

APPROVED

**Board of Directors
Workshop Minutes
Math & Science Academy
Monday, April 19, 2021
Building A and Remotely**

8430 Woodbury Crossing, Woodbury, MN 55125

Call to Order by Annie Cardenas at 5:00 pm

Members Present:

Voting:

Annie Cardenas, Chair & Teacher Member
Dan Ellingson, Vice Chair & Parent Member
Michelle Kurkoski, Secretary & Teacher Member
Cody Schniepp, Treasurer & Community Member
Jeana Albers, Teacher Member
Jennifer Bartle, Parent Member
Robert Krueger, Parent Member
Adam Bartz, Community Member
Maggie Burggraaff, Teacher Member

Non-voting:

John Gawarecki, Director (ex officio)
Paula Akakpo, Student Member

Absent:

Voting:

Non-Voting:

Jenny Abbs, BKDA, Contracted Financial Manager (ex officio)

Discussion:

1. Lisa Anderson, Chair of the Director Search Committee (or Task Force?)

- a. Should the search committee meetings be livestreamed?
This might allow the community to be more informed about the process and discussion.

The link could be placed on the website for ease of access

- b. The minutes of the different subcommittees would be included in the search committee file and information online
- c. Rough draft of an interim director advertisement sent to BOD, key information includes dates of hire and end of contract

2. MACS Representative Nancy Dana (MACS)

- a. There are individuals who have been directors and are retired, who are willing to step in as an interim director. Recommend that we pursue the interim route to allow us to access candidates who tend to begin looking in the winter.
- b. Take time with the search, even if it is continuing in the fall, to allow candidates who are leaving schools to be able to wrap things up at their school in an effective manner
- c. Mr. Krueger asked about recommendations for length of contract, and sorts of objectives. If a director starts mid-year, what would be the pro/con of that. Ms. Dana explains that this is a difficult thing for directors to begin mid-year, the challenges of getting to know staff, students, community, etc. would be much greater.

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- d. BMI interview - Behavior Management Inventory: gets at the why behind more standard answers that a committee might receive. This allows a greater chance to find a good fit.
- e. Determine what the school is looking for as a priority, as something good, as things that we do not want
- f. When would be a good time for a director to take over (assuming they aren't the interim director)? Recommends that there be some overlap with the interim director. There are also institutions that specifically state that the interim cannot be a candidate. The best plans are to advertise the position in October/November, interview December/January, decide in February, then in April the transition begins in which the new director starts to spend time and begin to learn more about the role.
- g. Mr. Schniepp asked whether there are a lot of individuals who are willing to take a one year position? Answer - not sure if there are a lot, but there are definitely individuals who would do so and be available. They tend to be retired, with experience. Will keep the school running, while not trying to establish a lot of new plans.
- h. What about expansion? It takes a year or more to get into an expansion project - might be a good project for an interim director. Mr. Ellingson shared that the expansion is making good progress and that the expansion is a need of the school, regardless of where MSA is in our director search.
- i. What is the best way to find interim candidates? Ms. Dana has a couple of names, but also to contact MACS to let them know that we are looking for an interim director. We can also use their career section of the MACS website to post the position (without cost because we are a member)
- j. Mr. Bartz asked whether we should use that as the site to advertise for the director, or should we use other external sites? Ms. Dana asked whether we would be focusing on in-state, regional, other?
- k. Ms. Anderson asked if the recommendation was to use only MACS or use others as well? Ms. Dana's reason was that we should also expand the postings to get additional candidates and allow a broader search. Mr. Ellingson also encourages MSA to expand the options to a broader possibility of candidates.
- l. MSA should also think about our total compensation package.
- m. Ms. Cardenas asked if there are any sites that Ms. Dana would recommend? Ms. Dana would be willing to look into this and share sites. Ms. Anderson has also compiled a list of possible sites. Mr. Krueger also shares that we need to evaluate whether there is value in paying for postings - will there be a return on investment? Recommendation is to still think about these as paying on the investment, that it will pay off when we find the correct person.
- n. Ms. Anderson shared that there is an item on the agenda to allow for some money to be allotted to pay for the subscription to post.
- o. Ms. Cardenas asked whether there are interims that are gifted at going into a school with the intent of helping in areas of needed improvement? Do we add that as part of our ad? Ms. Dana shares that this will likely come out as part of the interview process. This is also something to keep in mind with regard to a building project.
- p. Ms. Anderson asked to what degree the community should be involved? Ideally there would be interaction with teachers and students, but is that something that we should still pursue with an interim? Ms. Dana shares that in her opinion this is not as important as with the director, but that is something that the BOD would need to discuss. For the new director, there should be a lot of outreach, as well as opportunities for offering feedback and interaction.
- q. Ms. Anderson asked whether the benefit package would be different for individuals who might be retired? Ms. Dana shares that it can cost less, depending on whether the individual needs benefits, or whether there are variations in hours that the candidate would negotiate. Average starting salary for an interim director is between \$90,000 - \$120,000. The idea of trying to compete with traditional districts is not realistic for charter schools, this is not sustainable and would require looking at enrollment and staff salary. Looking at finances and asking what we can really afford would be important. Look at a 5-year plan and map out what these expenses would be. Add the building project as well. How many students would be needed to make all these things work.
- r. Mr. Kureger asks what resources and how can we leverage the director to be able to offer better salaries? Ms. Dana shared that she has experienced this and the resulting turnover, and that there

