

Utah State Charter School Board Meeting
Minutes
July 17, 2008
North & South Board Rooms
Utah State Office of Education

APPROVED

Members present: Julie Adamic, Brian Allen, John Pingree, Tim Beagley

Members excused: Scott Smith, Joel Wright, Yolanda Francisco-Nez

Staff present: Marlies Burns, John Taggart, Jeannie Rowland, Mark Long, Jo Schmitt

Others present: Mark Cluff, Christine Kearl, Susan Soleil, James Costello, Bobby Drake, Deb Richards, Rachel Brighton, Janene Bowen, members of the media

Call to Order

Chair Brian Allen called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Member Julie Adamic and seconded by Member John Pingree to approve the minutes from the June 19, 2008 State Charter School Board Meeting. The motion was carried unanimously.

Board Chair's Report

Chair Brian Allen welcomed Tim Beagley and Yolanda Francisco-Nez as new Charter School Board Members and stated the present board is looking forward to their expertise as charter schools move forward.

Chair Allen acknowledged Canyon Rim Academy for their receipt of the Utah Arts Education Fund Grant Award. He congratulated Canyon Rim Academy for their efforts in helping their students achieve.

Chair Allen also shared portions of a letter the SCSB received from a parent whose child attends Summit Academy, expressing their satisfaction with their child's education and progress at Summit Academy.

Chair Allen recognized the presence of Christine Kearl, Deputy for Education from the Governor's office. He stated Ms. Kearl would be swearing in the new SCSB Members into office later in the meeting. Mr. Allen also recognized Mark Cluff, vice chair of the State Board of Education, for his attendance

Board Standing Committee Reports

Rule Review Committee-Director Marlies Burns informed the SCSB the State Board of Education has passed on first and seconded reading, R277-494, which addresses with Charter School participation in extra-curricular activities. Legislation was passed this year mandating a rule be written to determine the cost, by the school and the student individually, if they participated in extra-curricular activities. Ms. Burns informed the SCSB that the Rule Review Committee felt it is important that all activities be included in this rule, such as Drama, Music, Forensics, and Drill Team and not be exclusive to only athletics.

Director Burns stated she had spoken with Dee Larsen, from Legislative Research and General Council, regarding the interpretation of "enrolled students" and "authorized students" and he has made the recommendation the SCSB create a policy to address the retrieval of students from schools that are not using the students they have been authorized. As well as a policy that includes schools that are willingly to give back students they are not using and will not use in the future. Director Burns stated Mr. Larsen also suggested having a guarantee that if and when those schools giving up students do need additional students, they would be

given priority. The committee discussed the policy being written for 25 students or 20% of enrollment, whichever is greater.

Annual Report Committee-Jeannie Rowland reported 60% of the charter schools have turned in their annual reports to the state office. The due date was July 15, 2008. She stated the schools are responding much quicker this year than last.

Ms. Rowland stated the committee requested her to address why the report is important at the August Director's Meeting. The committee feels some of the schools do not understand the significance of the report.

Grants Committee-Member John Pingree informed the SCSB the committee discussed a \$3,000 grant that is available for up to ten new charter school applications. It was determined the guidelines for the grant were: 1) the applications and applicants will come to the grants subcommittee of the SCSB for approval based on the recommendation of the Charter School Staff; 2) they must show their target population and how they will serve them; 3) Provide background information and experience that will qualify them to obtain charter school status; 4) USOE will provide a list of suggested qualifying agents that will help applicants achieve charter school status; 5) the grant funds would not be available to satellite schools, only for new start-up schools. Member Julie Adamic asked for clarification that this \$3,000 grant funds would be to help write new charters. Ms. Adamic was informed in the positive, and that the grant is a reimbursement funded grant.

Information Items:

State Charter School Board Retreat

Chair Brian Allen stated a board retreat was requested for this fall. Member John Pingree suggested author Clayton Christensen as guest speaker. Dates and locations were discussed, but no final decisions were made.

Accountability Plan 2008-2009

Director Marlies Burns informed the SCSB the Accountability Plan would be implemented next year. She stated there is a specific five year timeline of what is expected of schools in the Charter School Accountability Program Review booklet. Ms. Burns informed the SCSB schools that are obtaining accreditation through NAAS, which would include all secondary schools mandated by board rule, and elementary schools seeking NAAS accreditation would not be part of this accountability plan process.

Mandatory "webinars"

Chair Brian Allen stated the SCSB continues to have the challenge of making sure they provide the right kind of training to charter school board and staff members at the. There is a need to find a way to get the training to the charter school volunteers in the least intrusive manner possible. Because the SCSB has asked the school board members to be trained in various areas, the suggestion of webinars could be used for those trainings. Director Marlies Burns asked for suggestions and recommendations from the SCSB of possible topics that would be of interest to the schools that could be accessible through webinars.

Action Items:

Accountability Plan 2008-2009

Director Marlies Burns requested input from the SCSB as incentive for the schools to feel it important to participate in the Accountability Plan. Suggestions made by the SCSB were: recognition on the website, certificates to display in their school, recognize those participants at the Annual Charter School Conference, and financial incentives.. Also, a "Best Practices" booklet was suggested, to be able to showcase their school outside of Utah. No action was taken at this meeting, and would be placed on a future agenda.

Changes to Assurances

Chair Brian Allen referred the SCSB to the handout for Utah Charter Schools Assurances, letter 'CC', "All governing board members will attend a mandatory one-day human resources training annually." After much

discussion, suggestion was made to change the language to remove “one-day” from the assurances and for it to read, “All governing board members will attend a mandatory human resources training annually”.

Emerson Alcott Academy Request

Representatives of Emerson Alcott Academy presented their request to delay opening the school for one year. The SCSB was informed the decision to delay opening was made because of challenges with the building, and getting power and utilities to portables on the site. Chair Brian Allen requested Emerson Alcott Academy to prepare a plan for the SCSB for them to know how they are planning to be prepared for the coming year and what kind of student enrollment anticipation they are planning based on that plan. Member Julie Adamic cautioned Emerson Alcott Academy to be certain they meet the deadlines that have been set for new schools, also to address lottery issues. The SCSB requested a written plan of action to them by July 25, 2008. No action was taken by the SCSB because of there not being a quorum for the vote.

Monticello Academy Amendment

Director Marlies Burns informed the SCSB of Monticello Academy Amendment request to make changes to matters of policy and procedure which include technical changes, best management and best legal practices. Monticello Academy changed the name of their principal to CEO throughout their charter; taken out language that has anything to indicate the school is anything but “at will” employment; also changed the terms of the board of trustees’ members. The only minor concern by the State Charter School Staff was regarding board of trustees is a minimum number of trustees. Their charter stated a maximum number, but does not mention a minimum number of board members. No action was taken by the SCSB because of there not being a quorum for the vote.

Tim Beagley requested delaying the swearing in of the new board members until next month. Christine Kearn indicated she would be available to return next month to perform the swearing in of the new members.

Adjourn

Motion was made to adjourn at 11:30 a.m. by Member John Pingree.