

Valley Inquiry Charter School

December Board Meeting Minutes

December 8, 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

6:32pm Call to Order

Cammi called the meeting to order. Roll call:

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

Approving meeting minutes

- 11/17/2025: Motion by Terry, second by Carol. Vote: 5 yes / 0 no / 1 abstain. Motion passes.

6:34pm IB/Staff Report

Melody Reade: Working on 5th grade musical, slated for February. Finished unit on how we express ourselves, lots of art and poetry, ended with marketing project with branding, using AI, advertising and presentation. Now how we organize ourselves, researching different types of governments.

Student council working on fundraising, want to replace playground paint. Selling hot chocolate.

Jaimi Gravley: Students working on putting information out, having a spotlight in a newsletter, etc. Doing recycling “blue bag” project.

Lacey: Also working on presentation skills, students presented their ideas. Brynn returned, is stepping into PYP IB and student support role.

Brynn Ogilvie: Supporting students who need breaks, having trouble with projects, academics, etc. and doing 1-on-1s. Coalition Paws (awards staff can give for noticing attributes), each class can earn, tracked on a reward meter and have a schoolwide goal of 150.

BJ: Love this idea, used to work as camp counselor and would do politeness challenge against older guys' dorm, really helps kids kick up their game.

Brynn: Top class will get to send four representatives to silly string some staff.

6:44pm

Principal/Assist. Principal Report

Lacey: For Coalition Paws, slides on screens in school show progress, upcoming attributes, and rewards.

Katherine Fuller: November Risk Taker of the Month: Ashley Morse. December is Computer Science Education Month. Doing “Hour of Code” global event. December monthly STEAM challenge is to decorate a sweater. Family Craft Night this week 12/11/2025 put on by PTC, elementary and middle school families invited. Food available for cash purchase.

Lacey: Holiday spirit week week of Dec 15-19, with events like PJ day, Grinch Day, Tacky Shirt Day, etc.

Upcoming Events

- PTC Meeting: Dec 16, 6pm
- Dec 11: Family Craft Night 5:30
- Dec 22-Jan 2: No school
- Jan 6 – Pokemon Card Swap
- Jan 28-29: School days for VICK K-8 (despite SKSD training)

Staffing Updates

- Brynn Ogilvie is back as PYP IB Coordinator and Student Support coord
- Karen O'Connell has started as part-time Reading Intervention Teacher
- New 7.5 SPED EA starting soon, SKPS is finalizing hiring
- Hiring for a 3.5 SPED EA (literacy focus) almost complete pending reference checks

Enrollment Update

- New KG student starting in January
- PYP: KG 25 / 1st 26 / 2nd 27 / 3rd 28 / 4th 28 / 5th 27 / Total PYP 163
- MYP: 6th 39 / 7th 19 / 8th 6 / Total MYP 64
- K-8: 225 total

6:55pm

Treasurer Report

Steve:

- 1.2M cash on hand
- \$156k and \$173k pass-through deposits from SKPS
- Largest expenses in last 30 days:
 - Payroll
 - MYP expansion
 - Building maintenance (Plumbing, cleaning, landscaping, etc.)
- Update from last month regarding Oregon economic outlook
 - Oregon Office of Economic Analysis released their forecast on Nov 19
 - \$888M revenue reduction due to federal HR 1 changes
 - But, \$1,197M increase from other sources, much more positive economic outlook than most were anticipating
 - Results in a net increase to general fund
 - Still a forecasted deficit, but much smaller than expected
 - Lots of uncertainty, but no material impact to ADMw this school year and potential for low to no impact next year

Lacey: Expenditures for MYP expansion will be reimbursed by the bond.

Cammi: Between last meeting and this one, Chase account officially closed.

7:02pm

Construction Update

Cammi: Accepted wet weather change orders. Two extra dirt piles to hydroseed and berm, cannot be seeded yet due to heavy rainfall. Appears may not need extra 4 inches of rock for foundation. Cuts cost, keeps things moving. Daily reports now to keep everyone up to date.

