

State of Louisiana

MINUTES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JIMMY D. LONG SR. LOUISIANA SCHOOL FOR MATH, SCIENCE, AND THE ARTS

March 20, 2023

The Board of Directors of the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts met on Monday March 20, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. in the Jimmy D. Long Board Room, LSMSA, in Natchitoches, LA. Mrs. Sharon Gahagan welcomed members and guests and called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Mrs. Anne Dejoie-Lucas recorded the minutes. Roll was called, and quorum was established.

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Mrs. Sharon T. Gahagan (Chair)
Representative Beryl Amedee
Dr. Jason C. Anderson
Ms. Leanne Broussard
Ms. Lisa DeJean
Mr. Jared Dunahoe
Dr. Vickie S. Gentry (Vice Chair)
Ms. Marian "Suzy" Johnson
Mr. Patrick Jenkins
Dr. William "Bill" Luster
Dr. Kimberly Walker McAlister
Ms. Meredith McGovern
Dr. Larry Tremblay
Dr. Arthur S. Williams
Dr. Steve Horton, LSMSA Executive Director (non-voting)

Members Absent

Mr. Joseph E. "Jed" Cain
Mr. Preston Castille
Mr. Kirby Hopkins
Senator Katrina Jackson
Ms. Denise Karamales
Mr. Jimmy D. Long Jr.
Ms. Tana Luther
Senator Beth Mizell
Representative Charles Owens
Ms. Regina Pierce

Guests Present

Attorney Ken Sills
Dr. John Allen, LSMSA Chief of Staff
Dr. Kristy Pope-Key, LSMSA Director of Academic Affairs

Ms. Emily Shumate, LSMSA Director of Enrollment Management & Institutional Research
Ms. Angela Couvillion, Registrar and Chief Articulation Officer
Ms. Ro Slutsky, Director of Student Support Services
Ms. Christie Price, Dean of Students
Ms. Randi Washington, Director of the Living Community
Ms. Corey Poole, LSMSA External Affairs
Ms. Juliana Sheffied, LSMSA Foundation
Ms. Jennifer Fountain, LSMSA Alumna
LSMSA Students Rosie Schultz and Gabriela Juarez

AGENDA ITEM 1: APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 5, 2022, BOARD MINUTES

Mrs. Gahagan requested the Board's review of the December 5, 2022, minutes and requested any additions or corrections.

Upon motion duly made by Rep. Amedee, seconded by Dr. Williams, and unanimously passed, the minutes of the December 5, 2022, meeting stand approved as read/reviewed.

AGENDA ITEM 2: APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 20, 2023, SPECIAL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Mrs. Gahagan requested the Board's review of the January 20, 2023, Special Committee Meeting minutes and requested any additions or corrections. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Gentry.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Williams, seconded by Ms. Johnson, and unanimously passed, the minutes of the January 20, 2023, Special Committee meeting stand approved as read/reviewed.

AGENDA ITEM 3: CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Mrs. Gahagan reported that she had no requests for comment.

AGENDA ITEM 4: APPROVAL OF NEW COURSES OFFERED

Dr. Key gave a brief introduction of two new courses being proposed by Humanities professor Dr. Chris Bouton -- Historical Theory and Practice, and History of the Byzantine Empire.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Gentry, seconded by Dr. Tremblay, and unanimously passed, the proposed new courses were approved.

AGENDA ITEM 5: APPROVAL OF STUDENT ACTIVITY FEES FOR 2023 – 2024

Dr. Allen explained the breakdown of student activity fees and indicated changes to be made for the upcoming school year. Fees include, but are not limited to, student life programming and publications, (yearbook, folio, and newspaper) as well as PSAT fees, laundry service, and an additional graduation fee for seniors.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dunahoe, seconded by Dr. Williams, and unanimously passed, the 2023-2024 Student Activity Fees were approved.

AGENDA ITEM 6: APPROVAL OF LLC ROOM DAMAGE COSTS

Dr. Allen indicated that most of these fees were discontinued in Caddo and Prudhomme due to the age, and wear and tear on those older buildings. With the opening of the new Living Learning Commons (LLC), it is again necessary to list and enforce the collection of fees related to room and property damage. This info will be posted on LSMSA's website so parents and students are aware upfront regarding potential fees that may be assessed due to damage caused by a student.

