

# Valley Inquiry Charter School

January Special Session Board Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2026 | In-Person Meeting, 6:00 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 (absent)

## Meeting Agenda Minutes

### 6:05pm Call to Order

Cammi: Work session, public welcome but no public comment section. Excited to get work done. We have Dr. Beth Wigham with us tonight to help facilitate our work session.

### 6:08pm Work Session - Introductions

Beth Wigham: Feel like I've been traveling with you on this journey, thank you for having me. In front of you are some thank you gifts for your time on the board. National board appreciation month. Would like to do a round of introductions as if there was a student in the room. Say what you promise to keep, what you hope to do to benefit the students.

Cammi: Have a 1st and 4th grader, promise to keep students at forefront of most decisions I make, as you are the most important part.

Garrick Williams: Have a 3rd grader here, my promise has been communication and thinking about using technology for good things.

Carol Kruse: No kids here, my children are all grown ages 32, 35 and 38. On the spot for the promise, but would like to get to know the staff better and students better, as I feel like an outsider looking in. Would like to build a bridge.

Steve Staten: Board treasurer, students here in grades 2 and 4. Committed to creating a safe and welcoming learning environment. In respect of the tradition of visiting your elementary school when you graduate, I want to make sure this school is thriving.

Ed Austin: My daughter worked here, I taught here for one year. This school had a real family feeling, and I would like to help promote that.

BJ Foster: I had a student here in the past but not for a number of years now. As my time on the board approaches its end, I want to see our middle school dream firmly established before I pass on the baton.

Katherine Fuller: Grew up in Oregon, nice to be back and learning the systems, goal is to continue supporting students in being successful and solving problems, helping you understand what it means to be an IB learner and learn these attributes, making the school a strong IB school.

Beth Wigham: 25th year in education, banking industry prior and medical field before that. Likely ending career in education and will see what's next. My promise is to support the board in reflecting on our practices, seeing how we can grow our strengths and improve student outcomes.

**6:15pm      Work Session – Overview of Survey**

Beth: Do you have board norms?

BJ: Largely unspoken norms

Steven: Loosely follow Robert's rules.

Beth: (Handout on key high-functioning board norms): Strategic focus; constructive culture; active engagement & preparation; the "no surprises" rule; accountability & decision-making; respect for boundaries; unified voice; continuous improvement.

Carol: What is a consent agenda?

Steve: Allows shortening a meeting by not diving deeply into items we all agree on.

Carol: Does that happen often?

Steve: Not in our current context where we have really high communication and transparency needs.

Beth: OSBA also has a code of conduct for members. (handout)

Steve: Would also be good to add "assume good intent" to board norms.

Beth: May also want to add "Expect and accept non-closure" when you may not reach agreement. Let's take about five minutes to read through the report.

Handout: "Charter Governance Self-Assessment Report, A Roadmap for Strategic Growth"

Beth: Report is more qualitative than quantitative, but had 5 responses from board members. Where can we get better?

Garrick: Love the "Good to great" section that focuses on aligning with goals, seeing who benefits from decisions and if anyone is left out.

Carol: Is 25-30% parent engagement normal?

Steve: Likely increased recently due to some flashpoints.

BJ: As an opt-in school, we tend to see more parental engagement.

Beth: Some charter schools have parental involvement requirements.

Steve: Good SWOT analysis. [Secretary's note: "SWOT" stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats.]

Garrick: Nice to see call-out for new member onboarding.

Carol: Does responsibility fall on the chair to welcome new members?

Garrick: My company has a "new hire buddy" system.

Beth: At ODE we have a similar peer system. Less on the technical side but more with the work and building connections with people.

BJ: Something we've been weak at which isn't covered here is recruitment. We have had difficulty attracting community members, mostly it is parents who express interest, but we are supposed to try to maintain a ratio of community members to parental members to reduce potential for conflicts of interest.

Beth: Are community connections on website up to date?

Cammi: Website is out of date, have some technology issues that don't allow updating website from school computers.

Garrick: We should get that worked out, I'll see what I can do.

Steve: We have room for improvement around recruitment and onboarding.

