

State of Louisiana

MINUTES

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

Monday, March 9, 2020

The Board of Directors of the Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts met on Monday March 9, 2020, at 9:30 a.m. in the Jimmy D. Long Board Room, LSMSA, in Natchitoches, LA. Mrs. Sharon Gahagan, Board Chair, called the meeting to order. Dr. Steven G. Horton recorded the minutes. Mrs. Gahagan welcomed members and guests to the meeting. The following Board members in attendance were pinned for service for the upcoming term:

Ms. Martha T. Smiley
Dr. Vickie S. Gentry

Dr. Arthur S. Williams
Mr. Jared R. Dunahoe

Absent members also receiving pins include Ms. Leanne M. Broussard. Roll was called, and a Quorum was established.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Mrs. Sharon T. Gahagan (Chair)
Mr. Tony Davis (Vice Chair)
Dr. Jason C. Anderson
Mr. Raphael Curtis
Mr. Jared R. Dunahoe
Dr. Vickie S. Gentry
Ms. Chanda Johnson
Ms. Marian "Suzy" Johnson
Ms. Denise Karamales
Mr. Jimmy D. Long Jr.
Dr. Kimberly Walker McAlister
Ms. Martha Smiley
Mr. Jamie G. Smith
Dr. Larry Tremblay
Dr. Arthur S. Williams
Dr. Steve Horton, LSMSA Executive Director

Members Absent:

Rep. Beryl Amedee
Ms. Leanne M. Broussard
Mr. Joseph E. "Jed" Cain
Sen. Beth Mizell
Mr. Richard Strong

Guests Present:

Mr. Oliver Bennett (LSMSA student)
Mr. John Allen, LSMSA Chief of Staff
Dr. Kristi Pope-Key, LSMSA Academic Services
Director
Mrs. Emily Shumate, LSMSA Enrollment &
Student Services Director

A Quorum of Board members being present, the meeting proceeded with business.

AGENDA ITEM 1: APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 9, 2019, BOARD MINUTES

Mrs. Gahagan requested the Board's review of the December 9, 2019, Board minutes and requested any additions or corrections.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Jimmy Long, seconded by Dr. Larry Tremblay, and unanimously passed, the Minutes of the December 9, 2019, meeting stand approved as read/reviewed.

AGENDA ITEM 2: CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

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

AGENDA ITEM 3: PROPOSED 2020-2021 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Emily Shumate explained that LSMSA's annual calendar follows a repetitive format, adding and extrapolating as necessary. Students are not kept on-campus for more than four (4) weeks in a row without a break. Any month that doesn't include a natural holiday like Thanksgiving or Christmas often includes an "extended weekend" where school is dismissed on Thursday and students return on Sunday. In the spring, the calendar works around Mardi Gras and Easter and takes into consideration calendars of NSU and the Natchitoches Parish calendar as much as possible.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Arthur Williams, seconded by Ms. Martha Smiley, and unanimously passed, the 2020-2021 School Calendar is approved as presented. (Agenda Item 3 Exhibit 1)

AGENDA ITEM 4: SCHOOL ATTORNEY CONTRACT FOR 2020-2021

Dr. Horton said the only difference from the prior year was an increase from \$25,000 to \$35,000, mainly because of the number of issues experienced over the prior year. He explained that each year the School exceeds its contract with Hammonds, Sills Adkins & Guice LLP, and it simply makes sense to increase the contract to avoid the time and protocol involved to increase the encumbrance with the State.

Upon motion duly made by Ms. Denise Karamales, seconded by Dr. Art Williams, and unanimously passed, the 2020-2021 contract for services with Hammonds, Sills Adkins & Guice LLP is approved as presented. (Agenda Item 4 Exhibit 1)

AGENDA ITEM 5: PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE 2020-2021 STUDENT HANDBOOK

Dr. Kristi Key said the Handbook is reviewed each year to consider the best practices on campus, review items that have become policy thru precedent, and update accordingly before being distributed to students (refer to the materials presented for details on changes and suggested edits - **Agenda Item 5 Exhibit 1**). Data projects were done to request changes to areas about dismissal from the school based

on grades; each student who is in academic crisis is evaluated individually. The proposed change is in regards to re-application. Dr. Key addressed questions and concerns from the Board regarding the re-application process, communication to students and parents, impact of the proposed changes for students pursuing Associate degrees, determination/impact of midterm grades, and other policy verbiage that needed clarification. She further explained that monthly assessment by faculty and staff helps to quickly identify students who may be in crisis so help can be directed where needed. Faculty stays in constant communication with administrators and staff about students. Dr. Horton said the letters, conversations, etc. are all documented as well.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Jason Anderson, seconded by Mr. Jamie Smith, and unanimously passed, the proposed changes to the Student Handbook are approved as presented. (Agenda Item 5 Exhibit 1)

