Salt Lake Arts Academy
Governing Board Meeting FINAL Minutes
January 26, 2026, 5:30 pm
844 S 200 E, Salt Lake City
Room 201

Board Members in Attendance: Diana Cabrales (Board Secretary), Amy Fehlberg, Greg Ostrander (Board Chair), Claudia Geist, Kelly Goff, Catherine (Cat) Palmer (left before closed session), Reid Prentice (left before closed session), Whitney Provo (arrived 5:55 pm), Shantel Stoff (Board Treasurer), Kimberly Venable, Nick Vienneau

Board Members Excused: Sarah Colonna, Carol Fineagan, Amy Yuda

Staff in Attendance: Deborah Candler, Whitney Childers, Jen Guillory, Nicole Laird, Dan Rose

Others in Attendance: Tanner Robertson (Squire)

Quorum: 11 out of 14 Board members present

1. Welcome and Introductions

Greg Ostrander called the meeting to order.

Motion: Kelly Goff moved to adjust the meeting order to accommodate Tanner Robertson of Squire & Company and allow time for updated pending minutes to be printed.
Second: Shantel Stoff
Vote: Unanimously approved

2. Approval of Minutes – December 15, 2025

Motion: Catherine Palmer moved to approve the December 15, 2025 meeting minutes.
Second: Kelly Goff
Vote: Unanimously approved

3. 2024–2025 Audit Presentation (Squire & Company)

Tanner Robertson presented the annual audit. He reported that the financial statements fairly represent the school's financial position and that no material issues or findings were identified.

The school is in compliance with state requirements, expenses remain below revenue, and no items required reporting to the state.

Greg Ostrander asked about an “other matter” noted in the audit. Tanner Robertson clarified that Squire could not verify Board training documentation due to lack of a paper trail, not due to non-completion. Nicole Laird noted that improved documentation will address this going forward.

4. Principal’s Report (Deborah Candler)

Deborah Candler reported on recent programming and parent communications. She noted positive feedback on the maturation program and shared that the school responded to parent concerns regarding student access to inappropriate online content by providing resources and guidance. Parent education resources are shared as issues arise.

a. Health Department Data Review

Deborah Candler reviewed publicly available state data related to STIs and child abuse trends across all age groups, noting that the information is accessible via the USBE website.

b. Three-Year School Calendars (Action Item)

Deborah Candler presented the proposed three-year calendars and highlighted key differences from Salt Lake City School District calendars. SLArts calendars end in May unless emergency make-up days are required, include asynchronous professional development days, and maintain two full weeks of winter break in 2028–2029.

Motion: Claudia Geist moved to approve the three-year calendars as presented.
Second: Kelly Goff
Vote: Unanimously approved

c. Blind Mule

Deborah Candler provided background on the school’s engagement with Blind Mule, explaining that the consultant was hired following survey feedback identifying ongoing classroom behavior challenges. The consultant was selected based on alignment with school needs and budget and is engaged in a multi-year plan. The current focus is on defining and reinforcing Tier 1 behavior expectations to support improved instruction and student engagement.

5. Finance Report (Nicole Laird)

a. Monthly Financial Update

Nicole Laird presented financials through the end of December. She noted a minor reporting

error that does not affect the bottom line and stated that corrected figures will be provided. Financial performance remains on track, and all material variances are reported to the Board. Shantel Stoff confirmed certification through December.

b. Mid-Year Budget Revision (Action Item)

Motion: Shantel Stoff moved to approve the mid-year budget revision.
Second: Amy Fehlberg
Vote: Unanimously approved

6. Fundraising Update (Whitney Childers)

Whitney Childers reported that the recent fundraiser raised over $77,000, triggering a $50,000 matching challenge from an anonymous donor. A spring fundraiser is planned, and donor demographics will be reviewed over the summer. She also noted strong engagement and financial impact from post-performance student “talk-back” sessions with parents.

7. Requests to Speak

None.

8. Closed Session

Motion: Amy Fehlberg moved to enter closed session to discuss the competency of staff as allowed under Utah Open Meetings Act
Second: Nick Vienneau

Individual Votes:

- Greg Ostrander – Yes
- Diana Cabrales – Yes
- Amy Fehlberg – Yes
- Kelly Goff – Yes
- Nick Vienneau – Yes
- Claudia Geist – Yes
- Kimberly Venable – Yes
- Shantel Stoff – Yes
- Whitney Provo – Yes
- Reid Prentice – Abstained (departed prior to vote)

Result: Motion approved.

Return to Open Session

Motion: Shantel Stoff moved to return to open session.
Second: Kelly Goff
Vote: Approved

9. Adjournment

Motion: Diana Cabrales moved to adjourn the meeting.
Second: Shantel Stoff
Vote: Approved

Meeting adjourned.

Certification
Submitted by:

Diana Cabrales
Board Secretary
Salt Lake Arts Academy

Approved by the Governing Board on: Feb 23, 2026

See Addendum on Next Page

Addendum to the Minutes of the January 26, 2026 Board Meeting
(Adopted by the Board of Directors on June 15, 2026)

The Board of Directors of Salt Lake Arts Academy adopts this Addendum to affirm its commitment to transparency, accountability, and compliance with the Open and Public Meetings Act.

Prompted in part by questions raised regarding the December 15, 2025 meeting, the Board conducted a review of the January 26, 2026 meeting during an open session on June 15, 2026. The Board notes the following procedural matters:

1. Public Notice Timing: The public notice for the January 26, 2026 meeting was posted on the Utah Public Notice Website less than the required twenty-four (24) hours prior to the commencement of the meeting.

2. Closed Session Agenda Description: The agenda did not specify a closed session on the agenda or the basis for the closed session (which, in this instance was discussion of an individual's character, professional competence, or physical or mental health pursuant to Utah Code § 52-4-205(1)(a)).

The Board regrets these oversights. This review and corrective action reflect the Board's intent to strengthen its practices and to comply with applicable laws, rules, and procedures. The Board appreciates any input, feedback, criticism, or insights, especially when provided in a manner that is both effective and fiscally responsible.

No audio recording of the closed session was created, nor were minutes kept. The Board confirms that the closed session discussion qualified for the exception to the audio recording requirement under Utah Code § 52-4-205(1)(a). A declaration to that effect was prepared by the Secretary and disseminated to the Chair in or about January 2026. The declaration was formally executed in May 2026 and is attached to this Addendum.

This Addendum was adopted by the Board on June 15, 2026 and is appended to the official minutes of the January 26, 2026 meeting to provide a complete and accurate public record.

Declaration and Affidavit

Sworn Statement for Closed Meeting of the Salt Lake Arts Academy Governing Board

January 26, 2026

Pursuant to Utah Code§ 52-4-206(6), I, Greg Ostrander, Chair of the Governing Board of Salt Lake Arts Academy, hereby affirm that the Board held a closed meeting on January 26, 2026, for the sole purpose of discussing matters permitted under Utah Code § 52-4-205(1)(a), relating to the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual.

No other topics were discussed, and no action was taken during the closed meeting.

Signature: 

Greg Ostrander, Board Chair