STEAM Academy Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, April 2, 2026 – 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 with their Name, email address and phone # by Noon on 04-02-2026.

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:

- Call to Order: The Board Chair (Sarah Chebli) called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

- Present:
  - Board Members: Sarah Chebli, Maria Azizi, and Santa Fe Patawaran
  - Public: Jean Neuman (NEO Authorizer), Angela Reali Crossland (Instructional Designs), Abdinasser Ahmed (Ex-Oficio) and Luli Axhijaj

- Reading STEAM Academy Mission and Vision: Sarah (Board Chair) read the mission and vision.

- Conflict of Interest Check by Sarah (Board Chair): None

- Comments/Questions from the Public, 2 minutes per person: Jean Neuman from NEO Authorizer introduced herself again for this Board Meeting's observation. The STEAM Board of Directors thanked Jean for joining and observing.

- Agenda - Approval of Agenda - Motioned by Maria and seconded by Santa Fe, motion passed unanimously by a roll call.

- Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes - The Board reviewed and approve the previous meeting minutes for February and March 2026. Motioned by Santa Fe, seconded by Maria, motion passed unanimously by a roll call.

- Approval of the Financial Reports – Kelly Rimpila from Creative Planning was not present at this Board meeting. Therefore, Luli presented the Financial Reports and supplements for January, and February 2026. The Board discussed the financial statements as presented and everything is looking good and aligned to the budget. Maria made the motion and Santa Fe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call to approve the financial reports as presented.

- Approve 2026-2027 Budget – Luli also presented and summarized the 2026-2027 Budget prepared by Kelly and the finance committee. Motioned by Santa Fe and Maria seconded and motion passed by an unanimously roll call.

- Board Training – The Board training is provided by Angela Crossland from Instructional Designs. She went over the training after the board had watched the videos. The training was on meeting requirements for serving students with IEPs and ensuring the school teaches and assesses grade-level Minnesota standards.

  <u>Board Training: Special Education Oversight</u>

  Angela Reali Crossland explains the board's role in overseeing special education compliance and budget allocation. The board should review and improve the school's special education system plan and ensure sufficient funding for staffing and professional development. Angela presents a scenario where families express concerns about special education evaluations and services. Board members discuss questions to ask the school director to understand the situation and monitor evaluation timelines and IEP implementation.

  Quiz questions:

  Angela Reali Crossland asks board members to consider potential risks and benefits of requesting more special education updates.

The board should review last year's data related to special education students and ensure budget sufficiency.

Board members answer questions about federal laws, IEPs, board responsibilities, and family involvement in special education.

<u>Board Training: Curriculum Alignment and Assessment</u>

Angela Reali Crossland also explains the board's role in ensuring the school's curriculum aligns with Minnesota standards.

The board should review multiple data sources to monitor student progress and identify areas needing support.

Angela presents a scenario where a parent claims the school's reading curriculum is not rigorous.

Board members discuss questions to ask the school leader and the importance of curriculum mapping and professional development.

Scenario-Based Questions and Quiz:

Angela Reali Crossland asks board members to consider questions to ask when reviewing MCA results showing declining proficiency in math.

The board should conduct a root cause analysis and review the school improvement plan.

Angela presents a scenario where only 40% of students meet grade-level reading standards.

Board members discuss the appropriate governance response and the importance of curriculum mapping and school improvement plans.

Summary: Ensuring Curriculum Alignment and Professional Development

Angela Reali Crossland emphasizes the importance of curriculum mapping and school improvement plans in driving concrete changes in teaching and learning.

The board should regularly review state interim and classroom assessment data and ensure teachers are trained to use these maps for instruction and assessment.

Angela highlights the need for ongoing professional development to support standards-based teaching and assessment.

The board should ensure regular communication with school leaders about academic performance to stay informed and hold the school accountable.

- Approve 2026-2027 School Calendar – Luli went over the 2026-2027 STEAM Academy's School Calendar. The calendar meets all the requirements including the student days and instructional hours. Motion by Santa Fe and seconded by Maria and motion passes unanimously.

- Review / Approve of Contracts Approval (If any) – There were no contracts or hiring to approve at this meeting.

- Policies to approve – None at this meeting.

- School Leader Evaluation – The STEAM Board discussed the School Leader Evaluation - Abdinasser Ahmed (Executive Director). Sarah asked for the committee to work on this. Motion made by Maria and seconded by Santa Fe to approve the committee (Sarah Chebli and Mahdi Nur) for the school leader evaluation. The committee will share the results and recommendations at the upcoming Board meeting.

- Academic and Operations Update – Again at this Board meeting, Abdinasser Ahmed (Executive Director) presented the Academic and Operations report. The report was also shared with all prior to the Board meeting for a review. He presented on: Academic progress, enrollment, interventions, staffing, professional developments, school assemblies, and school culture.

- Other Suggested Agenda Items – There were no other Agenda items or business to discuss.

- Adjourn – Maria made the motion to adjourn and Sarah seconded it and motion passed unanimously by a roll call to adjourn the Board meeting at 7:12pm.