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is also a moment when the salaries won't be able to expand. This is a difficult and ongoing question.

- s. Ms. Albers asked if it is possible or common for the interim to be at a school for longer than a year? Ms. Dana shares that this is less common, but it is possible. She does not anticipate that MSA will have difficulties finding a new director, especially looking at our successes and strong community.
- t. Mr. Krueger asked how realistic is it to get an interim by July 1? Ms. Dana shared that we will find someone, that we need to do it. If things come up, we will be able to figure out what we need to do.

Workshop was adjourned at 5:57 pm

Submitted and Approved:

Michelle Kurkoski, Secretary

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**Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
Math & Science Academy
Monday, April 19, 2021
Building A and Remotely**

8430 Woodbury Crossing, Woodbury, MN 55125

1. Call to Order by Annie Cardenas at 6:15 pm

Vision and Mission read by Paula Akakpo.

2. Roll Call of Members

Present:

Voting:

Annie Cardenas, Chair & Teacher Member
Dan Ellingson, Vice Chair & Parent Member
Michelle Kurkoski, Secretary & Teacher Member
Cody Schniepp, Treasurer & Community Member
Jeana Albers, Teacher Member
Jennifer Bartle, Parent Member
Robert Krueger, Parent Member
Adam Bartz, Community Member
Maggie Burggraaff, Teacher Member

Non-voting:

John Gawarecki, Director (ex officio)
Paula Akakpo, Student Member
James Martin (ex officio) Board Attorney

Absent:

Voting:

Non-voting:

Jenny Abbs, BKDA, Contracted Financial Manager (ex officio)

3. Approval of Agenda (note any board member conflicts of interest)

Conflicts of Interest: None

Motion to approve the agenda.

Moved by: Annie Cardenas Second: Jeanna Albers

Discussion:

Add to Items of Discussion and Decision:

12K. Motion to postpone personnel committee work

Remove from Consent Agenda:

A. Policy 806 from Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the changes

Moved by: Robert Krueger Second: Annie Cardenas

Vote: 9-yes 0-no 0-abstain

The motion carries.

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4. Open Forum

Letters read by Ms. Annie Cardenas:

- a. Deb Webster - Thank you letter.
- b. Jessie Heydt - PTO time required for quarantine and testing requirements (mandatory off-site), asking to create a Covid PTO balance for staff.
- c. Two Senior Students: Prom 2020 guest reconsideration with regard to out of school guests to prom.
- d. Wendell Sletten: concerned about the decision of BOD to not renew the director contract, concern about teacher representatives not representing the teachers as a whole.
- e. Judy Seeberger - letter will be discussed later .

