in and of itself or does that accreditation come through the schools wherein K-12 is inserted. She was informed that K-12 has CITA accreditation (Commission on International Trans-Regional Accreditation), which is accreditation of the curriculum program and the delivery methods. Superintendent Harrington questioned what type of arrangement Utah Virtual Academy foresees for children coming to a building vs. not coming to a building. She questioned what kind of ratio or percentage do they see happening? Superintendent Harrington was informed that currently in the district model they have fieldtrips where the children gather together to a location to do activities with the teachers, and most likely Utah Virtual Academy will do the same along the Wasatch Front, or in Washington County. There will not be a physical building that will house students, but a school office will lease space locally. Also the school will contract for adequate testing facilities for state testing.

Chair Eric Smith, Members John Pingree and Joel Wright, Chair Julie Adamic, Director Marlies Burns, and Gary Belliston raised concerns regarding the school's budget spreadsheet, administrative services, funding, test scores of students, other virtual choices in the State of Utah, student placement, issuance of graduation diplomas, uniqueness of Utah Virtual Academy that is not currently being provided by districts, certified librarian and counselor, proof of the integrity of student performance, Special Education services, the service agreement with K-12, the target population and outreach program of the school, and the school's goals. After much discussion it was discovered the State Charter School Section had not received Utah Virtual Academy's complete application. Utah Virtual Academy was requested to provide a complete document electronically reflecting changes to the school's board, an updated signature page reflecting the new board chair, a new budget portion of the application showing a "zero" balance, a corrected enrollment configuration, and the math and attendance goals.

Motion was made by Vice Chair Eric Smith and seconded by Member John Pingree to approve for recommendation Utah Virtual Academy's charter application pending the SCSB's review of the updated document. The motion was carried unanimously.

Amendment Requests

- Navigator Pointe-Judy Farris, School Director, presented to the SCSB the amendment request for Navigator Pointe Academy's Charter to align the board's organizational structure with R277-470-12 regarding parent involvement, and specifically the election of a parent board member. Director Marlies Burns questioned Section 6, 4c where the document states "If this member resigns, or is removed, before their full term is complete, no mid-term election will be held to make a replacement." Ms. Burns questioned if the school intends to leave the position vacant, or would they appoint a parent to fill that role. The SCSB was informed the intent of Navigator Pointe Academy's board, since the other members of the board are appointed, is to take action to appoint a board member should that occur, ensuring they would appoint a parent as that board member.

Motion was made by Vice Chair Eric Smith and seconded by Member Joel Wright to approve the amendment request for a change in Navigator Pointe Academy's governance structure, with the knowledge if there is a vacancy on the board, another parent will be appointed to that position. The motion was carried unanimously.

- Ogden Preparatory Academy-Representatives from Ogden Preparatory Academy presented to the SCSB the amendment request for a waiver from State Board Rule R277-470-11 Expansion for Approved Charter Schools. Director Marlies Burns clarified their request is not to expand to grades 10-12, but to expand to a second building, but not on property adjacent to their present location. Because they are landlocked where they are currently located, their intent is to locate as closely to their present location as possible.

Motion was made by Member Joel Wright and seconded by Vice Chair Eric Smith to approve for recommendation Ogden Preparatory Academy's waiver request to expand to another facility and location, but to narrow the request to a two mile radius from their existing facility. The SCSB stated the reason they are recommending approval of the waiver request is Ogden Preparatory Academy is unable to expand under reasonable economic conditions. The motion was carried unanimously.

Charter School Teacher of the Year

Lynne Herring, Director of Freedom Academy, introduced to the SCSB Zulma Castaneda, the Charter School Teacher of the Year. Ms. Herring stated Ms. Castaneda has done an outstanding job while she has been employed at Freedom Academy and feels it is an honor to be associated with her. She is the epitome of a professional, she's dedicated to the learning and nurturing of children. For the past two years, Zulma has taught math and Spanish daily to 450 students. Ms. Castaneda has also taught an early morning accelerated Spanish class, sponsored a native speakers conversation club, designed and orchestrated a school-wide Cinco de Mayo celebration, assisted with all the fine arts events held at the school. Most recently she has taken a team of non-native Spanish speaking students to a BYU Language Fair competition and returned with a team sweepstakes award. All of these efforts demonstrate outstanding dedication and excellence in her personal philosophy of education and to the students at Freedom Academy.

Zulma Castaneda expressed her thanks for the honor of being selected as the Charter School Teacher of the Year. Ms. Castaneda shared that she comes from a small family from Peru and feels it is an honor and a privilege to actually practice her vocation. She stated she feels honored that she can do what she loves, which is teaching, and takes the responsibility very seriously. Every day is a new challenge and it is her duty to prepare her students to face a world that is more and more demanding every day. Spanish, and languages in general, is a tool that will serve them forever and make us a stronger nation more able to communicate and understand other nations.