Expecting crane to be put on property during break to move portables. Middle of January is currently the expected completion timeline, with a February 1 start date anticipated. Construction dates can fluctuate, but exciting to have a date to

plan for and begin bringing middle school students in and normalizing school experience. Lots of great teachers and families helping. ODE building in capitol mall area will be location to do two days a week between now and then of in-person education. Can use green space at capital mall for activities. Were looking at other sites, churches, Chemeketa, Corbin etc. Next week's in-person time will be special, and coming back in January with consistent in-person time with each other.

Lacey: Once the punch list is done and the construction people are finished, we may need some volunteer help with moving in furniture, etc. during last two weeks of January. Anyone with availability please contact us if you can help.

7:08pm

MYP Report

Lacey: Winter retreat Dec 18 and 19 at ODE. Time 9:30-1:30PM, attendance taken, breakfast and lunch provided, schedule to be sent out soon.

In-person learning Jan 6, 7, 12 and 13. Location ODE, time TBD, attendance taken, breakfast and lunch provided, schedule to be sent out soon. Not a retreat format for this portion.

Really excited for both things coming up!

7:13pm

Public Comment

Cammi: Two emails came to board email address. Anyone here can feel free to comment.

Kassy Selby: Appreciate more detail in Steven's report.

Cammi: Had a parent very concerned about their middle school child and the return to school date. Hopefully these dates are helpful. Also received an official complaint, which we directed to grievance process with SKSD. We were not informed until last week when Lacey spoke with our liaison. Feels like policy is in a bit of a gray area. Until we have our own policies in place, we're using SKSD policies, so planning to discuss setting up our own in January meeting. SKSD stated fine to use their policies until we clarify more services.

Please always feel free to bring a grievance to us directly or you can take it to SKSD, we're following that policy for now.

Lacey: Jonathan, the liaison for charter schools, asked us to make it a goal to adopt our own by the end of this school year.

Reuben Gershin: Notice was to board and executive, and SKSD said we are not covered under their policies.

Cammi: That's why it appears to be a gray area, as we're hearing one thing directly but appears you are receiving different info from them. Want to discuss this at the next meeting.

Carol: Did VICS have anything written down regarding grievances, whether it was VICS policy or SKSD policy that lists procedures a board would follow in this kind of situation?

Steve: Haven't seen any history of that other than seeing a history of pointing to SKSD.

Carol: Is there anything in archives or other documentation? Should be some record if there was. School has a handbook for policies and procedures.

Steve: Assumption is that there is nothing currently enforceable that board is bound to because we've been tied to SKSD for so long. As we pull away and gain more independence, we're going to come across civil rights complaints, labor complaints, etc. Special Education has a very different grievance path than other areas. Board as legal entity vs. Administrative grievance, etc. Might get more gray before it gets more clear, so may need to engage legal advice on this. Need to know what we don't know.

Terry: We have bylaws, but because we are a SKSD school we didn't build our own grievance policy. It should go into our bylaws as we develop these things.

Reuben: Agree, but complaint was initially registered with you, and you said in official capacity to speak to SKSD. Right now, the info provided by VICS is incorrect.

Terry: Thank you for calling this to our attention, we will work on it.

Jessica: Question about policies and technology. Before SKSD ran our tech for us, dealt with computers, etc. Is that still done by SKSD or is Valley now doing it?

Lacey: Still under SKSD for Guardian and controls, SKSD internet filters, etc. Have been talking with liaison about how we'll need to provide our own filtering and internet, but this year still on theirs. Tech contracts coming home tomorrow.

Cammi: I will add policy work to January agenda.

7:26pm

Items to discuss

Construction items:

Cammi: One change order about a steel plate under modulars, don't think it will come to fruition, architect says it isn't necessary and is pushing back. Not a large change order either way.

Staffing compensation amendment/budget spending review

Lacey: Meet with Steven monthly. Talked about compensation for meetings outside of work hours and for clubs. What was approved was teachers can flex time to get to leave early, and compensation for IEP meetings. Found teachers would rather flex IEP, while prep for clubs requires more time and might want to

switch the wording so flexing is available for IEP and compensation for clubs. Not a budget change, just wording.