5. Approval of Minutes.

a. Motion to approve the March 16, 2021 Workshop and Meeting Minutes.

Moved by: Annie Cardenas Second: Jennifer Bartle

Discussion:
None

Vote: 9-yes 0-no 0-abstain
The motion carries.

b. Motion to approve the BOD Special Meeting, April 5, 2021

Moved by: Annie Cardenas Second: Dan Ellingson

Discussion:
None

Vote: 9-yes 0-no 0-abstain
The motion carries.

c. Motion to approve the BOD Special Meeting, April 15, 2021

Moved by: Cody Schniepp Second: Rob Krueger

Discussion:
None

Vote: 9-yes 0-no 0-abstain
The motion carries.

6. Chair's Report

None

7. Director's Report

Fighting Calculator has qualified for the state championship

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Mr. Gawarecki read a resignation letter from Judy Seeberger. Administrator duties have been distributed. Board members offered to help.

Mr. Gawarecki offered to send the unredacted report out. Ms. Albers objects to sending out the unredacted report to be sent out.

Student Achievement/Activity:

Sophomore Greta Hansen placed 11th in the skate race and 36th in the tough classic course at the Minnesota State Nordic Meet on March 11th to finish 20th overall at the meet. She is the first MSA student to qualify for Nordic All-State honors.

These four MSA high school students have been selected as Aspirations in Computing Award Honorees through the National Center for Women and Information Technology (NCWIT) in partnership with the Minnesota Aspirations in Computing Awards (MNAiC) year-round program.

Alayna Tan – State Honorable Mention

Karina Dovgodko - State Honorable Mention

Grace Nhan - State Honorable Mention

Nalani Vang – Rising Star

MSA concluded its initial MCA testing.

● Update on Diverse Hiring Taskforce:

We met on April 1st and have completed the template for job postings as well as the process for posting positions to stakeholders.

● Next year's calendar is contained in the BOD packet for approval.

● A copy of the Staff Handbook is included in the packet for review.

● I am recommending that almost all staff be retained for next year. My rationale for retention is to reduce transitional turbulence for the school and because, in keeping with our Grace, Kindness, and Positive Intent theme for the school year, it is my belief that staff who have shown a commitment and dedication to MSA despite a pandemic and all of its unforeseen challenges should be allowed the opportunity to continue their employment for an additional year.

● Based on legal counsel and that the vast majority of counselors in schools statewide follow a teacher's payscale, I am recommending that the school counselors be placed on the teacher pay scale and be given a contract similar to that of the teachers. Each counselor will have an extended contract to complete additional duties outside of the BOD approved teacher days. The high school counselor will have 15 additional days, and the middle school counselor will have 10 additional days.

● The positions below are being recommended for nonrenewal based on the rationale provided. Non renewed teachers must be notified by the end of April, and all other staff being non renewed must be notified by the end of May.

- Employees A and B - both possess a Tier 2 license, which are school district specific. Best practice is to post the position with the intent of hiring a Tier 3 or 4 licensed teacher. Both employees are encouraged to apply for the posting, as they may be rehired if a more qualified

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candidate is not found.

o Employee C -

o Employee D -

o Employee E and F - both are in a position where they are teaching with an Out of-Field Permission (OFP) due to their not being licensed in the discipline they are teaching. Both employees are encouraged to apply for the position, but the position must be posted for at least 60 days to meet the requirement for being reassigned to the position with an additional OFP.

8. Student Representative Communication and Update

Ms. Akakpo noted that they are collaborating with teachers on projects that are student focused. Projects will be this year or next year.

9. Reports from Board Committees, Activities Director and Task Forces

Board Committees:

Academics (Ms. Kurkoski): Report submitted.

Annual Fund (Mr. Bartz): Report submitted.

Communications (Ms. Burggraaff): Report submitted.

Personnel (Ms. Cardenas): Report submitted.

School Expansion Possibilities (Mr. Ellingson): Report submitted. Mr. Ellingson noted that they are making progress and will share with the broader community. It will be discussed at the annual stakeholder meeting.