Cammi: Would be nice to recruit from different areas, not just education.

Beth: Might be nice to have financial ability more distributed. BJ, you were previously the treasurer, correct?

BJ: Yes.

Carol: Does treasurer sign checks?

BJ: No, treasurer only views transactions to create separation and protection.

6:43pm

**Work Session – Establishing Priorities**

Beth: Strengths identified, as well as areas for growth. Areas 8, 5 and 4 were the lowest. Areas 2, 11 and 10 were rated highest. Going to try to do heat map with red for stop, orange for proceed with caution, or green for full speed ahead.

Standard 8: Learning Organization. Current score 1.2. Group consensus: Green. (Part of what prompted this process, and will have some board members retiring soon.)

Standard 5: Using Data for Continuous Improvement. Average score 1.4. Orange. (In a phase where we're still setting things up, may not yet have the data points we want to evaluate.)

Standard 4: Accountability. Average 1.4. Green. (Interface with school admin is the core way board has influence over school performance.)

Standard 3: Effective Leadership. Average 2.2. Green. (Some meetings have gotten heated, would be good to have a clear sense of order and boundaries in meetings. Overview of challenges at prior board meetings. Good to have shared agreement ahead of time for respectful standards of communication. Want to be inclusive of all parents, but there are challenges. Numerous parents felt that the last meeting was uncomfortably tense and would not be returning as a result. Would be good to clarify our desire for having parents come and keep a focus on the goals we hope to achieve.)

Standard 9: Systems Thinking. Average 2.4. Orange. (Goes along with using data.)

Standard 6: Cultural Responsiveness. Average 2.5. Orange. (We are far more diverse than typical charter schools. As an IB school this is part of our identity, and we want to keep it as a part of our thought process.)

Standard 7: Culture & Climate. Average 2.6. Green. (Mostly anecdotal data about how people feel. Want to resolve issues while they're still small. Don't want to lose the message just because it's delivered inappropriately, but boundaries are important. Communications with individuals with specific issues with board leadership might be best delivered by someone not targeted. Want to co-opt people's passions and direct toward positive outcomes for the school.)

Standard 1: Vision-Directed Planning. Average 2.5. Green. (This helps us with many other things. Vision for past ten years has been IB and middle school. These are coming into place, so what next?)

Standard 12: Budgeting & Financial Accountability. Average 2.5. Orange. (Relying on external help currently.)

Standard 2: Community Engagement. Average 3.5. (Engaging on culture and climate will help this.)

Standard 11: Board Member Conduct & Ethics. Average 3.1. (Reasonably solid, fine as long as we're not losing ground. Want to not have too many areas of focus, not on list of action items.)

Standard 10: Innovation & Creativity. Average 2.8.

Beth: Can begin to rank these on axis of low to high effort and axis of low to high impact to help with prioritization and what you want to begin focusing on right away.

(Group placed standard 7 and 8 in low effort, high impact; standard 3 and 4 with moderate effort and standard 1 as somewhat higher effort, none with low impact.)

Beth: Providing a work packet for next steps. Identify 3-5 pillars, each have goals, which have objectives, which have actions.

Cammi: Do we want this on the agenda for the next meeting?

BJ: Should have dedicated time for it to keep it progressing.

Steven: Might want another dedicated work session.

Steve: Is there a school board accreditation resource we should be aware of?

Beth: ODE has a charter school guide, OSBA has resources as well.

Cammi: Do we want to continue meeting in person?

Garrick: Doesn't have to be all or nothing, might do once a quarter. Get better feedback in person.

Steve: Would be good to have in person at the start of the year.

Garrick: As long as not all online or all in person, we can pick the mix that works best for us. If we do a communication strategy where the big topics with big feedback sessions are in person.

Steve: Might be good to make it more selective and intentional.

Cammi: Don't want it to be just me and the school staff here.

Garrick: Also seasonal, people don't like going out in dark, cold part of the year. If it's more engaging and fun, most people will come.

Cammi: Next meeting will be online. February 9, 2026.

**8:12pm**

**Meeting Adjourn**