

January 15, 2020

MINUTES OF THE
UTAH STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, January 15, 2020
Utah State Board of Education—Board Rooms

APPROVED

Members Present:

Chair Kristin Elinkowski (*refrains from voting, unless otherwise noted)
Vice Chair DeLaina Tonks
Member Cynthia Phillips
Member Jim Moss
Member Krystle Bassett
Member Michelle Smith
Member Bryan Bowles

Staff Present:

Jennifer Lambert
Assistant Attorney General David Jones
Michael Clark
Amber Hellstrom
Brett Campbell
Stewart Okobia
Greg Connell
Marie Steffensen
James Madsen
Jenna Magnetti

Others Present:

Chair Mark Huntsman (USBE), Mike Haynes (USBE), Jeff Good (Imagineer Academies, IA), Jared Howell (IA), Kela Beus (IA), Alisha Mayer (IA), Bonni James (IA), Wade Glather (Ascent Academies), Marc Osternall (Ascent), Tyler Semeraudt (Ascent), James Hooton (Ascent), Brad Taylor (Ascent), Anthony Sudweeks (Wallace Stegner Academy, WSA), Adam Gerlach (WSA), Andrew Bernstein (WSA), Frank Magana (WSA), Jeremy Schow (WSA), Donald Robertson (Freedom Preparatory Academy, FPA), Buddy Ivie (FPA), Lynne Herring (FPA), Chris Helvey (FPA), Cary McConnell (FPA). Jay Garlock (FPA), Gavin Hutchinson (application reader), Marie Jess (application reader).

Call to Order

Chair Elinkowski called the meeting to order at 10:13 AM.

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Pledge of Allegiance

A flag was present and the Pledge of Allegiance was made by those in attendance.

Board Chair Report

Chair Elinkowski discussed the governor's education conference and noted that USBE Member Mike Haynes has joined the SCSB as USBE's liaison.

Public Comment

Nobody made public comment.

Ogden Preparatory Academy Amendment Request

Material Changes to Core Philosophy and Underlying Purpose

Ms. Marie Steffensen introduced Ogden Preparatory Academy's model, plan, and mission.

Changes to reflect what has already been happening, immersion program, and population of student body was discussed.

Motion

Vice Chair Tonks moved, and Member Bowles seconded, "to approve (Ogden Preparatory Academy's Amendment Request." The motion carried with Member Smith dissenting.

New School Application Report, Capacity Interview, Discussion, and Vote

Imagineer Academies

Process, nature of capacity interview and discussion, need for school, four core competencies, preparation of the proposing board, composition, governance structure, thoughts from NACSA, interviews, staff analysis, reason for using outside readers, evaluation criteria, feedback and technical expertise, robust skillsets, and the historical accuracy of readers' reports was discussed.

Vice Chair Tonks disclosed a conflict of interest, stating that Gavin Hutchinson is a member of the board of directors of Mountain Heights Academy where she is a director.

Application readers (Gavin Hutchinson and Marie Jess) discussed how Imagineer seeks to serve students; while noting weaknesses of multi-age model performance on State assessments, projected enrollment vs market trends, and vagueness of market analysis. The readers expressed that Imagineer Academies did not meet the evaluation criteria to justify opening.

Representatives of Imagineer Academies introduced themselves and delivered their elevator pitch.

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Representatives of Imagineer Academies was asked questions on personal financial interests of those in application, acquisition of land that would benefit the community, if any had previously submitted a charter school application, how the board was formed, identifiable skill gaps, experience in managing restricted public funds, experience with lower grade age groups, reasons for choosing pedagogical framework, perceived governance structure and its interactions with the school, process for selecting the school's director, school's mission and vision and how it would fill a need in community, hiring process for the director, management of relationship between board and principal if current board chair became principal, enrollment, typical school day through the eyes of a child, badges, meeting of state accountability systems, expected challenges between now and opening day, mentors and schools they would like to emulate, how they envision the creation of curriculum and combining teaching and creation of curriculum simultaneously, how they agree and disagree with readers' feedback, market analysis, target location, if they would consider a different demographic, needs for facilities, how to accomplish everything in application, and reasoning for unique grade band.