Right now they are doing investigative work on what can be done at the building site. Doing pro bono work.

Policy (Ms. Kurkoski): No report submitted.

Finance (Mr. Schniepp): Report submitted. Mr. Schniepp noted that the balance sheet now has a line item for cash reserves to ensure bond requirements are met. Money has been returned for the Class of 2020 funds. It was coded wrong.

Motion to approve the March 2021 Financial Statement.

Moved by: Cody Schniepp Second: Jeanna Albers

Vote: 9-yes 0-no 0-abstain

The motion carries.

10. Consent Agenda

None

11. Old or Unfinished Business

a. Discuss PELS/MDE findings for COVID-19 Coordinator Teacher Status

Discussion:

Mr. Jim Martin provided a summary. Ms. Judy Seeberger asserted that the Board was engaged in illegal activity and opened up to liability for failure to be seated on the Board. A Board member who is seated as a teacher requires a license as a teacher. The Board accepted her leave of absence last year and the replacement was appropriate. The position Ms. Seeberger held until her resignation did not require a license by the state. Therefore she could not be a teacher representative on the Board. The Board would have a greater liability if she was seated as an unauthorized teacher on the Board.

Mr. Martin left the meeting.

12. Items for Discussion and Decision

a. Discuss Annual Stakeholder Meeting

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Discussion:

Ms. Cardenas -

- Here are the rankings from U.S. News for high school:
 - #1 Minnesota High School
 - #32 Charter School in the United States
 - #124 best high school in the United States
 - 75% of our high school students took at least one AP exam
-
- In the top 50 schools in the nation for middle school grades 7 and 8, ranked #3:
-
- #1 of 429 best high school teachers in MN
 - #1 of 386 best middle schools in MN
 - #1 best high school in MN
-
- Average ACT score for 2020 for MSA was #1 in the State.
 - Average composite score for MSA for 2020 was 28.3

Ms. Burggraff - She has been investigating and comparing online learning as a supplemental or full expansion to the current curriculum. She has met with MDE. Items to consider is how to apply, how it is graded, and course offerings.

Mr. Ellingson - He took a tour last week. Class rooms are crammed and track is practicing on sidewalks and storm drains. There is a need to expand based on numbers and need more space. The committee is looking at options such as buy, lease, or build up. They will be coming back in the coming months to provide more about what can be done.

Mr. Schniepp - He is working on his masters degree and taking finance for nonprofit. Finance committee has a number of positives, including refinancing our bonds. The savings are set aside in the building repair fund for repairs as the buildings age.

Ms. Kurkoski - Covid liaison team has received feedback from parents with survey questions, update information regularly (CDC, MDH) and adapt to those guidelines, has members who have put in a lot of time to create our fall and spring plan documents. Will continue to meet through the school year.

b. Approval of 2021-2022 School Calendar

Motion to approve 2021-2022 School Calendar.

Moved by: Annie Cardenas Second: Maggie Burggraff

Discussion:

School will start before Labor Day to mirror District 833 start date due to the bus schedule.

Vote: 9-yes 0-no 0-abstain

The motion carries.

c. Review of Staff Handbook

Discussion:

Ms. Kurkoski noted that the communications flow chart should match the website with the handbook.

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Mr. Krueger asked what the issues were from last year. Some of the board members noted that they didn't recall any issues. It was approved late.

A purpose statement for Policy 103 should be added.

Motion to approve Staff Handbook with non substantive changes.

Moved by: Robert Krueger Second: Dan Ellingson

Discussion:

None

Vote: 9-yes 0-no 0-abstain

The motion carries.

d. Approval of Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2022

Motion to approve Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2022.

Moved by: Annie Cardenas Second: Cody Schniepp

Discussion:

Mr. Schniepp noted that the budget is based on last year's data. The budgeted interim director salary is starting at \$100,000. The staff raise is 2%. The school expansion is not included in the budget.

