

**State of Louisiana**

**MINUTES**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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

**June 14, 2021**

The Board of Directors of the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts met on Monday June 14, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. in the Jimmy D. Long Board Room, LSMSA, in Natchitoches, LA. Mrs. Gahagan called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m. Ms. Anne Dejoie-Lucas recorded the minutes. Mrs. Gahagan welcomed members and guests to the meeting, including new Board members Mrs. Regina Pierce and Mrs. Meredith McGovern.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Members Present:**

Mrs. Sharon T. Gahagan (Chair)  
Representative Beryl Amedee (via Zoom)  
Dr. Jason C. Anderson  
Mr. Joseph E. "Jed" Cain (via Zoom)  
Mr. Preston Castille (via Zoom. Arrived 1:35pm)  
Mr. Jared Dunahoe (via Zoom)  
Dr. Vickie S. Gentry (via Zoom)  
Mr. Kirby Hopkins (via Zoom. Arrived 1:30pm)  
Senator Katrina Jackson (via Zoom. Arrived 1:40pm)  
Ms. Chanda Johnson (via Zoom)  
Ms. Marian "Suzy" Johnson (via Zoom)  
Mr. Jimmy D. Long Jr. (via Zoom)  
Dr. Kimberly Walker McAlister (via Zoom. Arrived 1:25PM)  
Ms. Meredith McGovern (via Zoom)  
Dr. Larry Tremblay (via Zoom)  
Dr. Arthur S. Williams (via Zoom)  
Dr. Steve Horton, LSMSA Executive Director (non-voting)

**Members Absent:**

Ms. Leanne M Broussard  
Ms. Denise Karamales  
Senator Beth Mizell  
Representative Charles Owens  
Mr. Richard Strong

**Guests Present:**

Attorney Ken Sills, LSMSA Counsel (via Zoom)  
Mr. John Allen, LSMSA Chief of Staff (briefly during budget updates, via Zoom)  
Dr. Kristy Pope-Key, LSMSA Director of Academic Services  
Ms. Emily Shumate, LSMSA Director of Enrollment and Student Services

Ms. Ali Landry, LSMSA Foundation Executive Director (via Zoom)  
Ms. Angela Couvillion, LSMSA Registrar

#### **AGENDA ITEM 1: APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 22, 2021 BOARD MINUTES**

Mrs. Gahagan requested the Board's review of the March 22, 2021, Board minutes and requested any additions or corrections.

**Upon motion duly made by Dr. Art Williams, seconded by Dr. Vickie Gentry, and unanimously passed, the Minutes of the March 22, 2021, meeting stand approved as read/reviewed.**

#### **AGENDA ITEM 2: CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

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

#### **AGENDA ITEM 3: INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS**

Mrs. Gahagan officially "pinned" and welcomed to the Board Mrs. Regina Pierce, who fills the vacant seat for the teacher position was appointment by Dr. Brumley; and Mrs. Meredith McGovern, the Executive Director of Pathway Initiatives for the Department of Education.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 4: APPROVAL OF ATMOS ENERGY PIPELINE SERVITUDE & EASEMENT**

As a matter of housekeeping, the Board was asked to approve the underground utility easement for the Living Learning Commons.

**Upon motion duly made by Dr. Art Williams, seconded by Mr. Jared Dunahoe, and unanimously passed, the Board approved the Atmos Energy Pipeline Servitude & Easement.**

#### **AGENDA ITEM 5: APPROVAL OF CREDENTIALS OF NEW FACULTY**

Dr. Key outlined the credentials for new faculty being considered for hire by the School. Dr. Kira Braham is being considered in the English Department. Her credentials include a PhD from Vanderbilt and an MA from University of Vermont. Her specialties are 19<sup>th</sup> Century British literature and culture, and the notion of labor and work and how that's evolved.

Dr. Caleb Ford is being considered in the History Department. He received a PhD from the University of California Berkeley, and an MA in Chinese Studies from the University of Michigan. His interests are in World History as well as Asian studies and literature from the Eastern world.

