

Valley Inquiry Charter School

November Board Meeting Minutes

November 17, 2025 | Zoom Meeting, 6:30 PM

Board Members

Board President & Chair	Cammi Carriere
Vice Chair	Terry Rohse
Treasurer	Stephen Staten
Secretary	BJ Foster
At-Large	Ed Austin
At-Large	Carol Kruse
At-Large	Garrick Williams
At-Large	Vacant
At-Large	Vacant
Non-Voting Member	Lacey McNay

Meeting Agenda Minutes

6:35pm Call to Order

Cammi called the meeting to order. Roll call:

- In person: Cammi, Steve, BJ, Lacey
- Virtual: Carol, Terry, Ed, Garrick

Approving meeting minutes

- 9/15/2025: Motion by Terry, second by Ed. Vote: 7 yes / 0 no / 0 abstain. Motion passes.
- 10/13/2025: Motion by Ed, second by Garrick. Vote: 4 yes / 0 no / 3 abstain. Motion passes.
- 10/27/2025 & 11/3/2025 special sessions: Motion by Terry, second by Ed. Vote: 4 yes / 0 no / 3 abstain. Motion passes.

6:42pm PYP Report

Jamie (2nd grade teacher): Doing a unit on “How we express ourselves.” Significance of cultural diversity, traditions, art and symbols, and how it impacts our identity. Adding things we’ve done to board in hall. Learning about cultural

artifacts and art forms. Adopted a cow "Henley" through "Discovery Cow" program. Dairy cow, get updates every few months and get pictures periodically, might get to meet her in Corvallis.

Prior unit about folk traditions, put on a play about an enchanted turnip, all students had a role and a line. Made a giant paper mache turnip, worked together to pull turnip out of the ground, learned about teamwork.

Carol: How many different cultures, which ones, and how do you choose?

Jamie: Japanese right now, a student and her mom did a presentation about their festivals. Tying into different books which express different cultures and a project on expressing yourself through art. Read "The Name Jar" and talked about how important names are and that our parents gave them to us for a reason, put things in a jar that helped express who they are.

Carol: What others?

Jamie: Native American, trying to get a tribe to come in, planning on doing China, Africa, and did Mexico.

Lacey: Families know they can share as well.

Carol: Doing through end of school year?

Jamie: Not sure yet, first time through this, might need to explore how it ties into next theme.

Lacey: IB is new for Jamie as a new teacher, but doing great.

Carol: Not trying to grill you, just curious.

Terry: Live close to Corvallis, would like to join you when you meet your cow.

Steve: My daughter is in the class and is really enjoying the unit, get lots of cow updates.

6:50pm

MYP Report

Andrew Schmit - MYP

Have been officially approved as MYP candidate school, now in 12-18 month candidacy phase. Working to align with IB philosophy and framework, editing student handbook to reflect IB program. Plugging away with virtual learning, not the dream scenario but teachers doing a great job of making it work, have office hours. Have about 15 students that come 3-4 days a week to enrichment hours, building good relationships which will help when full-time in-person.

In engineering right now, doing cool units. 6th creating animal habitats. 7th on bridge-building, and 8th rube-goldbrick machines with overly elaborate solutions. 6th graders writing first middle-school essays, working hard on that to progress on ELA skills. In digital skills, learning to code video games and learning logical flow of a program. Spanish focusing on linguistic fundamentals through IB lens of language acquisition and learning about cultures and different ways of doing things. Choir and orchestra have a good group of students coming, choir getting ready for caroling. Leadership did event planning guide project for mock planning process as foundation for when we're back in person, for a dance or spirit week or community service, etc. Have had a lot of creative ideas for projects.

Cammi: Thanks, sounds exciting, my kid will like to do coding if it's still a class at that point.

Andrew: Coding isn't going anywhere anytime soon.

Cammi: Any kids struggling to participate?

Andrew: Some are doing great, some coming to enrichment, others we're reaching out to parents through Parent Square to try to keep student from developing bad habits and resulting learning loss. Communicating if kids are absent or assignments missing, as communication is the biggest thing we can control.

Carol: What would you guess is percentage of students struggling?

Andrew: Would estimate anywhere to 15-25% struggling with missing assignments. Doesn't mean they're failing all their classes, but missing enough for us to be noticing.