Vote: 9-yes 0-no 0-abstain

The motion carries.

e. Discuss BOD In-person Meetings

Discussion:

Ms. Cardenas was approached with the question of when the BOD meetings would be in person. Board discussed the purpose, benefit, and safety of in person meetings. There has been more attendance at the virtual meetings. Board will continue to review and discuss this.

f. Approval of BOD Election Results

Motion to approve BOD Election Results.

Moved by: Annie Cardenas Second: Dan Ellingson

Discussion:

Participation was low. It was better than the 2014 online elections. Current board members leaving are Robert Krueger, Jeanna Albers, and Adam Bartz.

Vote: 9-yes 0-no 0-abstain

The motion carries.

g. Approval of YMCA contract

Motion to approve YMCA contract.

Moved by: Maggie Burggraaf Second: Jeanna Albers

Discussion:

MSA allows YMCA to use Building D.

Vote: 9-yes 0-no 0-abstain

The motion carries.

H. Approval of Monies for Director Search

Motion to approve Lisa Anderson up to \$1000 for running ads for the director search.

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Moved by: Cody Schniepp Second: Adam Bartz

Discussion:

Funds will also be needed for the interim and permanent director search.

Motion rescinded.

Moved by: Cody Schniepp Second: Adam Bartz.

Motion to approve Lisa Anderson up to \$1000 for running ads for the interim director search and up to \$2000 next year for the search for the permanent director position.

Moved by: Cody Schniepp Second: Adam Bartz

Vote: 9-yes 0-no 0-abstain

The motion carries.

I. Approve the Director's recommendation for contract non renewal

Motion to approve the Director's recommendation for contract non renewal.

Moved by: Maggie Burgraff Second: Dan Ellingson

Discussion:

Mr. Krueger wanted clarification on timelines. For the non renewals, the teachers will be notified by the end of April. The others will be at the end of May. Returning teacher's contracts will be signed by the end of May. All other contracts should be signed by the first full week of June.

Proposed to have a review team of a teacher, a community member, and parent to review the investigation and claims before anything else can be done. Then discuss at a closed BOD meeting, pending advice from the legal council.

Motion to Amend the motion to only include Employees A, B, E & F.

Moved by: Robert Krueger Second: Jeanna Albers

Vote: 8-yes 0-no Annie Cardenas-abstain

The motion carries.

Discussion:

Renewal is not based on performance. It is based on policy. These are based on requirements from the state and mandated for E and F. A and B are tier 2, this is part of best practice (would need to apply for a tier 2 at MSA)

Vote: 8-yes 0-no Annie Cardenas-abstain

The motion carries.

Motion to approve the BOD to create a review panel for the recommendations to review the allegations of the nonrenewals for the contract for Employee C & D.

Moved by: Robert Krueger Second: Jeana Albers

Discussion:

Board will have a closed meeting on April 27. Board members volunteered to be on the committee. Mr. Ellingson will chair the meeting.

Vote: 8-yes 0-no Annie Cardenas-abstain

The motion carries.

J. Review Monthly COVID Evaluation

i. MSA Covid Rating

ii. On Campus Procedures Update

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Discussion:

Ms. Shannon Froberg will do most of the Covid administration. Rates went up to 62.

K. Motion to postpone personnel committee work

Motion that personnel committee should postpone work until an interim director is hired and the committee is tasked to return to it

Moved by: Annie Cardenas Second: Robert Krueger

Discussion:

A new interim Director will bring a new perspective.

Vote: 9-yes 0-no 0-abstain

The motion carries.

13. Future BOD Meeting and Workshop Agenda Items

a. BOD Goals

i. Contract Templates

ii. Expansion End of Year Goal

iii. Committee Purpose Statement

14. Dates and Times of Upcoming BOD Workshops and Meetings:

a. BOD Workshop, May 17, 2021 at 5:00 pm

b. BOD Regular Meeting, May 17, 2021 at 6:15 pm

15. Motion to adjourn at 8:57 pm.

Moved by: Annie Cardenas Second: Adam Bartz

Vote: 8-yes 0-no 0-abstain

The motion carries.

Submitted:

Ia Xiong, Board Recorder

Approved:

Michelle Kurkoski, Secretary