

Board of Directors
Workshop Notes
Math and Science Academy
Monday, April 20, 2015
8430 Woodbury Crossing, Woodbury, MN 55125

Board of Directors

Tim Tydlacka – *Chair* (Present)

Alice Quammen – *Vice Chair* (Present)

Shannon Froberg – *Treasurer* (Present)

Heidi Bardwell – *Secretary* (Present)

Joe Burianek (Absent)

Dan Keller (Present)

Jessie Heydt (Present)

Deb Ledvina (Present)

Mona Hayashi (Present)

Shailaja Radhakrishnan – *Student Rep*
(Present)

Bob Kreischer – *ex-officio* (Present)

Judith Darling, BKDA – *Contracted*
Financial Manager, ex-officio (Present)

Discussion of Activities Director Position

Teacher, Molly Molitor was at the workshop to discuss the importance of the Activities Director position. Molly was responsible for this job in prior years and getting paid for two hours. She said you put much more than two hours a day into this without getting paid. She did this position when MSA only had three sports, not all of what we have today.

The Activities Director has been in charge of working with the kids that are on academic probation. She will also be in charge of concessions being run, a lot of new clubs, girls volleyball, boys basketball, weekly check-ins with students to make sure they are fulfilling their responsibilities, etc. This position is also responsible for hiring and evaluating the coaches. Bob said that the current Activities Director, Shannon Froberg, has been a significant leader in setting up a conference. MSA will also have more sports next year, a possible girls basketball team and a badminton team. From Fall until the end of Spring the gymnasium will be used. Finally, Shannon will work on setting up kids to earn letters. The letters are meant to be athletic versus academic. These are the reasons why Bob suggests that this be a full-time position. Dan said that the Activities Director will also take away the burden of the Director or office staff having to track down the students. Jessie Heydt said it will be nice to have someone coordinate with the Yearbook to have group pictures taken of the clubs, activities, and sports. Deb Ledvina asked how this fits in the overall personnel plan in terms of what was the thought process for a FT director versus a full time nurse or custodian. Bob said that his has been brought up, at least twice, on having a full-time custodian. Bob thinks it is important for the school to have activities and athletics. He also thinks it would be nice to have kids receive letters and jackets.

Alice asked to be educated on what other schools of our size do in regards to having an activities director. Bob said that some just have an athletic director, not activities. Alice also asked what the budgeted amount for this position is. Bob determined that this will be in the mid to upper 60,000 range. Alice then asked why we are putting someone who is a higher end teacher in this position. Alice also said that a student coming out of college takes positions like these (the Activities Director) and is usually started at an entry level salary. Bob said there are Activities Directors making about the same money at other schools. When we looked at schools that are comparable, some of them only have an athletic director.

Bob also said that Shannon has good relationships with the students. Bob said that he would not want to hire from the outside because Shannon has already been doing this. Dan Keller said that this past school year has been tough with the many morning study halls and activities. Teacher and advisors have had to take attendance. He said he has one study hall where he hasn't seen some of the kids all year that are on his attendance list. It raises a liability issue with the school when you watch some kids drive off in the morning before school even begins. Jessie added that having a full-time Activities Director will help with teachers and advisors of morning activities. They will have a person to talk to directly about the activities instead of asking office staff.

Alice went back to the discussion of creating the position with one particular person in mind. She suggested establishing what the position is without making it into a position for a certain person, Shannon. Bob disagreed with this. There was clarification on Alice's suggestion. Alice was trying to say that MSA should set a salary base and then Shannon could apply and anyone else that heard about the position. Jessie said that Shannon has been the Activities Director and should be able to go into this role. Dan said that he thinks what they are saying more is not about the position but the pay scale for the position. We are creating a full-time Activities Director position and putting duties into the description that were not there before. You set a salary for this and Shannon chooses to stay with it or not. Questions were raised regarding for what we need, what is a good salary; what is the range, what do we want this position to look like? Questions were raised about what the Board's job is with regards to approving a new position. We rely on the director to know what goes into the job. Deb said that the Board needs to support Bob, the director, and his decisions. Alice asked, if Shannon wins the lottery and chooses not to stay here, would we post the position at the salary she is being offered?

Discussion was ended when Tim said it was time to move on the next workshop item on the list.

