

**State of Louisiana**

**MINUTES**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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

**September 12, 2022**

The Board of Directors of the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts met on Monday September 12, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. in the Jimmy D. Long Board Room, LSMSA, in Natchitoches, LA. Mrs. Gahagan welcomed members and guests to the meeting and, before moving into agenda items, introduced new Board Member Patrick Jenkins. Jenkins was welcomed by all and expressed his excitement at being part of the Board. Mrs. Gahagan then introduced NSU President Dr. Marcus Jones, who spoke briefly about the Dual Enrollment and Articulation Agreements between LSMSA and NSU and the initiatives to entice more students to attend NSU after graduation.

Mrs. Sharon Gahagan called the meeting to order at 1:20 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  
Dr. Vickie S. Gentry (Vice Chair)  
Ms. Marian "Suzy" Johnson  
Mr. Patrick Jenkins  
Ms. Denise Karamales  
Mr. Jimmy D. Long Jr.  
William "Bill" Luster, MD  
Ms. Tana Luther  
Dr. Kimberly Walker McAlister  
Ms. Meredith McGovern  
Ms. Regina Pierce  
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. Jared Dunahoe

Mr. Kirby Hopkins  
Senator Katrina Jackson  
Mr. Sheldon Jones  
Senator Beth Mizell  
Representative Charles Owens

**Guests Present**

Dr. Marcus Jones, NSU President  
Mr. 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. Randi Washington, Director of the Living Community  
Ms. Rebekah Maricelli, LSMSA External Affairs  
Ms. Corey Poole, LSMSA External Affairs  
Dr. Zheng Chen, LSMSA Math Instructor

**AGENDA ITEM 1: APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 13, 2022, BOARD MINUTES**

Mrs. Gahagan requested the Board's review of the June 13, 2022, minutes and requested any additions or corrections.

**Upon motion duly made by Ms. Johnson, seconded by Dr. Tremblay, and unanimously passed, the minutes of the June 13, 2022, 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 MEMBER**

This item was addressed prior to the Call to Order.

**AGENDA ITEM 4: INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF HIRED SINCE JUNE 2022**

Ms. Randi Washington, LSMSA's Director of the Living Community, addressed the Board and introduced herself as well as new LLC staff Ariyanna Bonton of Alexandria; Don'Ketia Swayne of New Orleans; and Alejandro Dager of Columbia, who is also an international student attending NSU.

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

Dr. Kristi Key introduced new Mathematics Department faculty member Dr. Zheng Chen, in attendance, who lives in New Orleans and most recently taught at Ottawa University in Kansas. Prior to that, Dr. Chen taught at Southern University in New Orleans where he became a tenured professor. Dr. Chen

holds two PhDs, the second from Florida State. Credentials for Dr. Chen and Chinese Professor Mrs. Shuxiang Li were approved by the Board in June.

Dr. Key asked the Board to approve credentials for Dr. Christopher Bouton, History professor who was hired as an adjunct instructor during the pandemic and now returns fulltime. Dr. Bouton has a PhD in History from the University of Delaware, with specialties in World History and American History.

**Upon motion duly made by Dr. Gentry, seconded by Dr. Anderson, and unanimously passed, credentials were approved for new faculty.**

#### **AGENDA ITEM 6: RATIFICATION OF FACULTY/STAFF REIMBURSEMENTS FROM LSMSA FOUNDATION SINCE JUNE 13, 2022**

One (1) faculty member, Chris King, submitted the appropriate paperwork and received reimbursement for expenses by LSMSA's Foundation. The exhibit explains the expenditures and details. As per Foundation policy, these reimbursements must be approved quarterly by LSMSA's Board of Directors.

**Upon motion duly made by Dr. McAlister, seconded by Representative Amedee, and unanimously passed, the Board ratified the Foundation payments to faculty/staff made since the June meeting.**

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

Ms. Shumate outlined the proposed changes to the Student Handbook, specifically areas where preferred names can and cannot be used, such as diplomas, transcripts, commencement, and matriculation ceremonies, where legal names must be used.

