Minutes of the Regular Meeting of

**STATEWIDE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD
OKLAHOMA HISTORY CENTER
800 NAZIH ZUHDI DR.
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK
July 13, 2026**

The Statewide Charter School Board met in regular session at 1:01 p.m. on Monday, July 13, 2026, at the Oklahoma History Center at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Dr., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Members of the Statewide Charter School Board Present:

Brian Shellem
Bill Pearson
Jared Buswell
Damon Gardenhire
Kitty Campbell, designee for State Auditor and Inspector, Cindy Byrd
Courtney Anderson, designee for State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Lindel Fields

Others in Attendance:

Rebecca Wilkinson, Executive Director
Skyler H. Lusnia, Director of School Performance
Emily Witwer, Secretary to the Board
Lecrecia Schmidt, Operations Officer
Jaycie Smith, Academic Compliance Officer
Shelly Hickman, Communications Director
Lisa Daniels, Director of Horizon: Digitally Enhanced Campus
John Hadden, Assistant Attorney General

Other general public in attendance are shown as an attachment.

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**

   Brian Shellem – Present
   Bill Pearson – Present
   Amber Wise - Absent
   Jared Buswell – Present
   Marshall Baker – Absent
   Damon Gardenhire – Present
   Kitty Campbell – Present, designee for State Auditor and Inspector, Cindy Byrd
   Courtney Anderson – Present, designee for State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Lindel Fields
   Stephanie Savage – Absent

2. **Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, Salute to the Oklahoma State Flag, and Moment of Silence**

3. **(Action) Discussion and possible action regarding minutes of the June 8, 2026, Regular Board Meeting.**

   Jared Buswell moved to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2026, regular board meeting as presented. Bill Pearson seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following votes:

Kitty Campbell – Abstain
Bill Pearson – Yes
Courtney Anderson – Yes
Damon Gardenhire – Yes
Amber Wise - Absent
Brian Shellem – Yes
Marshall Baker – Absent
Jared Buswell – Yes
Stephanie Savage – Absent

4. Chairman's Opening Comments

Chairman Brian Shellem acknowledged the recent 250th anniversary of Independence Day and how much there is to be thankful for. Mr. Shellem noted that as we look at history, the bend toward more freedom has always been a good thing. Mr. Shellem added that we need freedom in education and authorization and that more freedom encourages better results.

5. Public Comment

The Statewide Charter School Board shall hear public comment on any action item listed on the current board meeting agenda. Public comments will be limited to only those subject matters covered in the current meeting agenda. Public comment will not be taken on issues relating to: (1) pending litigation against SCSB or agency employees; (2) a pending grievance; (3) an employee complaint; (4) complaints against SCSB employees; (5) disciplinary action, suspension, or termination of an SCSB employee; or (6) any administrative proceeding initiated by the Board pursuant to the provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act. A sign-up sheet will be posted at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the Board Meeting. Sign up must be completed prior to the scheduled start time of the meeting. Only individuals who have signed up to speak will be recognized during the Public Comment period and will be recognized in the order in which they have signed in. Each speaker will be allocated three (3) minutes for presentation. The Board Chairperson may interrupt and/or terminate any presentation during public comment which does not conform to the procedures outlined under this Section. The Board Chairperson reserves and retains the right to interrupt, terminate, or postpone public comment as necessary to effectuate the management of the public meeting.

There was no public comment.

6. Presentation and possible discussion regarding the Statewide Charter School Board Working Group reports: Budget, Communications, Governance, and Horizon: Digitally Enhanced Campus

Jared Buswell, Chair of the Budget Working Group, had no update. Damon Gardenhire, Chair of the Communications Committee, had no update. Executive Director Dr. Rebecca Wilkinson had no update for the Governance or Horizon Working Group.

7. Administration

a. (Action) Review, discussion, and possible action regarding The Academies of Oklahoma charter contract, including the approval of an additional site in Canadian County

Skyler Lusnia, Director of School Performance for the Statewide Charter School Board, introduced the draft renewal charter contract for The Academies of Oklahoma, which included the addition of a new site location in Canadian County. Mr. Lusnia presented two versions of the charter contract – one prepared by SCSB staff and another that included suggested changes from The Academies' attorney and the correction of a scrivener's error, which replaced a reference to a 5-year term with the 10-year term approved by the Board at a previous meeting. The attorney suggested changes included modifications to language to better reflect statutory requirements and removal of a requirement only applicable to new schools.

