

Valley Inquiry Charter School

September Board Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2025 | Zoom 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

Meeting Agenda Minutes

6:40pm Call to Order

Cammi called the meeting to order. Roll call:

- In person: Cammi, Ed, Garrick, Lacey
- Virtual: Carol, Terry, Steve
- Absent: BJ (joined late)

Approving meeting minutes

- June 9, 2025: Motion by Garrick, second by Terry. Approved.
- June 23, 2025: Motion by Terry, second by Ed. Approved.
- July 2, 2025: Motion by Carol, second by Terry. Approved.

Principal's Report

Presented by Lacey McNay (Principal) and Catherine Fuller (Assistant Principal).

Staffing Updates

- Office Staff

- Ms. Purkey: Transitioning from front office to MYP Office Manager & K-8 Enrollment.
- PYP Office Manager role split:
 - Morning: Ms. Jackie – check-in, communications.
 - Afternoon: Ms. Mila – school life projects, employee records.
 - Both will also serve as IAs in their other half-time roles.
- IB Coordinators
 - PYP: Mrs. Boost (returning).
 - MYP: Andrew Schmit.
- PYP Teachers
 - Kinder: Ms. Oglive (returning, currently out); Ms. Miller serving as long-term sub.
 - 1st Grade: Ms. Kaur (returning).
 - 2nd Grade: Ms. Gravely (new).
 - 3rd Grade: Ms. Peppler (returning).
 - 4th Grade: Ms. Provencio (new; prior long-term sub).
 - 5th Grade: Ms. Reade (returning).
- MYP Staff
 - Teachers
 - Math: Mr. Jenkins
 - Science: Ms. Lettenmaier
 - ELA & Social Studies: Mr. King
 - Art & TAG: Mrs. Johnson
 - Leadership/PE/Health: Mr. Schmitt
 - Choir & Orchestra: Mrs. S
 - Spanish (6–8 and K-5): Mrs. Van Bergen
 - Instructional Assistants
 - Returning IAs: Miss Hannah (Kinder), Miss Mila, Miss Jackie, Miss Emily, Miss Katherine.
 - New IA: Mrs. Dolph (LRC).

- Additional Roles
 - Recess duty IA: Amber
 - Lunch duty IA: Krystal
 - Cheetah Care (Before/After School):
 - AM Supervisor: Emily
 - PM Supervisors: Ashley & Krystal

Professional Development

- Admin, IB coordinators, and two teachers attended IB Conference in New Orleans.
- August teacher in-service: focused on team-building, onboarding new staff, and action planning for middle school launch.
(Secretary joined 6:52pm)
- MYP Retreat: Held at Pringle Community Center; provided positive kickoff for middle school students despite construction delays. Middle years teachers knocked it out of the park. Met together to plan what it should look like, did in-person retreat at Pringle community center. Great way to start a less than ideal starting situation.
- PYP First Days: Successful transitions observed, especially with incoming kindergarten class.

Student & Community Updates

- Handbook: Updated version to be released next week.
- Community Webinar: Scheduled for Monday; open to students, families, and community members.
- Safety Committee: Met in June; next meeting planned for September to review safety policies in light of new property ownership.

Enrollment

- PYP Enrollment: KG 25, 1st 26, 2nd 27, 3rd 28, 4th 28, 5th 27 (161 total PYP)
- MYP Enrollment: 6th 39, 7th 16, 8th 6 (61 total MYP) (222 total for school)
- Some students dropped due to transportation concerns, but some families have returned to Valley Inquiry. Great to see those returns, working to boost enrollment.

Upcoming events

- PTC meeting 9/16 6pm

- VICS community update webinar 9/22 7pm
- Open house 10/2 4:30-6:30

Cheetah Care

After-school care is being offered at Valley this year. Champions generously donated materials, working to get online payments set up. Ring camera added to back door for pickup and drop-off from after-care.

7:03pm

IB/Staff report

Andrew Schmitt: MYP retreat, heard a lot of concern about wanting to build community when parents knew we wouldn't be back in person quite yet at the start of the school year. Whole teaching staff and office staff reserved Pringle Hall for three days, gave a chance for staff and students to get to know one another in a different setting. Got to do some mini-sessions introducing students to IB learner profiles and electives. Troubleshooted some tech issues as SKSD was loaning us some computers while we set up our own, but created a "one foot in each area" situation.

Things smoothing out, kids in the right classes now. Started to introduce some content but primarily focused on relationships last week. This week focusing on content and working on being open minded, reflecting and diving deeper in thought. Sixth graders that have experienced IB are ready to go, bringing older kids onboard. Trying to continue to give opportunities to meet in person, check in, ask questions, etc. Mini lessons on equations and thinking about how operations are impacted. Games, PE, etc. Working on application for MYP candidacy school, expecting approval in the next few weeks. Typically a 12-18 month period, then apply for authorization to be a MYP IB world school.