Dr. Horton added that legal counsel also reviewed the changes to make sure the school was in compliance.

**Upon motion duly made by Representative Amedee, seconded by Dr. Anderson, and unanimously passed, the Board approved the proposed amendments to the Student Handbook.**

#### **AGENDA ITEM 8: APPROVAL OF INCREASE IN PRICE OF TRANSCRIPTS AND REPLACEMENT DIPLOMAS**

Dr. Allen explained that the price to process transcripts and replacement diplomas has increased over the past several years. LSMSA has held its price point well below that of higher education institutions but now requests the Board's approval to increase the price of these items. The cost for a transcript would increase from \$5 to \$10 for paper and/or digital copies; replacement diplomas would increase from \$5 to \$15.

**Upon motion duly made by Representative Amedee, seconded by Ms. Karamales, and unanimously passed, the Board approved the price increase for transcripts and replacement diplomas.**

#### **AGENDA ITEM 9: APPROVAL OF LSMSA ADA POLICY**

The proposed policy is a result of action taken by the Legislature during its 2022 session, making it mandatory for agencies to enact policies, training, plans, and reporting related to Federal ADA policies. Human Resources Manager Sheila Kidd is designated as LSMSA's ADA Coordinator.

The main tenants of the policy include compliance with prohibiting discrimination in all practices including recruitment, hiring, maintaining employees, and anything having to do with termination. Additionally, the policy establishes procedures for requesting accommodations, an evaluation of the request by the ADA coordinator and others on campus, and a procedure for grievance if individuals feel they have not been granted a reasonable accommodation. The policy was written by State Civil Service but requires Board approval for LSMSA.

**Upon motion duly made by Dr. Gentry, seconded by Dr. Tremblay, and unanimously passed, the Board approved LSMSA's ADA Policy.**

#### **AGENDA ITEM 10: REVIEW OF IMMUNIZATION GUIDELINES/POLICIES FOR RESIDENTIAL STUDENTS**

LSMSA continues to follow past requirements for general immunizations for student enrollment. Regarding COVID-19, the School follows guidelines set by the CDC and also provides weekly COVID screenings for students, faculty and staff, as well as on-campus opportunities to receive vaccinations, boosters, and flu shots. Currently more than 100 individuals take advantage of the weekly screenings offered on campus by LSU Health Sciences. Dr. Horton said LSMSA continues to follow procedures for testing, masks, and isolation following exposure. Parents have been supportive, and ongoing updates and revisions ensure the adherence to CDC guidelines.

No action required.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 11: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

As the School has returned to normal operations following the Pandemic, it has been faced with reaching and maintaining enrollment numbers, which directly impact the budget. Dr. Allen has been tasked with managing the budget to make sure LSMSA receives and utilizes funds in a productive manner, addressing basic needs while also dedicating funds to mental and physical health and wellness. With assistance from the Foundation, LSMSA entered into an agreement with Natchitoches Regional Medical Center to offer telehealth services and making it possible to provide a full health services center. LSMSA also added an LPN who works evenings and assists with medicine distribution and student health needs. The goal is to request funds through the annual operating budget that will allow LSMSA to continue this agreement without having to rely on Foundation funds in the future.

The School will continue to fill its vacant faculty positions as enrollment continues to increase. Dean of Students Christie Price, and Director of the Living Community Randi Washington were added to the senior administration team to better serve the needs of the students and allow LSMSA to return to the usual policies and principles upon which the School operated prior to the Pandemic.

No action required.

**AGENDA ITEMS 12 & 13: APPROVAL OF FY24 PROPOSED FUNDING FORMULA AND USE OF EEF FUNDS FOR FY23; AND FY23 BUDGET UPDATES**

*(Dr. Allen's back-to-back presentations of these items allowed him to address the budget updates simultaneously while presenting the funding formula and EEF funds.)*

LSMSA is required by statute to annually develop a formula for its budget requests for the following fiscal year. This formula is approved by the Board in September and submitted to the State by November 1. Based on enrollment for February 2023, the number is expected to be no lower than 275. Exhibit A12-1 shows breakdown of the Funding Formula. Dr. Allen explained that based on projected MFP, State General Funds and lower enrollment, LSMSA's minimum request for next year will be \$5.3 Million.