He further explained the inspection process used during check-in and move-out and how the staff would determine when/if students were responsible for noted damages. Students/parents would not be responsible for normal wear/tear. This policy is primarily for excess damage caused by misuse and mishandling.

Upon motion duly made by Rep. Amedee, seconded by Ms. McAlister, and unanimously passed, the Costs for LLC Room Damage(s) were approved.

AGENDA ITEM 7: APPROVAL OF CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL LEGAL SERVICES, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2023

Dr. Horton and Mrs. Gahagan personally thanked Mr. Sills and his firm for their help and support during the year. Fees remain the same; the only change is the addition of another practicing attorney. This contract would remain in effect from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dunahoe, seconded by Dr. Gentry, and unanimously passed, the Board approved the 2023-2024 contract for legal services.

AGENDA ITEM 8: RATIFICATION OF FOUNDATION FACULTY/STAFF REIMBURSEMENTS SINCE THE DECEMBER 2022 BOARD MEETING

Three faculty and staff members have submitted the appropriate paperwork and have received reimbursements for expenses by LSMSA's Foundation: Mrs. Heather Tichenor (enrollment director), theatre faculty member Karn Richoux, and Executive Director Dr. Steve Horton. The agenda exhibit explains the expenditures and details for each. As per Foundation policy, these reimbursements must be approved quarterly by LSMSA's Board of Directors.

Upon motion duly made by Ms. McAlister, seconded by Dr. Anderson, and unanimously passed, the Board ratified the Foundation payments to faculty/staff made since the December 2022 meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 9: UPDATE ON LSMSA FY24 EXECUTIVE BUDGET

Dr. Allen indicated this was a good year for maintenance and acquisition of funds for major repairs and deferred maintenance. Most of the funds were used to retile areas in the HSB and the gym bathrooms, as well as replacement of iron pipes that were disintegrating in the gym restrooms. The maintenance department is looking ahead and being proactive on repairs and maintenance that will be needed over the next two years to use the funds while they're available. ESSER funds were awarded to replace the HVAC system as well as the smartboards and podiums in the classrooms. Those funds expire in September; the plan is to ask for an extension on that funding or have it moved from ESSER 2 to ESSER 3

to delay the HVAC renovation so it can be done simultaneously with building renovations. There are concerns about the roof and the historic implications involved with renovations, so it's important to get an engineering study done on the building for renovations and present it to the legislature for approval.

One area that continues to experience cuts is personnel. Several faculty positions need to be filled, but searches have not been successful. It's important to continue receiving those funds in the future so LSMSA can fill those positions as qualified candidates become available. The School is also asking the budget office to consider funds for an additional full-time counselor.

AGENDA ITEM 10: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dr. Horton thanked the faculty/staff for always taking the students' needs seriously and helping in every way possible as the School returns to a sense of "normalcy" following the pandemic years. LSMSA is again holding Exploration Days throughout the year. Reunion weekend was held as usual, welcoming home over 150 alumni. & Gold Week, Junior Ring Ceremony, and more will resume their normal rotations. The School is proud to recognize and celebrate several students who are receiving Boys & Girls State Honors, Louisiana Youth Seminar Honors, Internships, and more.

Mentioned by Dr. Allen and reiterated by Dr. Horton is the disappointment with the outcome of the budget return compared to what was requested. LSMSA recognizes its need for a third counselor and currently enlists the help of Natchitoches resident and family counselor Catherine Fauchaux who spends about 10-12 hours a week on campus. ESSER funds have helped with that, but those funds will expire in September. Mental health is becoming more important, especially since the students are on campus 24 hours a day. The MFP will be adjusted due to enrollment dropping slightly as a result of the pandemic.

LSMSA is adapting daily to changes at the state and federal levels related to substance abuse problems, gender equality, and more. The School is well supported by legislature and well-guided by its Board of Directors and faculty to produce students that are highly qualified and well educated.

AGENDA ITEM 11: PROCESS FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

An Ad Hoc Committee was formed to review and discuss the annual evaluation of the School's Executive Director. Committee members include Dr. Vickie Gentry (Committee Chair), Dr. Jason Anderson, Ms. Leanne Broussard, Mr. Joseph "Jed" Cain, Mr. Jared Dunahoe, Ms. Denise Karamales, and Dr. Art Williams, who met in January for discussion and explanation of the new electronic process to be used for the evaluation of LSMSA Faculty/Staff as well as its Executive Director.