Lacey: MYP team very cognizant and intentional to build relationships as a pathway to influence decisions. We've helped some student develop personal goals and seen improvements in attendance.

Carol: Was just checking in to make sure it wasn't something in an unhealthy range like 80%.

Andrew: We're always working towards 100%, teachers have been really on top of that communication, and have heard feedback from parents than it was like pulling teeth to get this info at other schools but Valley is being proactive. Lots of great individual success stories during the enrichment time and in the relational sphere.

Steve: Looking back at COVID and coming back to in-person and the difficulty with that transition, how is that?

Andrew: Social distancing isn't in place now, and kids haven't forgotten how to interact. Will still be mindful of need for good routines, but won't be near what we experienced coming out of COVID.

Lacey: Have been discussing what things we need to create or beef up and how to transfer it into the middle school setting for expectations, positive behavior, rewards, etc. Had reptile man here for an assembly, was a lot having middle school kids here when they are not yet used to the routines.

7:05pm

Principal Report

Katherine: We had Jog-A-Thon with superhero theme and had capes kids could wear, lots of supporters came out. We'll have figures on how much was raised tomorrow, had PTC and PE teacher involved. PTC paid for Reptile Man coming out, first assembly was K-4, and second was 5th and middle school. One hour long, had snakes and lizards, lots of volunteer participation.

Lacey: Used Jog-a-thon funds from last year to make that happen.

Katherine: Nov STEAM challenge: disguising a turkey challenge leading up to Thanksgiving. December challenge will be with old sweaters.

Lacey: Adult risk-taker of the month, Mireya De Young read about the day of the dead with traditional make-up on. November one coming up later this week.

Cheetah Den - When SNAP benefits were up in the air, had a few board members asking what the school's response would be. Was also feeling heavy about possible food insecurity, put together non-perishable pantry and providing ways for people to donate or receive, still need some socks, underwear, hats or gloves, reusable snack containers or bags, and small blankets. Doing what we can with the space we have. Schedule times when people can have some privacy. Thank you to those who have donated and helped.

Safety Committee: Lacey Purkey our MYP OM is heading up our Safety Committee. We have done a Fire drill / evacuation drill and earthquake drill. We will do a Lock Down drill and a fire/evacuation drill before end of month.

Photo Release Form: In the works for being approved, will send out to families to fill out, can select levels of comfort for internal/external disclosure. Faces of children is a selling point for the school but want to be respectful of parents desires.

Update on Services:

- Landscaping: Come twice a month, cleaned out gutters
- Custodial: Contracted cleaning company (come after lunch and after school)

- Plumbing: Working on fixing all our toilets (updating the kinder bathroom), some hadn't been updated since the building was first built.
- Mini-splits: Servicing all the AC/Heat pump units.
- Pest Control: Came today and sealed all holes on the outside of the building to prevent rodents from entering our interior. Katherine: Not putting traps or anything like that where students are.

Steve: Thank you for staying on top of all of that!

Lacey: Water heater was also replaced by plumbing company in less than 24 hours.

Upcoming Events:

Katherine:

- PTC Meeting 11/18 6pm in person or virtual
- Open House rescheduled for after construction is done
- Character Trait of the month assemblies will begin to get scheduled now that the parking lot project is complete
- Nove 26-28 no school
- Dec 5 no school (grading)
- Dec 15 Holiday spirit week (ugly sweater theme)
- Dec 22-Jan2 No school
- Looking ahead: Jan 28-29 will be school days for VICS K-8 despite SKSD closure (they are training on curriculum we don't use).

Clubs:

- Choir 3rd-5th grade on Fridays
- GRASP 4th-5th grade has started and practices on Wednesdays
- Student Council meets on Mondays (Ms. Reade & Ms. Gravely)
- LOSAF (TAG) PYP has begun meeting Thursdays (Ms Peppler)
- PYP Yearbook is accepting applications and will start meeting in December
- MYP tag (Thursday) lead by Ms. Antje Johnson
- More MYP clubs are being planned and info will come out on those as soon as the details are finalized (yearbook, STEM, etc.)

- Inquiry Clubs are still planned to happen this year after winter break.