**Upon motion duly made by Representative Amedee, seconded by Ms. Johnson, and unanimously passed, the Board approved LSMSA's Funding Formula.**

The additional part of overall needs of financing is the Education Excellence Fund (EEF). Board approval is needed to extend the funds for the current fiscal year. The State did not fund summer programming this year, so the School is requesting funds to cover the cost of programming and residential expenditures for summer programming, STEM instructors, education supplies and professional development. The overall request is \$245,000.

**Upon motion duly made by Ms. McGovern, seconded by Dr. McAlister, and unanimously passed, the Board approved LSMSA's EEF Funds for FY23**

**AGENDA ITEM 14: REPORT FROM THE FACULTY**

Dr. Anderson directed the Board to refer to the Faculty Report included as Exhibit 14-1. He added that the faculty has been busy doing great things presenting, attending, and serving on various boards. Dr. Anderson also serves as Vice Chair for the I.D.E.A. Council and shared that the Council is bringing Dr. Candace Maxwell from the University of Central Arkansas to campus in October to speak with students, faculty and staff about "Civility" and bringing that culture to LSMSA through speech and actions towards one another. Following the general assembly, Dr. Maxwell will meet with the School's student leaders for further conversation and training.

No action required.

**AGENDA ITEM 15: DIVISION REPORTS**

Mrs. Gahagan allowed Directors an opportunity to address the Board but asked that Board Members take time to review the reports in depth outside of the meeting.

Notable changes to departments were explained. Enrollment and Student Services has been divided into Enrollment Management & Institutional Research, which falls under the jurisdiction of Ms. Emily Shumate; and Living Learning Community, spearheaded by new Director Randi Washington.

Dr. Key maintains oversight of Academic Services, with Ms. Christie Price now serving as Dean of Students and 504 Accommodations, responsible for discipline matters and the role of Title IX Coordinator. Ms. Ro Slutsky oversees Student Support Services, which includes district testing.

Ms. Shumate said one focus this year is to increase male enrollment at LSMSA. New software allows Enrollment Management to better locate and advertise to families of potential students. LSMSA also relies on participation in summer programs, math competitions, and other events hosted by the School to expose potential students to LSMSA since it's not possible to directly recruit inside of the high schools.

New Board Member Patrick Jenkins shared some of his experiences while in South Korea and expressed a desire to further discuss recruitment efforts with LSMSA based on what he learned.

Ms. Randi Washington, the Living Community Director, shared plans to bring back many of the student services and activities that were in place prior to the pandemic, including expanded orientation programs to get students involved and provide opportunities for them to find niches they can identify with. Clubs and organizations allow students an opportunity to have fun and interact with students, faculty and staff outside of the classroom; and she emphasized that providing these outlets for students keeps them engaged and offers ways to reduce stress, which benefits overall mental wellness while they're here.

In the absence of Ali Landry, Dr. Horton gave a brief update on Foundation funding and how appreciative the School is of the Foundation's continued support. He will be accompanying Ms. Landry and the Foundation to events coast to coast over the upcoming weeks as it reinforces annual fundraising efforts with alumni and supporters of its Capital Campaign.

No action required.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 16: OTHER BUSINESS**

Tentative Dates for future Board Meetings: December 5, 2022, March 13, 2023, and June 12, 2023 (all at 1 p.m.)

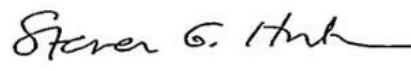
There being no further business;

**Upon motion duly made by Dr. Anderson, seconded by Ms. Pierce, and unanimously passed, the meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.**

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



Sharon T. Gahagan, Ed.S.  
Chair



Steven G. Horton, PhD.  
Secretary