Cammi: How many kids coming to enrichment time?

Andrew: 15-25 depending on the day, as it is optional. Great time to get one-on-one instruction. As a teacher who has also coached and gotten to build relationships outside of the classroom, the connections can grow much deeper in those less structured settings.

Cammi: Glad to hear kids are taking advantage of that opportunity.

Carol: What did you coach?

Andrew: Cross country and track for around 5-6 years. Want to thank families for their grace and patience as we work through the hiccups pop up here and there.

Stacy Boost: World IB conference in New Orleans was amazing with Ms. McNay, Mrs. Fuller, Mr. Schmitt, Mr. Ponce, Mrs. Reade, Mrs. Boost. PYP teachers got together and made cohesive new plan of inquiry for 2025-26. TAG and Civil Air Patrol ACE program. MYP TAG action plans likely to begin in early October.

Started a "Risk Taker of the Month" recognition for adults. Wanja Kiraguri came

and volunteered to come read a story about her culture to each of our Buddy Class groups.

Doing a test to see whether parents can enter books/pages read online. Started online math challenges, different set for each grade. Students can earn pins for challenges.

“Challenge Accepted” card set with staff members' pictures on them created.

Staff inservice setting up IB PYP framework, planning using IB and state standards. Was incredible to see old and new teachers coming together. Many of the teachers have an outline for all six themes now.

Working on iReady Math, reading testing happening now. Had to do some updates on iPads to get them functional. Reading intervention can pull out at same time classes are doing reading groups, so it's just another reading group effectively. Have two assistants in each class when doing this so we can break into smaller groups.

Have been blown away by MYP, kids acting respectfully and supervision has been good.

BJ: I didn't quite catch what the “Challenge Accepted” card set was for.

Have a challenge to collect the whole set by introducing themselves, asking staff member's name, and having a small conversation, followed by getting that staff member's card. Can get a prize for getting the whole deck.

Steve: Was a big hit with my kids.

Stacy: The kids who were one short got credit, have ways to make sure kids aren't just supplying others with cards.

Steve: Reading challenge also working well, kids motivated to read as many pages as possible.

7:27pm

Treasurer's Report

Steve: Now have finalized our bond process, it is funded and we've taken possession of the building. Some delays in construction from where we hoped it would be, but a lot of changes since July meeting. We have a Chase and a US Bank account, intent is to close Chase account. Was hoping to get it done this week, looks like that might be optimistic

\$185k in Chase account, \$159k is a recent deposit. \$394k in US Bank account. \$579k cash on hand. Have historically have had a bit more, incurred some construction expenses, applied for around \$330k in reimbursements from bond which should increase cash on hand. Most MYP stand-up costs will be charged to bond, but some may go to operating expenses. Some purchases of white boards and such. Requirements going up quite a bit. Will have quarterly reports due to

lenders with things like cash on hand, operating days cash on hand, etc. Will try to build out a dashboard to bring to board meetings.

Since we have extra reporting requirements, should set up bond compliance committee (maybe treasurer and another board member, Lacey, and another staff member or two). Understand what covenants are and make sure our understanding and attorneys' understanding match. There are something like 23 covenants and some go beyond financial, such as property maintenance, tax requirements, limitations on our ability to earn money, etc. Had to move away from Champions due to limitations on earning money as a 501c3. Want to make sure we have a good calendar of reporting requirements.

Lacey: As a non-profit, having 3rd party vendors in a non-profit building was the sticky situation. Tried to make it work with Champions, but ultimately both parties agreed that it was going to be a bit too much red tape to work out.

Carol: Are there any other materials, supplies or costs our after school program will need?

Lacey: Yes, but cost of coming can cover those costs. Our bookkeeper is helping with that.

Carol: Roughly how many children participating?

Lacey: 15-25 students day to day, but higher enrolled due to drop-in families.

Steve: Childcare piece wasn't something we anticipated and isn't built into our budget, should be self-funding but should revamp financials to recognize addition of that. May need to add substitute teacher costs line item.

As part of cash on hand reporting is the need to possibly set up a separate savings account to hold 60-days cash on hand so we know not to touch it, and can monitor if it needs adjusted up or down.

Cammi: In the past have we had a savings account or just MUNIS?

BJ: Just MUNIS and checking account.

Steve: PYP renewal was around \$10k, some additional fees will put us over budget slightly. Not a budget pre-approval process we need to add, same board process so long as we don't do anything unreasonable. Don't believe a subcommittee needs to be directly appointed.