Dr. Key explained the questions that were compiled by the committee with feedback from LSMSA Senior Directors and the criteria that will be used to answer each for compilation of the evaluation. The new software being used and the switch from a written to an electronic evaluation process is expected to increase the response rate and provide more anonymity for respondents who participate in this evaluation process. The process will also be used to evaluate faculty/staff within each department.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dunahoe, seconded by Dr. Luster, and unanimously passed, the Board approved the process for the evaluation of the Executive Director.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT FROM THE FACULTY

Dr. Anderson encouraged the Board members to refer to his written report of faculty accomplishments that include Dr. Pamela Francis, Dr. Allison Landry, Dr. Casey Green, Dr. Al Benner, Dr. Nathalie Malti, Dr. Sanjeetha Peters, Dr. Kelly Lankford, Dr. Charles Jones, Mrs. Karn Richoux, and Dr. Morris Tichenor, most of whom took advantage of the Foundation's Brown Funds to continue their research and development this year.

He also said with the School's recent moves back towards "normalcy," the faculty has been very engaged in projects around campus, publishing, and constant professional development as they continue to hone their crafts. Dr. Anderson also talked briefly about Artificial Intelligence and how it's beginning to permeate LSMSA and assured the Board that he and the faculty are already working to stay a step ahead. myLSMSA's subscription to TurnItIn is already integrating ways to detect AI in student assignments submitted through its platform.

Dr. Horton took this opportunity to inform the Board that Dr. Kristi Key is returning to the classroom in the fall as a faculty member. She will fill the opening left by the resignation of Dr. Kira Braham in the Humanities department as an English instructor. Dr. Anderson has accepted the request to fill Dr. Key's role as the Director of Academic Affairs; and Dr. Kelly Lankford will assume Dr. Anderson's responsibilities as EXCEL Coordinator in the summer bridge program. Dr. Anderson will continue to teach, but his class offerings will be adjusted accordingly to make room for his new role. Based on recommendation by Dr. Anderson, Dr. Key and the entire faculty, a new Faculty Representative to the Board will be elected later this year.

AGENDA ITEM 13: DIVISION REPORTS

Mrs. Gahagan welcomed questions but asked, for the sake of time, that the Board members please refer to the individual Exhibits prepared by the following:

- a. CofS – Operations (Dr. Allen)
- b. Academic Affairs (Dr. Key): The current retention rate is at 91%. Ideally it should fall between 93-95%. Once the school year is done, analytics will be run to determine the exit reasons so they can be addressed moving forward. Additional onboarding and discussions with parents early in the semester may help alleviate some of the exits.
- c. Enrollment Management and Institutional Research (E. Shumate)
- d. Student Support Services (R. Slutsky)
- e. Dean of Students (C. Price)
- f. Living Community (R. Washington)
- g. Foundation (A. Landry): Dr. Horton reminded the Board that he and the Foundation will be in Dallas speaking to graduates and potential donors as part of the Capital Campaign, which is progressing well.

AGENDA ITEM 14: OTHER BUSINESS

Dr. Bill Luster inquired about the Class of '97 alumna Hong Chau from New Orleans East, who was recently nominated for Best Supporting Actress, and asked if consideration had been given to send a letter or note recognizing the accomplishment. Dr. Horton stressed that the Board should be mindful in setting a precedent of having to recognize all student accomplishments after graduation.

Dr. Luster indicated that he would like to offer a motion that the Board congratulate and recognize the accomplishment.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Luster, seconded by Ms. Johnson, and unanimously passed, the Board approved the motion to congratulate and recognize Hong Chau via letter/note.

The following reminders were also presented as other business:

- Reminder regarding Ethics Committee reporting
- Blue & Gold Week, April 24-28, 2023
- Ring Ceremony, Saturday April 29, 2023; 11 a.m., Fredericks Auditorium, NSU
- Senior Recognition Ceremony, Friday May 19, 2023; 7 p.m., Fredericks Auditorium, NSU
- Commencement Exercises, Saturday May 20, 2023; 2pm, Prather Coliseum, NAU

The next Board meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 12, 2023.

There being no further business;

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Williams, seconded by Dr. Tremblay, and unanimously passed, the meeting adjourned at 2:38 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



Sharon T. Gahagan, Ed.S.
Chair



Steven G. Horton, PhD.
Secretary