Jared Buswell moved to allow the correction of the scrivener's error to reflect the appropriate 10-year term. Damon Gardenhire seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following votes:

Amber Wise – Absent
Marshall Baker – Absent
Bill Pearson – Yes
Courtney Anderson – Yes
Damon Gardenhire – Yes
Brian Shellem – Yes
Kitty Campbell – Yes
Jared Buswell – Yes
Stephanie Savage – Absent

Jared Buswell then moved to approve The Academies of Oklahoma's counsel's suggested changes to the contract language. Damon Gardenhire seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following votes:

Amber Wise – Absent
Marshall Baker – Absent
Bill Pearson – Yes
Courtney Anderson – Yes
Damon Gardenhire – Yes
Brian Shellem – Yes
Kitty Campbell – Yes
Jared Buswell – Yes
Stephanie Savage – Absent

Jared Buswell finally moved to approve The Academies of Oklahoma charter contract, including the addition of a new site location. Bill Pearson seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following votes:

Amber Wise – Absent
Marshall Baker – Absent
Bill Pearson – Yes
Courtney Anderson – Yes
Damon Gardenhire – Yes
Brian Shellem – Yes
Kitty Campbell – Yes
Jared Buswell – Yes
Stephanie Savage – Absent

b. (Action) Review, discussion, and possible action regarding the adoption, via emergency rulemaking, of proposed amendments to title 777, chapter 10 of the Oklahoma Administrative Code as set forth below:

Title 777. STATEWIDE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD

CHAPTER 10: Charter Schools and Statewide Virtual Charter Schools
Subchapter 3. Charter School and Virtual Charter School Sponsorship
777:10-3-4. Oversight and evaluation of charter schools and virtual charter schools by the Statewide Charter School Board (Amended)

Dr. Wilkinson introduced the proposed emergency rules to be submitted to the Governor for approval. Dr. Wilkinson explained that in order to revise the Performance Frameworks, the old language must be removed from the rules, and that the newly proposed rules would refer to the statutory requirements instead. Chairman Shellem then opened the item for further discussion. Dr. Wilkinson added that there has been interest from the Legislature in streamlining the Performance Framework process. Mr. Shellem suggested adding parent orientation for virtual schools to the rules. Dr. Wilkinson acknowledged the importance of parents knowing the commitment and involvement needed for virtual schools. Bill Pearson asked about school board meeting minutes and requirements and Mr. Shellem noted that this could be considered in later rule revisions and that more work would be done in regards to the administrative rules. Dr. Wilkinson emphasized the purpose of the specific agenda item to remove the Performance Framework language to allow for future rule changes. Jared Buswell asked whether the new Performance Language would need to be added to replace the current language, and Dr. Wilkinson explained that would be up to the Board in the fall when adopting permanent rules. Damon Gardenhire noted his desire to streamline the process as much as possible and increase transparency. Kitty Campbell moved to approve submission of the rules to the Governor. Courtney Anderson seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following votes:

Amber Wise – Absent
Marshall Baker – Absent
Bill Pearson – Yes
Courtney Anderson – Yes
Damon Gardenhire – Yes
Brian Shellem – Yes
Kitty Campbell – Yes
Jared Buswell – Yes
Stephanie Savage – Absent

c. (Action) Review, discussion, and possible action regarding Performance Frameworks for the following virtual charter schools:
   i. Epic Charter Schools
   ii. Oklahoma Connections Academy
   iii. Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy

Skyler Lusnia addressed the Board to introduce the final 2024-2025 Performance Frameworks for three virtual charter schools. Epic Charter Schools received an overall score of 60.81, with an academic score of 22.86. Mr. Lusnia noted that SCSB staff would be working to develop corrective action plans for all schools with low academic scores, including a root cause analysis.

Mr. Lusnia added that Epic uses a different nationally-normed English Language Arts and Math benchmark test than many other schools, which may not align with the Oklahoma School Testing Program. Mr. Shellem noted his concern with virtual school scores in general and requested Mr. Lusnia provide as much information on all the schools. Mr. Lusnia further discussed Epic's scores, including a decline in the academic and financial score from the previous year, but noted that they received full points in the organizational component. Mr. Lusnia next discussed Oklahoma Connections Academy's Performance Framework. Oklahoma Connections received an overall score of 78.48, with an academic score of 49.33. Mr. Lusnia noted that while these scores were very slight decreases from the previous year, Oklahoma Connections received high marks in both financial and organizational performance. Finally, Mr. Lusnia discussed Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy, which received an overall score of 72.41, with an academic score of 41.45. Similarly, these scores were slight decreases from the previous year. Mr. Lusnia noted that Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy also received high marks in both financial and organizational performance. Mr. Lusnia explained that Dr. Jaycie Smith, Academic Compliance Officer for the SCSB, would delve deeply into the academics of several schools with lower academic performance to develop corrective action plans.