AGENDA ITEM 6: UPDATE ON GOVERNOR’S PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FY21

LSMSA’s Chief of Staff John Allen recognized Oliver Bennett, LSMSA student in attendance to observe board administration in action and its impact on the students at LSMSA on a daily basis. Mr. Allen gave background info on current year finances and projections for next year, and what the Gov. has proposed for the School. LSMSA’s budget is independent of the Department of Education, is approved by the Division of Administration who then directs it to the Governor. No other authorities have an impact/say on LSMSA budget except, indirectly, the MFP money that’s handled through the Department of Education. HB 105 classified LSMSA under Education/Special Schools and Commissions along with its sister schools in Louisiana. The total budget for that category is around \$47 million, and LSMSA represents about 20% of that amount. Sixty percent (60%) of our financing comes from the State General Fund (SGF); 34% from the MFP (a per people count protected by the Constitution); self-generated fees account for about 5%; and appropriations make up for unrecognized funds, as 1.2% comes from the EEF Trust Fund. Overall the net total increase to the budget from last year to this year was about 3%, which has allowed for coverage in areas including faculty/staff, employee salary increases/promotions, and deferred maintenance. 82% of LSMSA’s budget is personnel. (Refer to Agenda Item 9 Exhibit 1 “Finance & Operations Quarterly Report for a full recap and breakout of budget numbers.)

Mr. Allen stated that he and Dr. Horton will testify on March 18th with the added intent to educate new legislators on LSMSA operations and why the School is an asset to the state. In April, they’ll again testify to the Senate finance committee. LSMSA expects to have a budget for FY21 by June 1st that includes more money than what the Governor has proposed.

The Foundation cannot pay state employees directly. To reimburse employee expenses, the Foundation issues checks to LSMSA, who deposits them and then issues reimbursement checks to the employees. New laws proposed to SB155 would allow for the Foundation to pay them directly for items like expenses, Brown fund, EXCEL program, etc., similar to what is being done by LSMSA sister schools. Mr. Allen said this will be tracked and an update given to the Board in June as to whether this law passes.

No Action Required

AGENDA ITEM 7: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Dr. Horton said construction on the residence hall is progressing well, and Directors can expect to see notable progress next time they come to campus.

Dr. Horton also gave an update on the productive conversations he’s had with the Outpatient Medical Center, as LSMSA needs a health center that can assist during the middle and end of the day to complement its existing health services staff. Dr. Horton and the Center engaged in a very informal memorandum of understanding that will allow the Center to send someone to LSMSA during the week -- a doctor, nurse practitioner, PA -- to help the school nurse with diagnoses, prescriptions, behavioral and mental health support. This would prevent students being taken out of class and bused to the ER or a doctor in town and missing classes. The Center understands the School’s unique situation and is willing to take on the labor of insurance claims, etc. In light of the Coronavirus pandemic, LSMSA is postponing its spring break trip to Germany until summer and will reconsider class reunions and bringing people to campus. Further discussion focused around the School’s ability to transition to online classes if necessary.

Another new venture by the School this year will be a new electronic process that allows the entire staff and faculty to evaluate supervisors as well as service areas like external affairs, counseling center, academic services, and areas that service everyone on the campus in an effort to give everyone a chance to make comments, offer praise or, recommend improvements.

Finally, Dr. Horton reminded the Board that formal photos will be taken after the meeting and new members would be issued ID badges to permit entry to campus buildings.