Discussed staff PD budget, same line item from last year to this year. Added a lot of middle school staff, PD is expensive. IB certification is expensive training and is required for school to gain certification and move past candidacy. Spoke with Cammi and Steve. Could this have reimbursement potential? Or is this something we want to adjust on budget?

Steve: We had it as \$20k last year, thinking was prior year had large staffing change, and knew would be some this year with MYP as well. Four months into the year, need appears greater than what we thought, will likely need to request an increase. Thinking about whether we can build this as a reimbursement expense with our bond buildout or if not, may need to discuss with bond team.

Lacey: One virtual IB training is \$550 for one person, and each teacher needs a category 1 training. Coordinators also need to go to training as well. We love that we're IB but it is a bit expensive. Agree we will check with consultants as to whether this is reimbursable.

Steve: Some require travel which adds to expense.

Cammi: How much expense so far?

Lacey: Beginning of school year was unofficial IB training, we have registered two for \$550 trainings.

Steve: Seeing at least \$7k spent, and that might be low.

Cammi: Was New Orleans on this?

Lacey: That was on last year's budget, but hotel might have come out of this year's budget.

Cammi: Any PD needed beyond IB?

Lacey: Yes, some lower elementary teachers asking for additional training. Board also authorized increase for for PeopleKeep insurance benefit from \$400 to \$440 a month. We would like to increase to \$500/mo, feel that would be doable in budget. The difference is around \$1800/mo. Do have more staff accessing PeopleKeep this year.

Steve: Around \$12k a year extra for this, we are seeing healthcare costs rising, would be a nice move for us to give additional compensation to employees on that.

Lacey: This is for full-time employees only.

Steve: That cost is at 100% utilization, so actual would be lower. There is a time crunch on this for the sign up process.

Cammi: Retroactive or from January forward?

Lacey: January forward.

BJ: Motions to increase PeopleKeep insurance benefit from \$440/mo to \$500/mo effective January 1. Carol seconds. Vote: 6 yes / 0 no / 0 abstain. Motion passes.

Lacey: Thank you on behalf of my staff. Have seen after training that utilization has increased.

Cammi: Do staff need help with open enrollment now?

Lacey: I will let staff know about what was approved.

7:43pm

Board Training

Cammi: We've been talking about board training for a while, kind of hit a wall on scheduling. Terry had reached out to Matthew Lowe and ESBA, would be good to investigate them further for board policies as a great resource for policy writing. Haven't landed on a good option for us, finding time that works for all board members is challenging. Spoke with parent who applied to be on the board a while back, she is a wonderful resource and she mentioned that she was starting a consulting business and wanted to know if it would be of interest to us.

Asked Beth Wigham to come tonight to talk about what she could offer. Sent out proposal via email.

Beth: I am a parent of two VICS students and a strategist, appreciate opportunity to support you all. Proposing helping coordinating services we can bring in to train board. Do document development and facilitation. Board manual, standard operating procedures, onboarding handbook. Do goal setting with school and committees at different levels. Could do work around aligning budget and resources with goals. Continuous Improvement cycles (Plan Study Act). Possible need to synthesizing past meeting notes, past policy and getting clear about this.

Carol: Is this something you could do at the school? Got excited when you talked about onboarding new people.

Terry: Refreshing to hear things you could provide. Was incredibly hard to try to get training together.

Steve: I can see important aspects of this. A bit of sticker shock on the full price. Speaks to the volume of work ahead of us to develop our policies and procedures. As we establish the ability to come together, if you've done policy development, it takes a long time and squeezing that in monthly board meetings likely isn't practical. May need to set up a second meeting each month to do this work for our 2026 plans.

Beth: Does take several months to a year to really do the work, proposal based on doing a lot of it for the Board. Willing to adjust the fee. Did one based on product development, and the other more facilitating a process. If there are other charter schools able to share what they already have, that could speed up development and lower costs. Ideally would like to work with you.

Cammi: What is our current consultant budget?

Lacey: I think it's \$20k for consulting and legal.

Steve: Thought it was separate line items for those two.

Cammi: If we want to amend our budget for consultant fees, we could discuss that.