Mr. Shellem noted that amazing students have come out of virtual schools but expressed concern that they are not doing well overall and his desire to know why some students are doing great and others are not. Dr. Wilkinson highlighted that amazing students come from even low-performing schools and that anecdotal evidence shows that when kids have a sense of work ethic and an adult presence, they succeed. Damon Gardenhire emphasized the need for a root-cause analysis to identify a common weak point and what is working for successful schools. Mr. Gardenhire added that virtual schools have a lot of promise but rely on parents to be a part of academic success and that training and resources should be provided to parents. Mr. Shellem further discussed hybrid school models that have shown good results and Kitty Campbell agreed their results were very impressive. Mr. Shellem concluded the discussion by stating that all schools are on a journey and that failure is not an option. Mr. Shellem acknowledged that the schools and teachers want their kids to succeed and that the Board wants to partner with these schools to help them succeed.

d. Presentation and possible discussion regarding the investigative audit for Epic Charter Schools and the school's implementation of audit-based recommendations

Skyler Lusnia discussed the audit for Epic Charter Schools which was presented to the Board in January. Mr. Lusnia explained that SCSB staff has had monthly check-ins with Epic and Epic had provided an update on the status of the audit findings. Of the 15 audit findings, every item had been addressed with either full implementation or plans to implement changes to address each issue. Mr. Lusnia commended Epic's new leadership and Board for facing the challenges head-on and being willing to continue the work. Mr. Lusnia highlighted some of Epic's recent changes, including implementing a zero-based budgeting model and updating their procedures to prevent reductions in force or skewed enrollment projections. Mr. Gardenhire noted that there were previous unorthodox accounting practices, and Mr. Lusnia confirmed that Epic is now using a more traditional model. Jared Buswell inquired how long the Board needs to monitor the audit. Mr. Lusnia predicted there would be one more update in the coming months and noted the need to follow it through and ensure the recommended implementations are not lost or forgotten. Dr. Wilkinson further explained the need for constant monitoring of Epic due to the uniqueness and size of the school, but acknowledged Epic's new superintendent, Dr. Shaun Ross, for his transparency and work to improve Epic in all aspects. Mr. Shellem requested Dr. Ross address the Board to discuss the audit findings and provide an update on the new board. Dr. Ross addressed the Board and stated that Epic's new leadership has worked hard to address every single audit finding. Dr. Ross explained new policies in place to mitigate purchases not aligned with the organization and a policy to govern how money is spent and approved and how items are purchased. Dr. Ross stated that financial reporting is being made to the board in a separate committee and providing transparency that was previously absent. Dr. Ross emphasized his desire for Epic to get past the financial situation and focus on the academic results of students and stability for teachers. Mr. Shellem thanked Dr. Ross for his time, and Dr. Ross assured the Board that Epic would make them proud and move the needle in academics.

e. Presentation and possible discussion regarding Tulsa Honor Academy's application for authorization renewal

Mr. Lusnia notified the Board that Tulsa Honor Academy had submitted a renewal application and introduced Tulsa Honor's Founder and CEO, Elsie Urueta Pollock. Ms. Pollock addressed the Board and explained the mission of Tulsa Honor Academy, as a college prep school, to equip all scholars with the skills necessary for college graduation and life success. Ms. Pollock discussed her background and the BES fellowship that allowed her to see and learn from high-performing schools across the country. Using this knowledge, Ms. Pollock founded Tulsa Honor Academy, which was approved as a charter school in 2014. Ms. Pollock described the growing pains faced by the middle school, including multiple school sites in the first few years, and the eventual expansion to high school and a second middle school. Ms. Pollock explained the school's college readiness and internship programs and highlighted students' success with those programs. Ms. Pollock shared data on the school's growth and test scores over the last eight years. Ms. Pollock then shared the school's goal to expand to serve Pre-Kindergarten through 4th grade with the addition of a dual-language model elementary school. Ms. Pollock explained that while Tulsa Honor is currently authorized by Tulsa Public Schools, the school is exploring options and has applied to the Board for a 10-year renewal and expansion to elementary. Damon Gardenhire stated that he has known Ms. Pollock prior to starting Tulsa Honor Academy and has watched the school grow and had the privilege of helping, and shared his support for granting the application. Mr. Shellem asked about the BES fellowship and Ms. Pollock further explained how the fellowship and seeing other successful schools helped bring her dream to life. Mr. Shellem asked how the Board could serve Tulsa Honor Academy and Ms. Pollock expressed the appeal of a 10-year renewal, which Tulsa Public Schools does not currently grant, and the desire to be a part of the Board's growth, but also explained the need to make the decision that best serves her students. Mr. Shellem thanked Ms. Pollock and stated he was impressed with her school, and Ms. Pollock thanked the Board for its consideration.