No Action Required

The Board took a five-minute break. Upon return:

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Tony Davis that the Board go into Executive Session pursuant to L.R.S. 42:17(A)(2) to discuss the following matters: personnel issues, and the events of January 19, 2020; seconded by Dr. Vickie Gentry, Dr. Horton commenced the required Roll Call Vote:

**Dr. Jason Anderson, yes
Mr. Raphael Curtis, yes
Mr. Tony Davis, yes
Mr. Jared Dunahoe, yes
Mrs. Sharon Gahagan, yes
Dr. Vickie Gentry, yes
Ms. Chandra Johnson, yes
Ms. Marion Johnson, yes**

**Ms. Denise Karamales, yes
Mr. Jimmy Long, yes
Dr. Kimberly McAllister, yes
Ms. Martha Smiley, yes
Mr. Jamie Smith, yes
Dr. Larry Tremblay, yes
Dr. Arthur Williams, yes**

Unanimously passed, the Chair gave permission to proceed and the Board entered into Executive Session (Dr. Horton requested that Mr. Allen remain in the Executive Session).

At the completion of business addressed during Executive Session,

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Tony Davis, seconded by Dr. Art Williams, and unanimously passed, the Board of Directors meeting resumed in regular session at 12:20 p.m., with Ms. Sharon Gagahan, Chair, presiding.

AGENDA ITEM 8: REPORT FROM THE FACULTY

Dr. Jason Anderson presented the list of faculty-submitted accomplishments achieved since December 2019, including accolades for Mr. Brad Burkman, Mr. Randy Key, Dr. Charles Jones, Dr. Casey Green, Dr. Christina Hillesheim and Dr. Nathalie Malti. (Refer to Faculty Report/Faculty Accomplishments, **Agenda Item 8 Exhibit 1**). Dr. Anderson added that the faculty wishes to recognize the senior administration for their leadership and empathy through this semester and allowing the faculty to “do what we do” in the classrooms.

No Action Required

AGENDA ITEM 9: ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF REPORTS

Mrs. Gagahan recommended that for the sake of time, the Board read/refer to the reports presented as **Agenda Item 9 Exhibits 1-4** in their binders. Chair did recognize Dr. Key for a brief report from Academic Services. Dr. Key commended Erin King who has worked as Coordinator for Academic Services for several years and will be transitioning to a full-time counseling role this year. “I’d like for the minutes to reflect that I appreciate very much all of Erin’s efforts and all the work she did in academic counseling,” Dr. Key said.

Dr. Key also offered a thank you to supporters in Baton Rouge and at the LDOE who nominated LSMSA for a Blue Ribbon School Award! “We are very excited and honored to even be nominated, and we’ll be putting together that application package the rest of this semester,” she said.

No Action Required

AGENDA ITEM 10: PROCESS FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

For the benefit of new Board members, Mrs. Gagahan explained the annual 3-component process that includes self evaluation by Dr. Horton, evaluation by faculty/staff, and evaluation by the Board. Evaluation forms will be made available in April and are to be returned to the Chair who will open each one, check for completeness and requests to meet, and then place back into original envelopes to be supplied to the Evaluation Committee.

Citing Article C Section B of the Bylaws, Special committees shall be created to address a specific academic, fiscal, or human need of the School. Examples include an Ad Hoc Committee for the Annual Evaluation of the ED and an Ad Hoc Student Appeals Committee. Special committees shall consist of no less than five members of the Board who are subject to ratification by the Board. Members of all special committees shall be appointed by the Chairperson, one of whom shall be designated as committee Chairperson, one of whom shall be designated as committee Vice-Chairperson, who shall assume the duties of secretary for the committee meetings.

The Committee will meet to complete the evaluation. Mrs. Gahagan and Mr. Davis, chair of the committee, will meet with Dr. Horton to discuss the results. The Committee consists of Mr. Jed Cain, Chair; Dr. Art Williams, Vice Chair/Secretary; Mr. Jimmy D Long, Dr. Vickie Gentry, Mr. Tony Davis, Mrs. Martha Smiley, Dr. Denise Karamales, and Dr. Jason Anderson.

No Action Required

AGENDA ITEM 11: DATE FOR NEXT BOARD MEETING

In an effort to allow Legislators time to end their session, the next Board meeting will be held on June 15, 2020.

AGENDA ITEM 12: OTHER BUSINESS

Senior Recognition Ceremony - May 15, 2020
Commencement - May 16, 2020

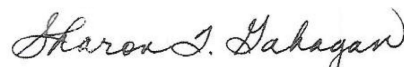
There being no further business:

Upon motion duly made by Ms. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Smiley, and unanimously passed, the meeting was adjourned at 12:32 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



Steven G. Horton, PhD.
Secretary



Sharon T. Gahagan, Eds.
Chair