

## STEAM Academy Board Meeting Minutes

**Date: Thursday, March 16th, 2023 – 6:00 PM**

**Meeting Address: Online Meeting using Zoom (Audio & Video)**

Interested individuals from the public who would like to attend the meeting, should email: [info@steamacademymn.org](mailto:info@steamacademymn.org) with their Name, email address and phone # by Noon on 03-16-2023.

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Mission: STEAM Academy's mission is to provide a student-centered learning environment where all of its students, families, and communities apply the civic skills needed to wisely meet the common good through personal and public education. Our school strives to answer the question, "Why do I need to know this?" from diverse perspectives: culturally responsive, critical thinking, life-long learning, gender neutral, community informed, cross generational, and any other viewpoint that produces a greater public good.

Vision: STEAM Academy embraces a multidisciplinary curriculum with an emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) to provide a learning-for-understanding environment which values personal and community accountability, creativity, diversity, critical thinking, and multiculturalism. We believe that schools can prepare their students for greater understanding of profound issues through collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving. We believe this is possible when learning is done with purpose.

Meeting Minutes:

- ❖ Present:
  - Board Members: Makia Jama, Hamada Aboubakr, Sarah Chebli, Maryam Arab (6:04pm), and Mahdi Nur
  - Public: Magdy Rabeaa, Luli Axhijaj, Hassan Hassan, and Tu Nguyen (NEO)
- ❖ Reading STEAM Academy Mission and Vision: Maryam read the mission and vision.
- ❖ Conflict of Interest Check: None
- ❖ Comments/Questions from the Public, 2 minutes per person: Comments from Tu Nguyen on later agenda items – NEO-Steam Framework. Comment from Magdy that he would like to address the Board a little later in regards to staffing update.
- ❖ Agenda

- Approval of Agenda. 6:10pm: motioned by Hamada, seconded by Makia, motion passed unanimously.
- ❖ Previous Meeting Minutes: No comments on previous meeting minutes, everything looks good.
  - Approval of previous meeting minutes for January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023 (6:11pm): motioned by Makia, seconded by Maryam, motion passes unanimously.
- ❖ Financial Update Budget/Financial Update: Since there is no representative from BergankDV (New finance vendor that started this month), Luli will do a quick walk through. There are financial reports from December, January, and February. All reports are very similar, board members had a chance to review them as they were emailed to all a few days ago. The reports mention the cashflow and that the school is working on the CSP grant. In December, it mentions that they are also working on a lease aid application as it was not approved yet at that time from MDE. The final page is the detailed revenue and the Board reviewed carefully all the payment register. For January, the lease aid application still was not approved. For February, they are over 65% usage of the year. On pages 9-10, it details the payments made and 12 and 13 shows projected payments. Edfin is no longer working with the school, so Luli is summarizing each report. BergankDV are the new financial vendor, BergankDV will begin presenting at the next Board meeting. BergankDV will be also assisting with the CSP grant which is a federal grant for purchasing mainly materials (Curriculum, Furniture, Technology, Teaching Supplies, etc.).
  - Motion to accept December 2022 financials at 6:18pm: motioned by Hamada, seconded by Maryam, motion passed unanimously.
  - Motion to accept January 2023 financials at 6:18pm: motioned by Maryam, seconded by Hamada, motion passed unanimously.
  - Motion to accept February 2023 financials at 6:18pm: motioned by Hamada, seconded by Maryam, motion passed unanimously.
- ❖ Items that need approval: Amina Adan resigned from her position in mid-February. Hassan Hassan was introduced to the Board of Directors. His resume was also emailed to all the Board of Directors and attendees along with the Board Packet. He will be focusing on the day-to-day operation including staffing, relations with parents, and student enrollment. Mr. Hassan has enrolled 10 students in STEAM Academy in less than two months, he is still working to increase student enrollment.
  - Staffing:
    - Motion to approve all staff hiring by STEAM Academy, including a new para-professional hired yesterday at 6:39pm: motioned by Hamada, seconded by Maryam, motion passed unanimously.

- Motion to approve Hassan Hassan to replace Amina Adan as the Executive Director of STEAM Academy at 6:38: motioned by Sarah, seconded by Makia, motion passed unanimously.
    - Vendor contracts: All vendor contracts have been mentioned previously, there are no new vendors for approval at this meeting. Yet, it is clear that the Board needs to approve all the vendor contracts.
- ❖ Operations and Academic updates: The school has been doing good, despite staff and teacher shortages that the schools are experiencing. All requirements are being met. The school operation is going well, but there have been some transitional challenges with a new financial vendor and a new director. Also, there are some cashflow challenges mainly due to the delayed lease aid application approval, SPED expenses, and student enrollment numbers. Luli is working with the MDE staff to update the ADM numbers (Student Numbers) to reflect accordingly as submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) on the Enrollment Projection Report. Luli believes that the cashflow and the issues with past due invoices will be resolved soon. The teachers are receiving training to support students with the standardized testing. There are weekly meetings with staff members and Professional Development opportunities to support teachers. The students are going through WIDA Access standardized testing.
- ❖ Faculty and lease aid application updates: STEAM Academy moved locations last year. The STEAM Academy team has worked hard to make sure the building meets all the requirements. There have been safety and fire requirements. Once the building was in compliance, after the Fire Marshal's final inspection and approval, STEAM Academy was able to submit the application for the lease aid. Then, the lease aid application was revised again in December per MDE's feedback and was resubmitted. Finally, the lease aid application was approved in mid-February. This has affected the school financially because the lease aid funds were delayed until after the approval. MDE will keep paying the lease aid money in each IDEAS payments as scheduled until June 30th. This process should be faster in the future years because the building now is ready, it passed the Fire Marshal's inspection, and it has received the Occupancy permit to be a school building.
- ❖ NEO-STEAM Performance Framework (Board Training), Lead by Tu Nguyen: Team members, including Board Chair, did a deep dive on the Performance Framework for STEAM Academy. All the framework points are shared with all board members. The NEO-STEAM Performance Framework includes the objectives for performance data and also it breaks down the performance data. Some data points show that STEAM Academy is weighted in Academic Performance at 60.5%. This framework is the core of the school's activities and objectives. There were a lot of questions and discussions from among the Board members in regards to Performance Framework. This Performance

Framework document is an ongoing document and is updated each year as the year passes. Each Board member have access to it and can comment if necessary.

- ❖ Next board meeting: May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 6:00pm via Zoom
- ❖ Adjourn
  - Motioned to adjourn meeting at 7:33pm: motioned by Hamada, seconded by Sarah, motion passed unanimously.