Carol: How much time commitment for subcommittee?

Steve: Some reporting due in October, probably 1-2 per week for first month, but not sure exactly.

Cammi: Why don't you think it needs appointed?

Steve: As mixed board/staff committee, likely isn't just a board subcommittee, but we could vote on something if needed.

Cammi: From chat: Were there any other services we had to get rid of due to third-party vendor constraint?

Lacey: We took on several services due to terms of real-estate transaction and amendments to charter agreement. Didn't have any other 3rd-party vendor, and one with Champions was through SKSD.

7:43pm

Open Comment

We have one parent in the audience, and others online, so we're open to questions.

?: Was the waitlist for sixth grade exhausted?

Lacey: Working through list. Have had some new students apply, but have to make through it and no, it's not exhausted.

?: Is there a certain number we have to get to?

Lacey: Our pro-forma had a minimum amount that we are above, but we are not yet where we want to be, shooting for split sixth grade of two groups of 25.

Jessica: Wondering if anything is going to be done about disruption and noise from construction? Son told me that it is very distracting and makes it hard to focus.

Steve: Have asked my kids the same thing, wasn't a distraction for them but sounds like it is for some kids. Please let us know if others are experiencing the same so we can talk to our construction team to see what can be done after hours or on weekends with louder activities. Thank you for bringing that forward.

Cammi: Originally was not planning on doing parking lot process quite yet but it should be finished soon and won't be as noisy since most of the digging work has been completed, hopefully will be coming to a close in the next few weeks. Could maybe talk with his teacher to see if you can come up with a plan.

Lacey: From chat: Is the plan for 5th to stay in the building? Lacey: Yes, plan has always been to keep elementary in the building.

Lacey: Access with front door a bit different with some caution tape, working with arborist to make sure we can get good access established. Thank you for letting us know your concerns.

Steve: An arborist said the tree should be removed, estimated cost is \$4500 so it's not a value that has to trigger multiple bids. Advised Lacey to proceed due to pressing concerns and low cost.

Carol: When is it scheduled?

Lacey: Still working on that.

Steve: Don't have a plan for replanting yet, but want to as it is difficult to see some trees lost on the property.

Lacey: Wanting to incorporate class instruction with tree replanting and add trees not as close to the building.

?: Wanting to set up K-8 Wonder wall where students can ask questions and investigate.

Cammi: Some encouraging words in the chat, so thank you for those kind words.

7:54pm

Facility update

Cammi: We now have all the responsibilities of being owners of the property. We were trying hard to keep the tree. Root damage to parking area was a concern with original drafts, and prior board wanted to keep that tree. Was planted around same time as the circle of trees on eastern side. Some sentimental value, hard to see it go, but it is causing damage and has potential to damage building as well. For safety reasons makes sense to follow advice of arborist.

Lacey: Part of amendments to charter involved taking on custodial, maintenance, utilities, etc. Contracting with custodial company (Lillian's cleaning company). Contracting with Nature Bros for landscaping, mostly on weekends. Working with SKSD to do handoff of fire messaging system so we can avoid any lapse in coverage. Working with SKSD TIS to step down from tech support, and Sodexo is serving through end of school year, but we need to plan for next year. Still have SKSD special education for LRC and IAs.

Steve: In list of everything we had to do to move from 90% to 95% pass through funding, what remains?

Lacey: The technology seems to be the biggest hurdle right now, but seems achievable to do by end of year.

Cammi: Even though we've chosen this path for custodial and landscaping, we could consider hiring for those positions if we want. This was the fastest way to get these services taken care of in a cost-effective manner for now.

8:02pm

Construction update

Cammi: First half of summer was hurry up and wait due to closing process, then our contractor ready in May but the delay pushed availability back, as their subcontractors had other jobs by the time we were finally ready. Unfortunate, but that's how it went. One thing we voted in two years ago was to bring the

electric underground to the pumphouse so we could eventually do this expansion.

AC electric had their own supply issues, gear arrived but we were not ready to get it going. Now that we're ready, their boring companies are all busy and we're on a waiting list. A boring company had something fall through and our architect got ahold of them, so this is a change order that isn't part of our bond. Need to get them going tomorrow or it will push back construction 5-7 weeks. Wasn't within the authorization for bond construction.

Steve: Motions to move forward with authorization of boring process.

Carol: What is cost difference?

Cammi: About \$5k additional cost.

Terry: Seconds motion.