f. Presentation and possible discussion regarding the Statewide Charter School Board's Commitment to Oklahoma and 5-year expectations for charter school authorization, oversight, and services, and supplemental online learning services

Dr. Wilkinson introduced the Board to a document provided showing where the agency ended on December 31, 2025, and the agency's goals and aspirations for 2030. The document included both the agency's charter school side, with the three areas defined by statute, and Horizon. Dr. Wilkinson highlighted some of the goals on the charter school side, including supporting expansion of 5,000 quality charter seats for brick-and-mortar schools, performance framework revisions and alignment, and implementing new facility funding, including setting parameters and writing rules. On the Horizon side, Dr. Wilkinson highlighted goals to develop Oklahoma-owned courses to help with costs, maintain highly effective teachers, expand to serve 450 school districts, and implement the Horizon Research Center. Mr. Shellem reiterated his desire to expand authorizer freedom in the coming years. Dr. Wilkinson also noted a goal to explore and research innovative schools, such as microschools and opportunity schools. Damon Gardenhire mentioned the BES fellowship and added that while microschools and fellowship programs are not necessarily part of the Board's role, it is important for the Board to have a voice at that table and be a part of the pipeline of talent coming out of these programs. Jared Buswell inquired about staff efforts to contact the charter school community to weigh in on the agency's goals and suggested a panel or workshop at the upcoming conference. Mr. Buswell further suggested evaluating the traffic to the Annual Charter Report visualization to determine its usefulness. Mr. Shellem concluded the discussion by expressing the need for great outcomes for all students, not just charter school students, and the hope that the Board can be the tip of the spear to push progress.

g. (Action) Presentation, discussion, and possible action regarding the election of officers:
   i. Chairperson
   ii. Vice-Chairperson

Mr. Shellem stated it has been a privilege to serve as Board Chairperson for the last two years and expressed that he would be happy to continue serving if the Board is happy with his service before opening the floor for discussion. Bill Pearson moved to re-elect Brian Shellem as Chairperson. Jared Buswell seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following votes:

Amber Wise – Absent
Marshall Baker – Absent
Bill Pearson – Yes
Courtney Anderson – Yes
Damon Gardenhire – Yes
Brian Shellem – Yes
Kitty Campbell – Yes
Jared Buswell – Yes
Stephanie Savage – Absent

Mr. Shellem noted that Damon Gardenhire graciously served the last year as Vice-Chairperson but acknowledged that he has time constraints and that Bill Pearson had volunteered to serve as needed if re-elected after his current term expired. Damon Gardenhire moved to elect Bill Pearson as Vice-Chairperson. Kitty Campbell seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following votes:

Amber Wise – Absent
Marshall Baker – Absent
Bill Pearson – Abstain
Courtney Anderson – Yes
Damon Gardenhire – Yes
Brian Shellem – Yes
Kitty Campbell – Yes
Jared Buswell – Yes
Stephanie Savage – Absent

8. New Business

Discussion and possible action of any item that could not have been known or reasonably foreseen prior to time of posting agenda (As defined in Oklahoma Statutes Title 25, Section 311 (A)(9)).

There was no new business.

9. Adjournment

Jared Buswell made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Courtney Anderson seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following votes:

Amber Wise – Absent
Marshall Baker – Absent
Bill Pearson – Yes
Courtney Anderson – Yes
Damon Gardenhire – Yes
Brian Shellem – Yes
Kitty Campbell – Yes
Jared Buswell – Yes
Stephanie Savage – Absent

The meeting was adjourned at 3:27 p.m.

Brian Shellem, Chairman of the Board

Emily Witwer, Secretary of the Board

ATTACHMENT:

OTHER GENERAL PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

STATEWIDE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR MEETING - JULY 13, 2026
Meeting Sign-In

Please PRINT Name	Business - School - Agency	Address
DERWIN ROMANI	TRI FACTOR 13 ICF	811 EAST DR, OKC
Morrison Dominguez	THA	—
Jennifer Palmer	Ok Watch	100 W Main OKC
Shawn Ross	Epic Charter Schools	
Elsie Urueta	THA	1421 S. Sheridan Rd.
Rebecca James	Oklahoma Connections	
Andra Plummer	OVCA	MWC
Melissa [illegible]	OkCd	[illegible]
Melissa [illegible]	OJA/OHACS	
Jennifer Wilkinson	ISOK	MWC
Chantta Smith	YACA	1025 NE 15th St.