

THE MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL FOR MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
16 November 2019  
Columbus, MS

Present: Ryder Taff, Cynthia Henderson, Germain McConnell, Chad Edmonson, Jennifer Sloan-Ziegler, John Davis, Thomas Richardson, Sheila Westbrook

Present on Phone/Webex: Deyo Johnson, Jason Christiansen, Karen Lundy

Guests: None

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Cynthia Henderson. A quorum being present, but less than 50% of the board was present. Reviewing minutes from the July minutes, Karen Lundy noted that she was present via telephone. Kassie's name was spelled incorrectly as well. Chad Edmonson motioned that we approve the minutes as amended. Minutes were approved unanimously.

SCHOOL REPORT

Dr McConnell presented the school report. He noted that this was the third year that they did a college fair for all schools in the Lowndes County area. Several outreach events are getting so large, it starts to make sense to do regional events - notably, Math Superstars.

February 1st is the application deadline for the Class of 2022. Board members are reminded to encourage prospective students to apply.

"I Am MSMS" promotional campaign has started. The focus is on making MSMS a household name. Other advertising campaigns on statewide radio and TV are now live. Total package for Broadcast Media Group was \$7,500 for producing the ads. The ads are coordinated from within MSMS in addition to advertising on social media.

MSMS employee openings include physics. Dr Odom is retiring at the end of the year. They have started getting applications back for his position.

For the legislative priorities, the focus is increasing funding by \$500,000 to fill all 300 beds. The school is trying to bring more legislators on campus to show the need and the vision. They have 15 bids for developing the concept for renovation of residence halls (funded by bond money from two years ago). They will narrow the list to three bids then hear pitches in person. Ideally this renovation will save space and expand capacity.

The maintenance requests include new blinds. The science faculty want more lab space. Currently some lab classes are limited by space right now. Probably have plant

fund money for it, but they are seeking outside grants.

Engineering course - Dr Danielle Grimes is teaching physics and engineering. The engineering lab and computer science lab are in Shackleford. They are painting and kitting out that building right now. Dr Grimes is visiting other schools to get ideas of how to create her space. The engineering program capacity is limited by physical space.

Other program updates. For the business plan competition, Cadence Bank is one sponsor. MSMS is again partnering with MSU center for entrepreneurship. They have 10 groups participating. DJ offered to reach out to business consultants who may be able to help. For the research program, 15 students were placed of 23 looking for positions. MSMS has had to do more outreach there to engage faculty. The Excel program is scheduled for a July 2020 launch and is aimed at getting incoming Juniors up to speed. The program would be two weeks over the summer. They want to focus on 20-30 students who are anticipated to be lower performing.

Outreach. Dr McConnell noted that he is pushing back the launch date of his AYME (African American Youth Excelling) program to 2021. Wants to do it right. School will also work on getting a list of businesses or people that they are reaching out to for other help so that the Foundation can coordinate better.

Changes to orientation may be leading to less attrition.

Ms Westbrook has twelve grants that she is working on. Looking for a local Jackson business sponsor for STEM fair. Looking at Butler Snow (Chad), Entergy (Shelia) and Hargrove Constructors (Cynthia) as possible sponsors. It was again pointed out that Ingalls always sponsors the Alabama Math and Science School. Tailoring asks for these companies to local events. The school is even reaching out to sporting associations for help there. It is getting more difficult for them to access MUW facilities (some NCAA restrictions) and any little bit helps.

Goal is to have a teacher partner in every school. Several ideas were thrown around on how to target missing schools.

Jennifer Sloan-Ziegler motioned to accept the school report. John Davis seconded. The report was accepted unanimously.

#### FOUNDATION REPORT

Noted that donations were around \$110,000 for the 2019 year, which is lower than we might want.

Chad spoke to the foundation investment account performance. It has been very good this year, but lots of dispersion in the market.

John Davis moved that we accept the foundation report. Dr. McConnell seconded. The

report was accepted unanimously.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

PLUS “blowing and going.” Shouts out were given for various PLUS folks. There was a conversation about making the student needs closet support more permanent. Engaging alumni a possibility, but it was noted that parents are generally enthusiastic to support this. There may be a need to supply clothes, etc, for students in need, but that can be difficult.

Noted that the students have an Interact club who did a thrift store.

LaborVoices was dissolved. The MSMS Foundation was a shareholder there. No action can be taken.

Room and board requests increased. Restricted funds basically ran out, but additional students were funded from the general fund.

Kassie has been funded to do the Golden Triangle Leadership program.

Thomas Richardson motioned that we accept the committee reports. Chad seconded. The report was accepted unanimously.

#### FOUNDATION ACTIVITY

Challenge grant accepted from Edmonson Family. The initial effort of the challenge grant was to challenge classes to get their missing classmates to update their information to earn donations. This was successful in increasing contact information from 38% to 58.7% of all alumni.

The Current magazine is in the works.

So far we have \$35,250 in matching grants available from the board to match on Giving Tuesday. We will be running it through Neon this year, but Kassie will be working the Facebook interaction. We will be using names of the matching board members, as there is no objection.

Much discussion on feasibility of mailing yard signs to people. There seemed to be fairly good reception to the signs. Looking to sell them at PLUS table. Not a money maker, but a way to get them out there. An idea was raised that we have a frame for diploma for fresh graduates.

Do we have podcasts? Not a regular schedule.

Capitol Day is scheduled for February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Alumni day expected to be bigger this year. We're outgrowing our spaces and systems. We can do it now though.

Motion as made by Jennifer Sloan-Ziegler to approve foundation activities. Ryder seconded. The report was accepted unanimously.

#### OLD BUSINESS

Needs wants and wishes. The school is still figuring out how to handle this account. This was tabled.

We're looking for a better fit accountant for the MSMS Foundation.

Discussed an abandoned Nissan restricted fund. Discussed how to update that fund and move the money towards something else. There are other abandoned restricted funds that we need to get un restricted. Sheila and Chad to work on that. This will help reduce our accounting cost. Noted that we are being more careful to add a clause to restricted funds allowing us to spend on general expenses.

Motion made by Chad Edmonson to fund MSMS budget requests. Seconded by Thomas. Motion includes Summer Enrichment camp at \$21,000 Pharma at \$2,500 AP Exam fees at \$2,000 housing for summer research at \$1,030 and business plan competition up to \$5,250 but not exceeding other donations received. Motion was accepted unanimously.

Motion to approve PLUS budget was made by Jennifer Sloan-Ziegler. Seconded by Chad. Motion was accepted unanimously.

Foundation budget request, due to larger Alumni Weekend, will be increased to \$10,800. Motion was made by Chad Edmonson to approve up to \$10,800 for Alumni weekend. Dr. McConnell seconded. Motion was accepted unanimously.

#### NEXT MEETING

Next meeting was set for February 29th, Leap Day, 2020, in Jackson.

John Davis made a motion to adjourn. Dr. McConnell seconded.