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

Cammi: Original bid has changed by around \$70k. Nine change orders. #3 was septic revision, add concrete blocks so it doesn't float away. #4 was civil revision to storm structure for Marion permit approval. #5 was for dirt berms and hydroseed. #6 septic change due to lack of coordination with septic engineer and contractor. #7 was for erosion permitting for DEQ. #8 was to hire subcontractor for septic before October deadline. #9 is for demolition of existing portable, contractor didn't include cost in bid. ACCO had an update to contract, were originally through end of August but they are acting as owner's rep so adding on some additional cost for extending their concern.

Steve: No additional concerns.

Terry: Thank you for sharing.

Cammi: Can send out weekly updates from construction, have been summarizing them but if you want the minutes I can pass them on instead of summaries.

Terry: Would like full documents, thank you.

Cammi: Didn't realize they had minutes until there were attachments on one communication. Boring will go under highway, so may cause some noise.

8:13pm Board position update

Cammi: Mary Sinclair resigned from board due to work constraints keeping her from being present and available for meetings. Thank you Mary for the time you spent on the board and we completely understand having other commitments. Want to ask Ed and Steve how we are doing on additional board application.

Steve: Hoping to reach out with a time in the next few weeks that works for all involved to see whether we want to move that candidate forward.

Cammi: Always looking for community members with a passion for education. Would grandparents count as family?

Terry: Yes, would still have a vested interest in a particular student.

Cammi: Get Saturday availability to Terry for scheduling board training.

Carol: How long of a training?

Terry: Around a half day, maybe 4 hours.

8:19pm Next meeting info

Cammi: Next meeting October 13, virtual.

Steve: Felt like I was missing everyone to go two months between meetings!

Gerrick: Same, felt like I was missing out!

Terry: Lacey, can we use the school?

Lacey: We'll make it work.

8:21pm Meeting Adjourn

Chat log:

2025-09-15 18:36:03 From Ashly Schaffert to Everyone:

Lacey you can ignore my comment in Parentsquare. It obviously started working ☺ ☺

Lacey McNay: (heart)

Stephen M. Staten: ☺ ☺

2025-09-15 18:40:35 From Beth Wigham, EdD. to Everyone:

Hello All, good evening!

Lacey McNay, Stephen M. Staten: (heart)

2025-09-15 19:35:39 From Crystal to Everyone:

Were there any other services we had to get rid of because of 3rd party

2025-09-15 19:44:49 From Crystal to Everyone:

what extra steps are in place to ensure safety at drop off and pick up for anyone that may be late because I saw a young girl run through the front door

and across the front drop off pick up lines to her moms car next to hazel green who was leaving and no staff until she was with her mom

Also in the plan for 5th to stay in the building and the library to remain split for the other grade

2025-09-15 19:46:03 From Wanja Kiraguri to Everyone:

Thank you to the MYP team. You are doing a great job and the remote program and afternoon in-person is very well thought out.

Hannah Mcsmith, Kassy Selby, Stephen M. Staten, Beth Wigham, EdD.: (heart)

Beth Wigham, EdD.:□ □

2025-09-15 19:46:25 From Crystal to Everyone:

My child said this as well

2025-09-15 19:46:35 From Jessica Gershin to Everyone:

Our son said it was all he remembered for the day. He said it shook the whole building

Stephen M. Staten, Hannah Mcsmith, Crystal:□ □

2025-09-15 19:46:51 From Jessica Gershin to Everyone:

Its a huge problem

2025-09-15 19:52:32 From Stephen M. Staten to Everyone:

Replies to "My child said this as well":

Thank you for letting us know!

2025-09-15 19:53:03 From Kassy Selby to Everyone:

I just wanted to say thank you to the board and the staff. You guys are doing great at all the changes that are coming up. I can't wait for the rest of the year

Beth Wigham, EdD., Jaskiran Kaur, Hannah Mcsmith, Kassy Selby: (heart)

2025-09-15 19:56:11 From Beth Wigham, EdD. to Everyone:

The staff have been amazing; super patient, giving lots of grace and great with communication. Thank you!

Hannah Mcsmith, Jaskiran Kaur, Kassy Selby: (heart)

2025-09-15 20:04:47 From Stephen M. Staten to Everyone:

*Direction boring companies. The companies are actually very exciting, not boring at all.

Beth Wigham, EdD.:□ □

2025-09-15 20:04:58 From Stephen M. Staten to Everyone:

Directional*

Carol Kruse:□ □

2025-09-15 20:20:01 From Beth Wigham, EdD. to Everyone:

Thank you so much for all the updates and your intentional work to make the transitions as smooth as possible. It is all noticed and greatly appreciated.

Lacey McNay: (heart)

2025-09-15 20:20:47 From Beth Wigham, EdD. to Everyone:

We all knew things would have some bumps and hurdles, but you all are doing great.