**Upon motion duly made by Dr. Jason Anderson, seconded by Ms. Suzy Johnson, and unanimously passed, the Board approved the credentials for new faculty.**

#### **AGENDA ITEM 6: APPROVAL OF PROPOSED NEW COURSES**

Dr. Key reviewed the new courses being presented for approval. They include Literature in Gender Studies and Latin Paleography. Literature in Gender Studies would be offered as a senior elective that can be paired with another upper level English elective for Survey or English CORE credit. Latin

Paleography would be offered as an elective for upper level students who have already progressed through two years of Latin and would not apply to CORE credit.

Dr. Key also presented a current course requiring revision of its course description. Formerly titled Classical Scholars: Sport & Spectacle, the revised course, Classical Scholars/Classical Gymnasium, remains an elective course in the Language department and does not apply to CORE credit. The course will run as part seminar and part experimental sports practicum and has the potential to pair with PE faculty to allow for PE credit, but not in Year 1.

**Upon motion duly made by Dr. Art Williams, seconded by Dr. Jason Anderson, and unanimously passed, the Board approved the proposed new courses.**

#### **AGENDA ITEM 7: APPROVAL OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Dr. Key explained the amendments being suggested to the handbook related to Academic Services that outline with some specificity what students and parents may expect if a student makes a poor decision related to academic dishonesty.

Dr. Williams asked if it might not be helpful to have an institutional statement about the internet as a secondary source that has to be cited somewhere in the handbook to give institutional force to the way we view it, to which Dr. Key concurred and said she would discuss with the department chairs.

Mrs. Shumate addressed changes to the Work Service program, attendance tracking, and several pages of the health services section of the handbook related to the change in location of the health services offices in the LLC. The remaining pages are related to the privilege system and will combine efforts with the College Counseling Center to replace the class grade and test prep hours with extra privileges. Counselors have asked to try a rewards system rather than a punitive system to encourage studying, test prep, and college admissions preparation and a more beneficial use of the Naviance system.

**Upon motion duly made by Dr. Jason Anderson, seconded by Dr. Vickie Gentry, and unanimously passed, the Board approved the proposed amendments to the student handbook.**

#### **AGENDA ITEM 8: APPROVAL TO MODIFY STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE**

The Student Activity Fee covers items including, but not limited to, life programming; dances and social events; yearbook, newspaper and Folio printing; PSAT testing, and more. A new laundry service fee, being added to the Student Activity Fee, requires approval.

**Upon motion duly made by Dr. Vickie Gentry, seconded by Dr. Art Williams, and unanimously passed, the Board approved the modification to the Student Activity Fee.**

#### **AGENDA ITEM 9: REVIEW OF LSMSA'S 2021-22 PROPOSED BUDGET**

Dr. Horton presented an overview of the proposed budget, as outlined by Mr. John Allen. There's a 6.07% increase in state general funds of approximately \$344,000, and a reduction of \$70,000 due to attrition. Self-generated revenue remains the same, and statutory dedication from the EEF funds decreased by about \$407. The MFP increased to allow for the \$800 faculty salary increase mandated by the Governor. Some requests were not funded, including \$465,000 in major repairs, \$75,000 in textbooks, and \$226,000 in desktop computers and network switches.

The School requested an additional \$6.4 million through ESSER and was awarded \$3.2 million that will be earmarked for specific purposes related to academic success, technology, health & wellness, student support, facilities and more. There will be another opportunity to request ESSER assistance in the spring.

A lengthy discussion ensued as Dr. Jason Anderson inquired about the COLA adjustment and the Governor's mandated \$800 salary increase for faculty. Dr. Anderson explained how important the COLA adjustment is to faculty and suggested that a failure to approve such adjustment for the coming academic year could result in a decline in faculty morale and possibly negative repercussions directed towards the Executive Director, especially considering all the faculty has gone through this past year.

Mrs. Gahagan explained that the Board imposes the policy, and she strongly suggested that the business office reassess its initial calculations and look for areas that can be adjusted to accommodate the 3% COLA, stressing that it would be very detrimental to the health of the school and the faculty for it to be reduced this year. Following lengthy discussing, the Board decided to present a motion to let the record reflect its stance on the matter.