Staffing Updates:

- Stacy Boost our PYP IB Coordinator and PYP Reading Interventionist has retired. Thank you Stacy for all your have done for Valley Inquiry.
- Brynn Ogilvie will be stepping into our PYP IB Coordinator role and taking on a new role of Student Support Coordinator when she returns from her maternity leave at the beginning of December.
- Kerstyn Miller, our long-term kindergarten sub has agreed to continue in kindergarten through the end of the academic year.
- Currently interviewing for part-time PYP reading interventionist, funded through early literacy grant.
- New 7.5 SPED EA starting at VICS soon
- Hiring for a 3.5 SPET EA (Literacy focus) is currently in progress.

PYP Enrollment report

- Have had some in/out. K 25/26/27/28/28/27
- 6-8: 39,19,6 (64) (225)

Carol: Looks like you have been very busy.

7:23pm

Treasurer's Report

Steve: Want to say thanks, going the extra mile during this transition, and it's appreciated.

We have about \$1.2M cash on hand which is about where we want it. Sent quarterly disclosure today which is somewhat new, with quarterly and annual requirements for bond.

Lacey: Got confirmation it was accepted.

Steve: Did a requisition request to Andy Metcalf, essentially asking bondholders for funds around \$142k directly to Andy Metcalf for construction. You may have seen about SKSD talking about mid-year cuts with financial concerns, want to touch on impacts to VICS. When we set up 25-26 budget, we built in a cushion, didn't want to run right at our limit. Even with that, we don't see anything impacting us the way it's impacting the district level. They have some PERS obligations we aren't seeing at our level, and the large driver is with federal tax changes which will flow into state-level tax funding. We don't see the federal impact the same way. Won't see OEA data until Wednesday, but we likely won't see impact this school year, but may see something next year. Obviously things can develop in the intervening months, not sure what reduction may be on state

side, looks possibly 2-5%, would be around \$100k at 5%. Not something we want to absorb, but we could with our cushion. Hoping to move from 90% pass through to 95% pass through by taking on additional services, would make about \$150k difference. Legislature passed 11% increase, so even with a 5% decrease will likely not see same impacts that Portland or SKSD may see. Still in a strong financial position but something to monitor going forward.

Cammi: Chase account finally getting closed, should receive a check in the mail toward the end of this week or early next week.

Lacey: Online question about whether SPED service cuts would impact VICS. Yes, those would eventually impact us, but we have SIA and literacy grants which we could get creative with if we feel that impact.

7:30pm

Public Comment

Lacey: Crystal in the chat asks what the max enrollment is. 75 on low end, cannot go over 285. 168 primary, 117 middle school would be highest. Currently have 64 for middle school.

Kassy: Thank you for the posts to Parent Square about construction and board meetings. You heard something and did something, and it did not go unnoticed.

Cammi: Thanks

Garrick: Thanks

Cammi: Any other questions or comments?

7:33pm

Principal Contract

Two different job descriptions. Committee got together to consolidate it.

BJ: A few errors which need addressed: P1 has mismatch between “program” and “programme”. P3 has extra words at the end of bullet point 4 under board relations, and has “aunt” instead of “audit”. Page 4 has no period at the end of the final sentence.

Carol: Was the salary schedule attached?

Cammi: Given as percentage increase.

Carol: Was this discussed in executive session?

Garrick: Part of October meeting.

Steve: We have added additional duties to job description, the additional salary offering reflects that. Looked at similar positions at other schools and SKSD where we benchmarked for staff salaries. Grounded in these compensations, and reflects growing school and responsibilities. Hoping to offer as a 3-year contract instead of 1-year, that's why you're seeing these steps. Wanting stability in leadership of school.

Carol: Which years would this encompass?

Steve: Year one would be 25-26.

Carol: If this is pretty straight across the board with no red flags, I don't see why we couldn't vote on it.

Steve: Committee is looking for a recommendation to take this forward.

Garrick: This is in line with where I was thinking things would be with the updated role. Would be inclined to go for a vote.

Cammi: Are we ready to take this to a motion?

Terry: I was on the committee.

BJ: Our treasurer was part of the process, no concerns.

Carol: Would like to make a motion to proceed to offer contract to Lacey with edits recommended. BJ seconds motion.