Motion

Vice Chair Tonks moved, and Member Phillips seconded, "to not approve Imagineer Academies." The motion carried unanimously.

SCSB members expressing appreciation for the idea and suggested Imagineer Academies could work with staff and the associations to strengthen their application for a future cohort.

Consent Calendar

A) December 9, 2019 Minutes Capstone Classical Academy Informal Hearing Minutes, B) December 12, 2019 Minutes, C) Monthly Financial Report

Motion

Member Bowles moved, and Member Smith seconded, "to approve (the Consent Calendar)." The motion carried unanimously by those members present.

Satellite and Replication Introduction

Ms. Marie Steffensen presented on the process, timelines and deadlines for applications, interview; looking for preparation, capacity, structure, and clarity of roles; data, and staff's recommendation of only replicating those who are succeeding in all areas.

Replication Application Report and Interview

Ascent Academies

Ms. Marie Steffensen presented the school's model, campuses, statewide accountability, and other data.

Representatives of Ascent Academies introduced themselves and discussed creation and purpose of Ascent Academies' schools, working with developers who are building planned communities, and the strength of current students in current schools.

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The board questioned representatives of Ascent Academies on mission and vision of the school and how they are filling a need in the community, what is keeping them from meeting all goals outlined in their charter, availability of missing data referenced in report from staff, enrollment and low-performing schools, Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM), student retention rates, alternative options for location, and their frequency of board meetings.

Motion

Member Bryan Bowles moved, and Member Phillips seconded, “to replicate Ascent Academies as they have proposed.” The motion carried unanimously by those members present.

Replication Application Report and Interview

Wallace Stegner Academy

Ms. Marie Steffensen presented on school’s campus, performance on statewide accountability, enrollment, and other data.

Representatives of Wallace Stegner Academy (WSA) introduced themselves and discussed founding members, curriculum methodologies, and closing the achievement gap with curriculum and professional development.

The board questioned representatives of WSA on mission and vision and how they are filling a need in the community, school’s contractual goals and lack of data, plans for keeping two schools successful, why they are seeking Replication now as opposed to when the school is more established, high quality teaching force, administrative structure, reasons for students to attend their schools, land prices, plan to succeed if approved, if budget is dependent on projected enrollment, and their plan for managing growth of new school.

Motion

Member Phillips moved, and Vice Chair Tonks seconded, to approve the Replication expansion of Wallace Stegner Academy as proposed in their application.” The motion carried unanimously.

Satellite Application Report and Interview

American Leadership Academy

American Leadership Academy withdrew its application the night before this meeting so this agenda item was skipped.

Replication Application Report and Interview

Freedom Preparatory Academy

Ms. Marie Steffensen presented on Freedom Preparatory Academy (FPA)’s model, performance on statewide accountability, enrollment, and other data.

Representatives of FPA introduced themselves and then presented their elevator pitch discussing growth St. George area.

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The board questioned representatives of FPA on status of bond, mission and vision and how they filling a need in the community, contractual goals, choice of location, plans for building culture, plans for growth, executive board vs. local board, geographic location and demographics in chosen area, percentage of vacation homes in selected area, how they would handle a property being more expensive than expected, and how they identified specifics of school that warrant a Replication,

Board members expressed concerns over market viability in St George and the district's plans for schools in area.

Motion

Member Moss moved, and Member Smith seconded, "to approve it (Freedom Preparatory Academy's Replication)." The motion carried unanimously.

Replication, and Satellite Requests Discussion and Vote

Motions and discussions were done in their respective agenda items so this agenda item was skipped.

Closed Session in Accordance with The Utah Open and Public Meetings Act for Purposes Outlined in Law

No closed session was needed so this agenda item was skipped.

Adjourn

Motion

Member Smith moved to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously by those members present.