

Utah State Charter School Board Meeting
Minutes
April 11, 2013
North & South Board Rooms
Utah State Office of Education

APPROVED

Members present: Tim Beagley, Laura Belnap, Dean Brockbank, Kristin Elinkowski, Robert Enger, Howard Headlee

Staff present: Marlies Burns, Jennifer Lambert, Janene Bowen, Jo Schmitt

Others present: Heather Groom, Freddie Cooper, Joylin Lincoln, Joel Wright, Tina Smith, Richard Ellis, Jon Bronson, Sol Garcia, Kristin Hooten, David Moss, Leif Nelson, Isaac Strack

Call to Order

Chair Tim Beagley called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Member Laura Belnap led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

Joylin Lincoln expressed her concerns regarding the process for submitting new charter applications to USOE and how those applications are received. Ms. Lincoln also expressed concerns regarding performance standards.

Joel Wright expressed his concerns and thoughts regarding Credit Enhancement Standards.

Approval Consent Calendar

Motion was made by Member Robert Enger and seconded by Board Chair Dean Brockbank to approve the consent calendar (minutes of SCSB meeting held March 14, 2013, School LAND Trust plans and Revolving Loan recommendation for Utah Career Path High of \$175,000). The motion was carried unanimously.

Presentation regarding criteria used by rating agencies to determine school credit worthiness

Richard Ellis, State Treasurer and Chair of the Utah Charter School Finance Authority, presented to the SCSB criteria used by rating agencies to determine charter school credit worthiness. Jon Bronson presented a list of suggested documentation that is requested when applying for a bond. This information also relates to which academic standards should be part of this criterion as it relates to the Credit Enhancement Program.

Recommendations to Utah Charter School Finance Authority

Chair Tim Beagley informed the SCSB that in 2012, the Utah Legislature created the Charter School Credit Enhancement Program. Part of this program is a great benefit to schools who can borrow money for their building. As part of this program, the Charter School Finance Authority was tasked with establishing the criteria by which a charter school would be designated as qualifying for the purposes of issuing bonds under the credit enhancement program. Program participants' standards were developed and put in place with input from several different stake holders: members of the charter school community, credit agencies and individuals. After the initial standards were put in place, one school, Ogden Preparatory Academy, was approved to finance their building through the enhancement program. They have saved thousands upon thousands of dollars by using that program, money that will be put directly into the classrooms. Throughout the process of approving

that first school, several issues were noted and changes were made to the criteria because of input from the investor community, finance authority and the charter school community. They have proposed a revised set of standards, which surrounds academic standards. Richard Ellis, Chair of the Utah Charter School Finance Authority, has asked the SCSB to propose a set of academic standards by which schools would qualify for the Credit Enhancement Program.

Director Marlies Burns and Jennifer Lambert suggested different options using a combination of three different criteria to determine whether or not a charter school would “hit the mark” for qualification.

After much discussion, motion was made by Member Howard Headlee and seconded by Member Kristin Elinkowski to recommend to the State Charter School Finance Authority that they delegate any and all academic review of an application, to the moral obligation Credit Enhancement Program, to each school’s authorizing entity for assurance to qualify an applicant for the Credit Enhancement Program. The motion was carried unanimously.

Discussion of State Charter School Board past budgets

Director Marlies Burns presented to the SCSB the budget for FY2012, the FY2013 expenditures to date, and a proposed FY2014 budget for review and comment.

USBE report

Member Laura Belnap informed the SCSB of the actions taken by the USBE in their April meeting.

Charter School Performance Standards value questions

Director Marlies Burns presented to the SCSB value questions to help set charter school performance standards framework metrics and requested input from the board members.

Amendment request – Wasatch Institute of Technology

Representatives from Wasatch Institute of Technology presented to the SCSB their amendment request to postpone opening until the 2014-2015 school year.

Motion was made by Vice Chair Dean Brockbank and seconded by Member Robert Enger to recommend for approval to the USBE the requested amendment to postpone opening to 2014-2015 school year. Along with the recommendation for approval, the school was instructed to report their progress towards opening monthly through email updates to Dr. Burns, and the school’s board will be required to report to the State Charter School Board, on said progress, in December 2013. The motion was carried unanimously.

Amendment request – Esperanza Elementary

Representatives from Esperanza Elementary presented to the SCSB their amendment request to postpone opening until the 2014-2015 school year.

Motion was made by Vice Chair Dean Brockbank and seconded by Member Kristin Elinkowski to recommend for approval to the USBE the requested amendment to postpone opening to 2014-2015 school year. Along with the recommendation for approval, the school was instructed to report their progress towards opening monthly through email updates to Dr. Burns, and the school’s board will be required to report to the State Charter School Board, on said progress, in December 2013. The motion was carried unanimously.

Amendment request – Guadalupe School

Representatives from Guadalupe School presented to the SCSB their amendment request to increase enrollment by 105 in 2014-2015 school year; with a total enrollment of 280 students.

Motion was made by Member Laura Belnap and seconded by Member Robert Enger to recommend for approval to the USBE the requested amendment to add 105 students in 2014-2015. The motion was carried unanimously.

Recommended changes to R277-477

Director Marlies Burns presented to the SCSB a proposal regarding changes that need to be addressed in R277-477 – *Distribution of Funds from the Interest and Dividend Account (School LAND Trust Funds) and administration of the School LAND Trust Program*. The proposal was developed from interested individuals that met and discussed ways to distribute School LAND Trust funds.

Motion was made by Member Robert Enger and seconded by Member Kristin Elinkowski to accept the proposed recommendations made for School LAND Trust fund distributions and to forward the recommendations to the USBE for final approval. The motion was carried unanimously.

Update – Quail Run Primary School

Representatives of Quail Run Primary School updated the SCSB of their progress and actions to be removed from probation status and the continuing amendment requests. The SCSB was informed Quail Run Primary School would proceed with the name change of the school to Canyon Grove Academy and work within their existing charter; improving instruction for their students, to recruit students and to continue with their school improvement plan.

Member Laura Belnap informed the SCSB of concerns that were discussed at the May USBE meeting where Quail Run Primary School's amendment request was presented. Ms. Belnap stated the USBE did not take action on the amendment requests.

Adjourn

Motion was made to adjourn at 1:40 p.m. by Vice Chair Dean Brockbank.