Vote: 7 yes / 0 no / 0 abstain. Motion passes.

Terry: I would like to be in offer meeting.

Cammi: Noted.

7:45pm

Construction update

Cammi: Still waiting for a few things from Andy Metcalf, has been both frustrating and understandable. They have not provided a schedule yet so that we can give a middle school move-in date. Wanted to give that at this meeting. Waiting to hear from Andy Metcalf which is waiting to hear from subcontractors. Will distribute that when we finally have it.

Parking lot finished out front, louder part of construction should be past. Most dirt moved to berm and berm was hydroseeded. Repairs done to parking lot due to improper draining, had to have it restriped. Came in at \$1470.

Another change request has come up for extra excavation work. Blake is suggesting that we get it done, but isn't strictly required. Creates crawlspace in case of plumbing catastrophe or pest control, possibly electrical. Gives two feet of extra space. Came in around \$15k.

Next one came in with a large number, around \$148k, subject to change, was presented in Thursday meeting. Want to make board aware. There are others which could be coming down the pipeline about rock under portables for foundation if they cannot compact soil enough, another about extra dirt in berm. \$72,212 in change orders so far. When we think about the amount of money we

have with our bond to take care of unanticipated expenses, our financial advisor made sure we had this money set aside as part of the bond.

Carol: Are we able to anticipate any additional change orders?

Cammi: Have discussed this, cannot increase bond funds. Wet weather change order has to do with ground getting muddier. Comes with doing construction project in the winter.

Carol: Don't know much about construction. Have to be honest, however, that it concerns me that these are coming and possibly more. Seems like they should have predicted some of the things which could have come up. Appreciate hearing that this amount might not affect our bond, but what happens if two weeks from now they say you need to have additional changes?

Cammi: Construction bid was for summer construction, so wet weather change is due to delays pushing project back. Some are things where subcontractors did not anticipate it, or for testing our water system and such. For change order #13, having Blake ask additional questions to get that clarification. Do we really need to use a crane and have a different road or lay down mats? Asked Andy Metcalf if we can use existing road on east side? Has that been looked at?

Steve: Small things are typical construction, but the wet weather one. Asked in September how much it was going to add to cost in we weather, and were told no anticipated increase, so that is frustrating. Salem-Keizer told us we had a window to move them, so we know that it would add cost, now we're finding out what that bill is. Cammi is asking the right questions, but beyond that, we have two options, and that's either do it or wait until it dries out. I don't love the idea of delaying in-person school until better weather. Still should push for reductions in cost that make sense but want to keep project moving forward.

Carol: Agree we don't want to delay further, but want to be making the right decision.

Steve: From a financial perspective, we did anticipate some cost overruns, won't come from our savings but want to be careful. We will get some more small ones when we start furnishing and such.

Cammi: The foundations, moving portables, setting and furnishing them are the major portions left. This is the big thing as far as we can see, but we want more answers. Not one to let things go, so this came as a surprise to both me and our architect Blake. Once we approve it, that is the only amount of work they can do until we approve the wet weather. Want to ask board to have another meeting, possibly Monday evening when Blake is available, and am confident we'll have more answers at that point.

Carol: Comment in chat says perhaps contractor would be on the hook for the extra cost.

Cammi: They answered in good faith, but PGE caused additional delays and likely would not need this.

Steve: PGE work is now done, were waiting on that for two years. Okay with making a motion on it as it is, authorizing you to make that decision.

Carol: Will it delay us to meet on Monday?

Cammi: No delay if we meet on Monday.

Terry: I would second a motion.

Steve: Would put additional burden on the community to meet again.

Terry: Would like to meet again, but okay with approving.

Garrick: Can make myself available on Monday. Would approve it at the end of the day, but would like to understand what aspects are contributing.

Cammi: Expecting this is the highest the number would go.

Garrick: Comfortable voting on it.

Terry: We have to get this project done, wanted something in contract to put a cap on overruns, concerned that wasn't taken into consideration. Bond took longer, chemicals put a delay in things. Wouldn't be bad if it came in high and discounted when done, but can't wait until dry weather.

Steve: Motion to authorize approving the change order. Garrick seconds. Vote: 7 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain.