State Charter School Board Bylaws

Gary Belliston informed the SCSB the recommended adjustments from last months meeting have been made to the Charter School Board Bylaws, and reminded the SCSB that this document is very dynamic and can be changed at a moments notice, but the procedures are in place.

Motion was made by Vice Chair Eric Smith and seconded by Member Joel Wright to approve the State Charter School Board Bylaws as presented. The motion was carried unanimously.

Prioritization of 2009 Ongoing Budget Requests

Director Marlies Burns informed the SCSB that the Utah State Board of Education has asked their opinion as to how the SCSB would like the budget requests ranked, from one to four, and with that information, the USBE will put the requests into their larger ranking system. After discussion the following ranking order was decided: 1) local replacement, 2) administrative costs, 3) service center, and 4) transportation. Chair Julie Adamic questioned the transportation portion of the budget request. She inquired if schools receiving the transportation funds, would the school be required to provide transportation to the students that qualify? Director Burns informed the SCSB that there was a \$75 allowance for a free lunch eligible student. The school may choose to provide the student with a bus pass, which costs approximately \$75; or reimburse the parent a small amount of money. It is not to require the school to provide transportation, but to alleviate some of the costs for lower income students, if they could choose to attend a charter school.

Motion was made by Vice Chair Eric Smith and seconded by Member Joel Wright to rank funding requests with local replacement first, administrative costs second, service center third and fourth, transportation. The motion was carried unanimously.

Changes to CSP Non-Regulatory Guidance and Charter School Section Q & A

Director Marlies Burns informed the SCSB that the federal government, due to requests by many states, Utah included, has made two changes to the CSP Non-Regulatory Guidance. The first change determines that children of teachers will now receive priority just as founders' children will receive priority of enrollment to the school. The second change to the CSP Non-Regulatory Guidance states a satellite school could receive start-up and implementation grants. Because Member John Pingree had left the meeting, there was not a quorum in attendance to take any action of this agenda item. It was tabled and will be addressed in September SCSB Meeting.

Recognition of District Authorized Charter Schools

Director Marlies Burns informed the SCSB that Member John Pingree was interested in seeing recognition given to districts that have authorized charter schools, but because of him not being in attendance, the discussion will be moved to the September SCSB Meeting.

Update on Schools Opening Fall 2007

Director Marlies Burns informed the SCSB that she has met with several of the schools that will be opening this fall, and feels that most of the schools are doing well. Not all schools will be opening on time, but have submitted a “plan B” as to how they are going to extend their year or if they are going to meet in a different facility. Ms. Burns informed the SCSB she has one concern regarding Monticello’s Special Education plan. The school turned the plan into the USOE after 4:30 p.m. and she has not had a chance to discuss their plan with the Special Education Section at USOE. Ms. Burns stated USOE’s Special Education Staff has significant concern based on how the school has been functioning this past year. Gary Belliston informed the SCSB the four schools he was assigned to monitor will all be in their permanent facility for the beginning of school.

Link to CS Website

Director Marlies Burns informed the SCSB that because of Member Brian Allen’s suggestion there has been a link incorporated into the charter school website with a link to access the location to make comments on rules that are open for public comment.

Charter School Revolving Loan Subcommittee

Gary Belliston informed the SCSB the Charter School Revolving Loan Subcommittee would be meeting for their first meeting August 28th. Superintendent Patti Harrington informed the SCSB the law required one member of the subcommittee come from the governor’s office, Michael Kjar, who is in the governor’s office of Planning and Budget, the other four were appointed by the State Board of Education. Sterling Norton is coming from John Hancock Charter School, where he has children attending and is a banker by trade with long experience with finance. Richard Tolley is currently a consultant for accounting in general, but specifically for public schools. He was previously a district business administrator and then came to USOE working in the Finance and Statistics Section, and is consulting again on finance and statistics. The last two members are former State Board of Education members, Mike Anderson and Greg Haws. Member Joel Wright questioned when the committee would start taking applications. Mr. Belliston informed the SCSB the timeline for taking applications has not been determined, but would be discussed in the first meeting.

Update on Liberty Academy’s Janitorial Contract and Pre-School Contract

Gary Belliston informed the SCSB the pre-school at Liberty Academy will not be in operation this next school year. Mr. Belliston stated he didn’t feel Jack Mason, the board secretary, wanted to be involved with the pre-school any longer. Issues of concern regarding the pre-school were no rent payment paid to Liberty Academy and no liability insurance for any of the children attending the pre-school. Liberty Academy has a written contract in place with Mike Brockbank for janitorial services to run through the end of October.

Adjourn

Motion was made to adjourn at 12:10 by Member Joel Wright.