Math Program

Two months ago, the BOD was given a math report from a previous teacher who no longer works at MSA. Bob Kreischer was asked to look into this and report back to the Board. Bob did by producing a math recommendations document. Bob assumed that everyone on the Board read this prior to the workshop meeting. Bob said that he would be happy to answer any questions from the Board. He said that in order to have the kind of math program we want and expect to have, these are some of the things that need to be done. Dan Keller said that if he were a math teacher he may get a little defensive with the use of textbooks. Bob said that he was trying to indicate that we may need to use textbooks to fall back on. Because we have mixed grades, we weren't always meeting the state standards. This will help do this. Alice indicated that the textbooks would have really helped her two students when they were at MSA. The bottom line is that if there are three different teachers teaching the same class, such as Algebra I, we should expect all students to move on to Algebra II.

Director Search Update

At the BOD Special Meeting for the final candidate for the Director position, parents, students, and staff that attended could leave comments for the Board to bring to their closed Board meeting to discuss. Deb said there were comments that some people thought the Board did not solicit enough advertising for community involvement. Deb put together a handout of "Timeline for Hiring Director 2015" that was given to all the people attending the workshop. She said this timeline was put together through memory and some notes she took. She is also putting together a binder for any future hirings.

Highlights from the timeline: January 12th - met with the school community to discuss search for new director; January 26th BOD meeting - Board decided that survey to parents and staff not needed; February

3rd - Board members that were interested in helping with Director search attended a meeting with MSA HR consultant; February 23rd - due to lack of applicants, position description was updated and revised (doing this helped the BOD receive 12 more applications); A note to parents and teachers of MSA from Tim Tydlacka asking for people interested in helping out in the hiring for the director. Also on the timeline handout was an overview of the interviewees rating score sheet of the seven candidates that were interviewed.

Deb said there was debate over how many candidates should be interviewed. Deb felt strongly against interviewing seven candidates. Alice remarked that she sent the director posting to every charter school director in the State of MN. This is how candidate, John Gawarecki found out and applied for the position. The search was narrowed down to their final top two candidates who scored the highest. They asked both candidates to a Special BOD meeting on Saturday, April 18th. One of the two candidates withdrew the day before the meeting. The final candidate, Mr. Gawarecki, was the highest scorer of all seven candidates that were interviewed. The Board offered John a contract for Director.

Some comments regarding the Special Board of Directors meeting (from attendees at the April 20th workshop):

A MSA teacher said the Board mentioned at the January 12th meeting that they would be putting a survey together for teachers and staff on what qualifications they are looking for in a director. This was not done. The teacher said that she gets busy and didn't have time to reach out to the Board about the survey. She was upset that things were not properly communicated to staff. She assumed that things would be handled somewhat similar to how they were three years ago. Mona said that it is up to the Board to decide how things will be done and that just because something was done a certain way three years ago doesn't mean this is how it will be done in the future. The teacher said that this is true, but this is the only process the staff has known. Three years ago people on the Board and hiring committee worked really hard to bring the staff and parents information and had them involved. There were zero updates.

A parent on the hiring committee disputed this and said that due diligence was completed and there was teacher input from those teachers that are members of the Board. However, the teacher disputing the Board said that we needed to have communication about the process and there wasn't any.

A staff member said that due diligence was not done on the credentials of the final candidates since one of the candidates had some issues when the name was searched. One of the final candidates had applied for a previous position at MSA and was not called in for an interview because of the name search on the internet. The staff member sent an email to the Board after the resume was received asking if they wanted to know of any candidates that applied for a previous position at MSA and one Board member responded indicating that probably not since it would be fair to give everyone a clean slate.

Another MSA parent on the hiring committee said he asked for more teacher involvement. He said that the committee did compromise to allow this and that is why the open microphone was added to the Special Board Meeting of the final candidate. There was dispute from some Board members saying that this was never off the table.

Another MSA teacher spoke on how difficult of a process it is to hire a director. You asked them questions, you scored them on their answers in the initial interviews. Why does someone who does not have fundraising experience score so high on your rating for fundraising? The final candidate said that he has worked on a fundraising team but has had to delegate. Deb said that in his first interview he discussed the annual campaign. Deb said that he most likely did not go into detail at the Special BOD meeting because he thought we (the BOD) all knew this. The teacher also remarked that the final candidate also

said that he doesn't have the budget experience and yet he was ranked high marks for this as well. Deb said that in the interview he said he had done a budget. The teacher went on to remark that there is a disconnect on what you are looking for and who the final candidate is. Deb then remarked of what they were looking for and specific qualifications - Do you know how a charter school is run? Do you know the financial situation of the school? Deb said he did a fabulous job on these questions.