



**MARCH 2023**

# **CHARTER BOARD BUZZ**

The official newsletter of the SCSB



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Continuing along with our review of the SCSB values, this month I am highlighting trust. There is an old short story that goes like this:

A little girl and her father were crossing a bridge. The father was nervous of the river below, so he asked his little daughter, “Sweetheart, please hold my hand so that you don’t fall into the river.” The little girl said, “No, Dad, you hold my hand.” “What’s the difference,” asked the puzzled father. “There’s a big difference,” replied the little girl. “If I hold your hand and something happens to me, chances are that I may let your hand go. But, if you hold my hand, I know for sure that no matter what happens, you will never let my hand go.” In any relationship, the essence of trust is found in both the bind and the bond.

Let’s look at the difference between “bind” and “bond.” In a physical sense, when you bind something, you are taking two things and tying them together, but that tie can be broken. When you bond something, you are also joining two things, but you are unifying them, making them much harder to separate.

As a charter school authorizer, we have relationships that both bind and bond. The charter agreement is a binding agreement between the State Charter School Board and a school’s governing board. It outlines commitments and accountability that the SCSB and schools have to one another. And while that is important, ultimately, we have a bond and accountability to the people of Utah to authorize and oversee good schools. Great trust is placed in the SCSB to hold schools accountable. When communities and authorizers are bound together, we can ensure that schools are meeting needs and helping each student succeed.

# BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

February:

Wallace Stegner Academy presented information about their satellite request. The request was granted.

A training on the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) was provided in fulfillment of the annual requirement for OPMA training.

The SCSB received a legislative update.

Catch up anytime on our YouTube channel

[www.youtube.com/UtahSCSB](http://www.youtube.com/UtahSCSB)



This is Jamie Lewis. She is the Principal at Thomas Edison North.

Board Chair Oliva Kirkham writes, "Mrs. Lewis took over as principal this year during a very difficult time for the school, and she has done a phenomenal job stepping into that role. She has built great relationships with staff members and helped unify the school. She cares deeply about the staff, students, and parents, and it shows. She is organized, forward-thinking, and passionate about helping everyone at the school succeed. The community is inspired by her leadership, and her compassion sets the tone for the whole school.

Keep inspiring others, Ms. Lewis!

# NOTES FROM THE SCSB

An effective Head of School evaluation process allows the board to:

- Develop clear performance measures and goals every year so the Head of School's work is aligned with and supports the school's strategic direction
- Assess the Head of School's ability to perform the core competencies of the position and to meet agreed-upon annual goals
- Identify proactively when the leader is not on track to meet their goals, and provide support, professional development, and timely feedback to help them improve
- Recognize and reward successes, which helps retain strong leaders
- Provide an opportunity for the Head of School to reflect on their performance
- Create a transparent and agreed upon structure for communicating with the Head of School about their performance regularly and routinely throughout the year

From: Charter Board Partners

# LET'S NETWORK

Learning who's who in our charter world

## SPOTLIGHT: SCSB MEMBER

Rabecca Cisneros, SCSB Member

1. How long have you been with the SCSB? A little less than a year on the board. I was on staff for a little over 3 years previously.
2. What is your background in? Military, Business, Education (in that order).
3. What is your favorite part of your role with the SCSB? Hearing new school applications.
4. What is your favorite way to relax? Reading and baking chocolate chip cookies.
5. What is one way you consider yourself lucky? I got lucky with my awesome hubby and amazing kids.



## SPOTLIGHT: CHARTER DIRECTOR

Errol Porter, Timpanogos Academy

1. I have been with Timpanogos Academy since it opened in 2002. This is the 21st year.
2. My background is education. I started teaching in 1990 and have been doing it ever since.
3. I tell people I have the greatest job in the world. I get to see young children everyday.
4. My favorite way to relax is time with my wife doing things we don't usually get time to do.
5. I am blessed to be married to my best friend for 36 years. I have 5 children who are all married, 12 grandchildren, 6 of which have attended my school. The future looks bright and it is exciting to be part of it.



