

Scattergood Friends School
School Committee Meeting
Open Session Proposed Minutes
14 March 2026

Mission Statement

Scattergood Friends School challenges students with a college-preparatory curriculum, farm experience, a shared work program, and community living in the spirit of Quaker faith.

Present: Aaron Woolfson, Katie Jacoby, Roy Helm, Alex Lippitt, George Bergus, Eric Stakland, Nancy Jordan, David Wilcox, Monica Beals, Kristin Hilgendorf, Kent Tjossem, Linda Corbin-Pardee, Ruth Hampton (clerk)

Regrets:

CELP: Crystal Aguero-Norman

Staff Present: John Zimmerman

Friends settled into silent worship in a timely manner. The clerk shared with us:

“I alone cannot change the world. But I can cast a stone across the water to create many ripples.”
~ Mother Theresa

Minute: We approve the following School Committee meeting dates for 2026-2027:

- September 19, 2026 - Hybrid (*UI home game*)
- November 7, 2026 - Hybrid
- January 16, 2027 -- Zoom only
- March 20, 2027 -- Zoom only
- May 1, 2027 - Hybrid
- July 17, 2027 - Zoom only

Minute: We approve the minutes, both open and closed, of our meeting on January 17, 2026.

Minute: We approve asking the Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) for a donation of \$50,000 for the 2026-2027 fiscal year for Scattergood Friends School.

Reports

Development

Sam is taking over travel for spring. John is going to FCE conference, Sonja is presenting paper/leadership program, the trip will include fundraising stops. Strategic planning is needed for transition from campaign mode to maintenance/annual fund.

There was a discussion of use of data analysis in development/financials. The new Math/Statistics staff member may be a good option for a paid consultant for this. Monica’s company provides software for this type of work. **TASK: Aaron, John and Monica will meet and advise on a possible way forward.**

Facilities & Farm

Bathroom renovation involves laundry and a ventilation “energy recovery unit.” There are 2 options: 1) install a system just for the restrooms at \$51k; and, 2) install for all a/c spaces at \$120k, a \$69k difference. Matt/Eli/John & Facility committee recommend option two. (Kitchen/dining room may not be included in ventilation system but kitchen and DR will be air conditioned)

John recommends a bonus or time off for Matt and Eli for their above-and-beyond work in the Roots & Wings projects (managing contractors, etc) and also preparing apartments for new staff.

Minute: We approve the option of an energy recovery unit (ERU) that will cover all climate-controlled spaces of the two dorms.

Head of School Report

New College counseling from Jessica, new staff member for Math/statistics, there are many strong candidates for open positions. Open staff positions: four teaching: livestock/bio, math/science, general, business manager.

Business Manager candidate – in Iowa City, son may come to SFS. The business manager will also act in some capacity as administrative assistant to John so there needs to be a strong interpersonal relationship. John has a chapter in the book “Elevate 16 Boarding Schools and the Practice of Holistic Education and the link is elevateschools.org.

John will be in the musical JCS as Herod. He really enjoyed this and it has reinforced his awareness of the need for a life-work balance. He hopes the new business manager will be able to manage some administrative tasks so this can happen.

Consultation & Finance

Meetings involve teasing out how expenses have been allocated. Funds have been merged where they should have been separated. We **do** own our online QuickBook license, and John is the account holder with full admin rights. Chris Serle is giving advice regarding an analysis of the QB data. There is a possible candidate for Business Manager. Aaron restated his offer to realign costs and recategorization. Forensic analysis might imply malfeasance and “review cycle” is a better term for what we are doing. Aaron has a couple of investigators in mind and would like to meet with them and Chris Serle.

Some aspects of budget difficulties: some were on cash basis, some on accrual basis – this caused complications. We are moving back to an accrual basis for all systems.

Chris Serle’s initial take on reporting: Lots of fixes, numbers are more accurate. Good scenario: \$50k surplus over projected. Bad scenario: \$200k deficit won’t be covered. However: there may be room in the budget for adjustment, some expenses were one-offs. John and Chris will meet on Tuesday.

There may be questions about the state of the bookkeeping. We are conducting a review cycle, re-alignment, not a forensic investigation (which suggests malfeasance).

Explanation for inquirers: "We are reviewing the cost categories in which we have placed expenses and income in order to bring additional clarity and transparency into our practices, and moving forward support additional school initiatives"

SAGE Update: Crystal explained the work of the University of Iowa Law School’s Community Empowerment Law Project. They plan to interview some committee members and IYMC members as part of their information gathering.

We took a break then shifted into a workshop with LiberatED Consulting on Challenging Supremacy.

We meet again on May 9th, God willing.

Katie Jacoby, recording clerk