Cammi: Subs were expecting to begin work in July, but closing timeline pushed things back. Not trying to add time through change order, and they want to move on to other things. Initial timeline was three months, but that was with assumption that things would fall into place but PGE delays were considerable.

Terry: There were good questions and comments in the chat.

8:15pm

Bond Continuing Disclosure

Lacey: Part of bond agreement that we signed with Oregon Facilities Authority says there are documents on monthly, quarterly and annual basis we have to do. More extensive documentation on longer time-period documents. Doing my best but outside my wheelhouse. Spoke with David Robertson, our financial advisor and asked for help getting systems in place. Their firm does help with continuing disclosure and something with the taxes that go with a non-profit taking bond funds. Asked for a quote, spoke with Cammi and Steve and we all

think it would be good to have expert help. Would be feasible and pertinent for us to proceed.

Steve: Something like 19 covenants were part of the bond and each has multiple requirements. Some are easy to get to, some are quite technical. Something we definitely want to do for the first year, could review if we want to continue after that, but need to be built properly. Worth the investment.

Terry: Trust David, have worked with him for years, and he has given us a lot of help.

Steve: Initial year for setup \$3500 first year, \$2500 following. Arbitrage \$2000 for initial, \$900 for following. So \$5,500 for first year.

Ed motions to approve having David Robertson's firm assist us. Terry seconds.
Vote: 7 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain.

8:23pm Next meeting info

Cammi: Next meeting December 8, virtual.

8:23pm Meeting Adjourn

Chat log:

2025-11-17 18:27:52 From Reuben Gershin to Everyone:

Yes

2025-11-17 18:35:03 From Reuben Gershin to Everyone:

I accidentally clicked google twice by accident

2025-11-17 18:55:49 From Crystal to Everyone:

Can you check the waiting room?

2025-11-17 18:56:23 From Crystal to Everyone:

List thing sorry

2025-11-17 18:58:10 From Katherine Fuller to Everyone:

Thank you for the heads up !

Crystal: (heart)

2025-11-17 19:20:27 From Beth's iPhone to Everyone:

Mrs. Boost is greatly missed!

Carol Kruse: (heart)

2025-11-17 19:21:01 From Beth's iPhone to Everyone:

Replies to "Mrs. Boost is greatly missed!":

But, excited for her on her new adventure!

2025-11-17 19:23:10 From Crystal to Everyone:

What is middle school max enrollment?

2025-11-17 19:23:28 From Lacey McNay to Everyone:

Replies to "Mrs. Boost is greatly missed!":

We miss her greatly!

Beth's iPhone: (heart)

2025-11-17 19:25:42 From Lacey McNay to Everyone:

Replies to "What is middle school max enrollment?":

Hi Crystal, Our charter stipulates our max enrollment is 285. Our elementary max is 168, which would mean our middle school max is 117.

2025-11-17 19:28:48 From Erika T to Everyone:

Are sped services separate from money received from SKPSD already? Or will their budget cuts impact sped services at VICS?

2025-11-17 19:30:41 From Crystal to Everyone:

What is max for middle enrollment

2025-11-17 19:31:29 From Crystal to Everyone:

Replies to "What is middle school max enrollment?":

What are we at? I think I missed that earlier

2025-11-17 19:31:57 From Lacey McNay to Everyone:

Replies to "What is middle school max enrollment?":

64 middle school

2025-11-17 20:02:18 From Diana Marquez to Everyone:

If the contractor said there wasn't going to be a change back in Sept and it's on record then they should be on the hook

Carol Kruse:□ □

2025-11-17 20:08:48 From Diana Marquez to Everyone:

And firm bid is firm bid for construction the fact that they don't have a firm amount is disturbing. change orders do happen but wet weather should have been planned for

2025-11-17 20:09:17 From Erika T to Everyone:

I think you guys were accommodating in accepting a change order for wet weather. As a subcontractor we know that weather conditions can affect our scope but that is why we bid all these unforeseen circumstances to our initial bid. Do you have a timeline for completion with the wet weather change order or are they trying to also add more time by adding another change order?

2025-11-17 20:13:50 From Erika T to Everyone:

Yes, I would look for a clause about completion timeline in the original contract.