## SPOTLIGHT: CHARTER BOARD MEMBER

Sarah Steimel, DaVinci Academy

1. My daughter started 1st grade at DaVinci Academy in the 2015-2016 school year, and I slowly got more involved over time (volunteering, Parent/Teacher Association, Land Trust Committee, and then eventually school board starting in 2020). This is my first year as chair of our DaVinci school board.
2. I am a professor of Communication at Weber State University, and I've been teaching at the community college and/or university level now for 20 years. I love teaching a wide variety of classes (like Organizational Communication, Theory, Research, Small Group Facilitation, etc.) to many different university students.
3. I love helping to support teachers and administrators to foster the learning moments that lead to student success. Sometimes that is through direct volunteering (in the classroom). Other times it is, on the board, by helping review, refine, and support teacher-led plans for meeting and exceeding student learning goals in reading or math. In every way, the most fulfilling moments come when students excel because teachers and administrators had the support to shine in their roles too.
4. Spending time outdoors with my family -- I have a 7th grader and a 4th grader now, and my husband and I love to go hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, or otherwise just be outside with them.
5. We are so lucky to live in such a beautiful place (filled with spectacular national parks and beautiful trails right in the city) here in Utah.



## SPOTLIGHT: CHARTER BUSINESS MANAGER

Courtney England, Spectrum Academy

I have been with Spectrum Academy for 5 1/2 years now. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting from the University of Utah and came to Spectrum with over 15 years of public and private accounting experience.

My favorite role at my job is obviously all of the accounting stuff...lol. But, really, knowing that I am helping make a difference in so many kids' lives everyday, even if it is in an indirect way, is very fulfilling.

In my downtime, I love working out, going on walks, crocheting, and doing puzzles. I also love to spend time with my husband and my two teenage boys.

Lucky is a funny subject for me since my motto lately has been "If I didn't have bad luck, I would have no luck at all". But, seriously I consider myself lucky that I get to live such an amazing life here in Utah. I love this state and all the opportunities it has to play outdoors.





## SPOTLIGHT: SCSB STAFF

Brendan McGinn, School Performance Specialist

1. How long you have been with the SCSB? I started with the SCSB in January 2022.
2. What is your background in? I studied biology in school and began my career as a field biologist for the states of Colorado and Utah. I moved into education, luckily, and enjoyed teaching math and science to all grade levels in both charter and traditional public schools. I have also had the opportunity to work in school administration as a vice principal, interim director, and assessment director.
3. What is your favorite part of your role with the SCSB? My favorite part of working at the SCSB has been visiting our charter schools and learning about the wonderful and unique ways that each school inspires students.
4. What is your favorite way to relax? My favorite ways to relax are to spend time outdoors with my family and play soccer with the teams that I coach.
5. What is one way you consider yourself lucky? One way that I feel incredibly lucky is meeting my wife on the very first day of graduate school. We have been inseparable ever since and even taught at the same school with adjoining classrooms a few years later.



## SPOTLIGHT: CHARTER TEACHER

Salli Robinson, Legacy Preparatory Academy

How long you have been with your school? I have been with Legacy Preparatory Academy for 3 years.

What is your background in? My schooling is in Health Education and School Counseling which surprisingly go hand in hand. I've worked with high school, Jr. High/Middle school, and Elementary and love them all, they all have their own unique challenges.

What is your favorite part of your role with the school? I love that I get to know ALL the teachers and All of the students. Plus I've gotten to work with a lot of amazing administrators and leaders.

What is your favorite way to relax? I love to laugh with friends and watch mindless movies or read.

What is your favorite type of movie? I like dumb goofy movies!



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

You can nominate an employee of the month by going to <https://www.utahscsb.org/team-3>

Please email and pictures you'd like to see featured by the SCSB to [helloscsb@schools.utah.gov](mailto:helloscsb@schools.utah.gov)

The training calendar can be found here:

<https://ucap.schools.utah.gov/TrainingAndSupport/Trainings#trainingMenu>

The reporting calendar can be found here:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1vvYxS9lb4Mxcb43a97q-kh4wHIVkbb7/edit#gid=38538872>

The Utah Association of Public Charter Schools has trainings coming up. If you would like more information, please email Shannon Greer at [shannon@utahcharters.org](mailto:shannon@utahcharters.org)

The ACES program will provide training targeted to individuals interested in becoming charter school administrators. All classes will be offered over Zoom, with the option to join an in person session 3 times throughout the course. Classes will be taught by educational leaders throughout the state and there is no cost to participate.