**Upon motion duly made by Larry Tremblay, it is the clear intent of the Board of Directors to provide both the COLA and the \$800 supplement to the faculty this academic year, and the Board asks the administration to review any possible steps to make that a reality. Seconded by Miriam Suzy Johnson, the motion unanimously passed.**

Following the vote, additional discussion ensued concerning enrollment challenges and what is being done to bring the numbers up for this and future academic years.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 10: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Dr. Horton's report included updates about events and accomplishments throughout the year, including but not limited to, return of students to campus in smaller cohorts during the spring, and senior events including spring fling, prom, and graduation. The residence hall is scheduled to open in August. Caddo is being used for summer programs including EXCEL, Summer@ and STEMrichment. The contents of Prudhomme have been sold, and the same will be done for CADDO once LSMSA vacates the building. Caddo and Prudhomme both revert back to Northwestern on July 1. Furniture for the LLC is ordered and will start arriving the week of July 25, and signage will go up in late June.

The Chamber of Commerce will be hosting an Education in Natchitoches Parish event on June 24<sup>th</sup> for Leadership Natchitoches that will include a forum at LSMSA with Dan Carr, Derwood Duke, and others who are instrumental in telling the story of how the Louisiana School came into existence. Additionally, the Chamber After-Hours event on August 9<sup>th</sup> will be an open house in the new residence hall to allow the community a chance to see the LLC before students move in. It will be an informal reception for 100-150 people. *(The August 9 event was postponed due to the Governor's Order shortly after June 14.)*

LSMSA welcomes Rebekah Maricelli as its Senior External Affairs officer. Previously with LSMSA's Foundation, Mrs. Maricelli brings a wealth of experience, especially in PR, and will be the school's contact person for media and external affairs, including helping to build web page content and working with the new marketing company to keep the community aware of what goes on at LSMSA.

LSMSA formally ended its exploratory MOU with the Outpatient Health Center and is working with the Natchitoches Regional Medical Center to offer similar services on campus. We have an RN and LPN on campus, and this relationship could reduce the frequency of students needing to go off campus for various medical needs.

The School submitted a revised MOU with Northwestern to renew the annual articulation agreement for dual enrollment.

LSMSA is moving forward with the creation of the Innovation Center and working with architect Doug Ashe and the Foundation to create a building plan. The School has been in contact with state and federal government in hopes of working with the Red Cross to create a space that could also serve as an evacuation center or emergency center.

**AGENDA ITEM 11: APPROVAL OF POST-PANDEMIC MASK GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2021-2022**

LSMSA follows the Governor’s guidelines regarding mask mandates and social distancing and encourages mask wearing, social distancing and good hygiene.

**Upon motion duly made by Dr. Vickie Gentry, seconded by Regina Pierce, and unanimously passed, the Board approved the post-pandemic mask guidelines.**

**AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT FROM THE FACULTY**

Dr. Anderson updated the Board on the faculty accomplishments achieved since the last Board meeting in March 2021. These accomplishments are included as Exhibit A12E1, and recognize Dr. Chris Hynes, Dr. Allison Landy, Dr. Casey Green, Mr. Marcus Journey, Mr. Chris King, Dr. Nathalie Malti, and various members of the faculty who teach during LSMSA’s summer programs.

**AGENDA ITEM 13: ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF REPORTS**

Mrs. Gahagan requested the Board Members to review the administrative staff reports on their own due to length of the meeting. Madam Chair did, however, yield the floor to Ali Landry, Executive Director of LSMSA’s Foundation, for comments.

Ms. Landry reported that the Foundation’s Board will review and approve its budget at their June 15 meeting and that they plan to fully support the School’s needs for the next academic year.

**AGENDA ITEM 14: OTHER BUSINESS**

Dates to Remember:

- Wednesday, August 5                      Faculty In-Service Begins
- Sat - Tues, August 14-17                  New Student Orientation
- Wednesday, August 18                    First Day of Fall Classes

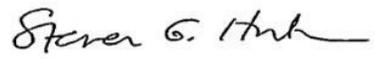
Dr. Horton added that the the FY21-22 Board meetings have been scheduled to avoid conflict with BESE, state legislature, community festivals, final exams, and school closures. The meetings will continue to be held at 1:00 p.m. to simplify travel arrangements and reduce costs.

- Monday, September 20
- Monday, December 6
- Monday, March 21
- Monday, June 13

There being no further business ...

**Upon motion duly made by Dr. Jason Anderson, seconded by Dr. Art Williams, and unanimously passed, the meeting was adjourned at 3:12 p.m.**

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



Steven G. Horton, PhD.  
Secretary



Sharon T. Gahagan, EdS.  
Chair