Lacey: Double checked, legal is separate.

Steve: Could be more able to speak to budget impact next month, not overly concerned about slight increases.

Lacey: As a school, we used what was budgeted last year, and this would be an increase beyond that. In hearing Beth explaining what would be included, this does seem to be part of our expansion. Would there be room for some to be reimbursable costs?

Steve: I doubt it, but we should absolutely ask.

Lacey: We can reach out to David about this.

Cammi: OSBA training was around a \$3k figure, Matthew Lowe was a bit higher than that. Board training is critical and overdue, and kickoff planning meeting would be quite important.

Beth: As you work with attorney or OSBA, we can build those out in handbooks.

Cammi: We've met long term goals, want to figure out where we go from here.

Steve: Goal setting is phase two.

BJ: Does this hit threshold for requiring bids?

Steve: It's been a while but recall threshold at around \$10k for procurement, looks like it has increased to \$25k in 2024. Would have some comfort in scheduling Phase 1. If we wanted to do Phase 2 strategic goals, that would probably be February, start having budget conversations in April. Not ready to talk about document development costs, but also don't have to decide tonight.

Cammi: Monday nights seem to work for most since we have this meeting, so if we wanted to do a first meeting a week or two after the board meeting, that might work best. Anticipate a board policy committee starting in January.

Steve: Looking for historical consultant use.

Lacey: We used up budget last year and had to shift funds.

Steve: Would propose scheduling Phase 1, look at budgeting for more. Can give a clearer picture during January meeting of what our ability to cover remaining expenditures would be.

Cammi: Policy, budget, and possible PD budget amendment.

Terry motions to proceed with Phase 1 of development plan presented by Dr. Beth Wigham, Steve seconds. Vote: 6 yes / 0 no / 0 abstain.

8:17pm **Next meeting info**

Cammi: Next meeting January 12, in-person and virtual.

8:19pm **Meeting Adjourn**

Chat log:

2025-12-08 18:43:04 From Crystal to Everyone:

How do class students get picked

2025-12-08 19:04:00 From Beth Wigham (she/her) to Everyone:

Very exciting for students and staff!

2025-12-08 19:07:27 From Windrider to Everyone:

count me in

2025-12-08 19:07:51 From Carol Kruse to Everyone:

I am more than happy to help

2025-12-08 19:12:14 From Diana Marquez to Everyone:

Is there actually going to have an informational packet this time for the retreat

2025-12-08 19:12:18 From Crystal to Everyone:

What cultures will be featured in the craft thing

2025-12-08 19:12:35 From Crystal to Everyone:

Sorry if I missed the answer

2025-12-08 19:15:03 From Reuben Gershin to Everyone:

So what is your current policy for complaints, what is timeline, where to go and when will it be addressed?

2025-12-08 19:17:25 From Reuben Gershin to Everyone:

It's too late. That's beyond 90 days from initial complaint

2025-12-08 19:17:34 From Reuben Gershin to Everyone:

I already went to ODE for the appeal

2025-12-08 19:18:50 From Crystal to Everyone:

Was a handbook sent out?

2025-12-08 19:19:48 From Reuben Gershin to Everyone:

I agree with you Steve

2025-12-08 19:20:53 From Reuben Gershin to Everyone:

But shouldn't that had been thought of before the sudden changes enacted?

2025-12-08 19:21:56 From Reuben Gershin to Everyone:

In the SKPS/VICS charter agreement section 5-B-v it states, "VICS shall establish an administrative process for resolving public complaints against VICS, including complaints regarding curriculum."

2025-12-08 19:22:11 From Crystal to Everyone:

Are grievance policies mandatory to be available for us to know?

Jessica: (heart)

2025-12-08 19:28:55 From Reuben Gershin to Everyone:

That is a great idea!

2025-12-08 19:30:32 From Stephen M. Staten to Everyone:

PD = Professional Development (training)

2025-12-08 20:13:48 From Crystal to Everyone:

Is a down payment required to schedule before budget review?

2025-12-08 20:19:28 From Beth Wigham (she/her) to Everyone:

Thank you all. Have a lovely evening!