

Vision: To empower all students with a STEM education which will help them reach their maximum potential and guide them to a promising and successful career.

Mission: To provide a high-quality, well-rounded education for K-12 students in Central Florida by incorporating innovative, proven, research-based instructional methods in a stimulating and nurturing environment which provides a special emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM), and Reading.

DISCOVERY EDUCATION SERVICES INC.,

GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, August 28, 2024

5:30 PM

at Orlando Science Elementary Charter School

Schools:

Orlando Science Middle/High Charter School

Orlando Science Elementary Charter School

Orlando Science Charter School K-8

Seminole Science Charter School

Osceola Science Charter School

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda Items
3. Public Remarks
4. Board Member Remarks

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- Service Provider Agreement

ACTION ITEMS

- A01. Request Approval of Continuing with the Existing Service Provider Agreement
- A02. Request Approval of Renegotiating Service Provider Agreement with an Addendum
- A03. Request Approval of Cancellation of Service Provider Agreement
- A04. Closure of the Meeting

Items Discussed and Voted by Governing Board Members:

- The Board Members Mr. Fortna, Mr. Sabuncu, Dr. Brindala, Mr. Colak, and Dr. Yuksel attended in person. Dr. Yuksel arrived after the public remarks.

1. Call to Order

- Mr. Fortna called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda Items

- Dr. Brindala moved to approve the agenda items. Mr. Sabuncu seconded the motion. The agenda items were approved unanimously.
(Mr. Fortna, Mr. Sabuncu, Dr. Brindala, and Mr. Colak voted “Yea.” Dr. Yuksel was not present at the time.)

3. Public Remarks

- Dr. Yuksel shared two documents from his colleague who had reviewed the service provider agreement and wanted the documents to be recorded as public remarks.

4. Board Member Remarks

- Mr. Fortna expressed concerns about recent emails sent to the board and stated that Dr. Yuksel’s emails and statements contained accusations. Dr. Yuksel stated that his statements or emails were not personal and not meant to accuse but to warn of any potential violation of rules. The exchanged ended with Mr. Fortna reminding Dr. Yuksel about the existence of defamation laws in Florida.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Service Provider Agreement

- Dr. Yuksel expressed concerns about the current service provider agreement, particularly regarding the ownership of Discovery Science Schools (DSS). He raised concerns about outsourcing administrative tasks to a for-profit entity owned by DES’ senior administrators, particularly when these tasks were managed by our non-profit institution. He stated that the agreement is not justifiable unless there is no other option to move forward, which he believed is not true.
- Mr. Fortna stated that he is not concerned about the service provider being for-profit as it is essentially a service upon a fee and should not be treated differently. Dr. Brindala emphasized that the service provider will be regularly evaluated as part of this agreement and any wrongdoing could be addressed.
- Mr. Sabuncu stated that he would like to see an administrator (CEO or COO) for Discovery Education Services (DES) in addition to the administrative services provided by the DSS. Mr. Fortna expressed favor for the idea and stated this administrator could be one of the existing employees as well.
- The board members also deliberated about the use of DES’ history and success and discussed whether it would be fair for the DSS to indirectly use DES’ reputation for its business. Mr. Sabuncu stated the agreement should only be at-cost since DSS will have the opportunity to use DES’ reputation. Dr. Yuksel stated he finds it unfair to offer such reputation to only a subset of a school system’s leaders. The Board Attorney gave an example of a similar agreement where a charter school was raised from scratch and its leader(s) was/were given the opportunity form a for-profit entity.

The board concluded its deliberations. Mr. Fortna, Dr. Brindala, Mr. Sabuncu, and Mr. Colak supported moving forward with the executed contract; however, Mr. Sabuncu and Mr. Colak favored renegotiating some terms of the agreement.

ACTION ITEMS

A01. Request Approval of Continuing with the Existing Service Provider Agreement

- Mr. Fortna and Dr. Brindala supported continuing with the executed service provider agreement as is. However, no action was taken.

A02. Request Approval of Renegotiating the Service Provider Agreement with an Addendum

- Mr. Sabuncu and Mr. Colak supported continuing with the executed service provider agreement, along with an addendum proposed by the service provider. A motion was made to negotiate the service provider's offer by establishing a committee, including the board attorney, a volunteer board member (Dr. Brindala), the service provider, and the service provider's attorney, to finalize the addendum and present it to the board for consideration. Dr. Brindala moved the motion. Mr. Fortna seconded. Board Members Mr. Sabuncu, Mr. Colak, Dr. Brindala, and Mr. Fortna voted "Yea." Dr. Yuksel initially wished to abstain from the vote, but after the Board Attorney stated that abstaining is not possible, Dr. Yuksel voted "Nay." The motion was approved by a majority vote of 4 to 1.

A03. Request Approval of Cancellation of the Service Provider Agreement

- Dr. Yuksel supported canceling the service provider agreement. However, no other board members expressed interest in canceling the agreement.

A04. Closure of the Meeting

- Mr. Sabuncu moved the motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Brindala seconded. **The motion was carried unanimously.**
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.