

State of Louisiana

MINUTES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

June 13, 2022

The Board of Directors of the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts met on Monday June 13, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. in the Jimmy D. Long Board Room, LSMSA, in Natchitoches, LA. Mrs. Sharon Gahagan called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. Mrs. Anne Dejoie-Lucas recorded the minutes. Mrs. Gahagan welcomed members and guests to the meeting, and asked Members to introduce themselves. 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
Mr. Joseph E. "Jed" Cain
Ms. Lisa DeJean
Mr. Jared Dunahoe
Senator Katrina Jackson
Ms. Marian "Suzy" Johnson
Ms. Denise Karamales
Mr. Jimmy D. Long Jr.
William "Bill" Luster, MD
Ms. Tana Luther
Ms. Meredith McGovern
Representative Charles Owens
Dr. Larry Tremblay
Dr. Arthur S. Williams
Dr. Steve Horton, LSMSA Executive
Director (non-voting)

Members Absent

Mr. Preston Castille
Dr. Vickie S. Gentry (Vice Chair)
Mr. Kirby Hopkins
Mr. Sheldon Jones
Dr. Kimberly Walker McAlister
Senator Beth Mizell
Ms. Regina Pierce

Guests Present

Attorney Ken Sills, LSMSA Counsel
Mr. John Allen, LSMSA Chief of Staff
Dr. Kristy Pope-Key, LSMSA Director of
Academic Services
Ms. Emily Shumate, LSMSA Director of
Enrollment and Student Services
Mrs. Ro Slutsky, Director of Student
Success Services
Ms. Rebekah Maricelli, LSMSA External
Affairs

AGENDA ITEM 1: APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 21, 2022, BOARD MINUTES

Mrs. Gahagan requested the Board's review of the March 21, 2022, Board minutes and requested any additions or corrections.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Art Williams, seconded by Mr. Jimmy D. Long Jr., and unanimously passed, the minutes of the March 21, 2022, meeting stand approved as read/reviewed.

AGENDA ITEM 2: CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Mrs. Gahagan requested a motion to amend the agenda.

Upon motion duly made by Ms. Denise Karamales, seconded by Mr. Jared Dunahoe, and unanimously passed, the agenda was amended to consider review of LSMSA's Sexual Harassment Grievance procedure.

As board members reviewed the Exhibit outlining the procedure, Attorney Ken Sills and LSMSA Registrar and Chief Matriculation Officer Angela Couvillion explained the changes being made. Mrs. Couvillion served as LSMSA's Title IX Coordinator for the past year. Incoming Dean of Students Christie Price will serve as Coordinator for the new school year and beyond. The policy being reviewed addresses new federal regulations anticipated in the coming year. Mrs. Couvillion further explained that the changes reflect clearer language and definitions that can be understood by students, parents, and employees, and more accurately spell out grievance procedures.

Dr. Horton and the Title IX Coordinator would have authority to prepare checklists, procedural documents, etc. This approved procedural change would become effective in August when students return to school. Mrs. Couvillion said she expects the school may be bringing more revisions by June 2023. This document combines current policy with model policies and procedures shared by the Association of Title IX Coordinators (ATIXA), the Number One group in the country for institutions of higher education and K-12 Title IX.

Upon motion duly made by Representative Beryl Amedee, seconded by Dr. Art Williams, and unanimously passed, the revised LSMSA's Sexual Harassment Grievance Policy was approved.

AGENDA ITEM 3: APPROVAL OF CREDENTIALS OF NEW FACULTY

Dr. Kristi Key presented credentials for approval for two new faculty hires: Dr. Zheng Chen (Math/CS department) and Dr. Shuxiang Li (Languages department). Dr. Chen had a recent tenure position in Ottawa at the University of Kansas, and before that was at Southern University in New Orleans for 10 years. Mrs. Li hails from an elite academy in Salt Lake City.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Art Williams, seconded by Dr. Larry Tremblay, and unanimously passed, the Board approved the credentials of new faculty.

AGENDA ITEM 4: APPROVAL OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO STUDENT HANDBOOK

Dr. Key recapped two new policies related to Academic Services: an adjustment to the academic probation policy; and clarification to the dual enrollment policy as it relates to students' GPA. She explained that while these policies are already in practice, the administration felt it necessary to codify them in the Handbook so there's no misunderstanding or misinterpretation.

Mrs. Shumate reviewed changes related to the level privilege system regarding Naviance and unexcused absences. Changes also clarify points of contact through the School's Coordinator of Academic Student

Support, Ms. Co Ceaser, for academic probation, supervised study, etc. Changes to the REACH sign in/sign out procedures help to clarify language and better identify various locations in and around campus. The final policy states that dorm furniture, namely the adjustable beds, that require repositioning must be done by LSMSA maintenance staff.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Jason Anderson, seconded by Ms. Suzy Johnson, and unanimously passed, the Board approved the proposed amendments to the Student Handbook.

Circling back to the agenda amendment, Mr. Dunahoe indicated that the Board did not include verbiage in its motion to authorize the Title IX coordinator to promulgate separate forms or procedures as necessary. Attorney Ken Sills stated that a separate motion can be made to avoid having to amend the prior motion/vote.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Jared Dunahoe, seconded by Ms. Suzy Johnson, and unanimously passed, the Board authorized the Title IX Coordinator to promulgate or create any forms or documents needed to effectuate the Title IX grievance/reporting procedures.

AGENDA ITEM 5: APPROVAL OF ADJUSTMENTS TO 2022-2023 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Dr. Key explained to the Board the following event that was added to the calendar:

NSU's College Fair – September 21 – required for seniors

The Board acknowledged its understanding of the change. No formal motion was made; nevertheless, the Board did vote unanimously to approve.

AGENDA ITEM 6: APPROVAL OF STUDENT ACTIVITY FEES FOR 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR

An adjustment is proposed to LSMSA's student activity fee for seniors from \$60-\$80 to reflect an increase from Jostens's. This fee includes purchase of the cap and gown and diplomas.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Jimmy D. Long Jr., seconded by Mr. Jared Dunahoe, and unanimously passed, the Board approved the proposed increase to student activity fees for the 2022-2023 school year.

AGENDA ITEM 7: RATIFICATION OF FOUNDATION FACULTY/STAFF REIMBURSEMENTS SINCE MARCH 2022 BOARD MEETING

Five faculty and staff members have submitted the appropriate paperwork and have received reimbursements for expenses by LSMSA's Foundation: Dr. Jason Anderson, Dr. Maggie Hodge, Mrs. Karn Richoux, Dr. Steve Horton, and Dr. David Andersen. The exhibit explains the expenditures and details for

each. As per Foundation policy, these reimbursements must be approved quarterly by LSMSA's Board of Directors.

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Art Williams, seconded by Dr. William Luster, and unanimously passed, the Board ratified the Foundation payments to faculty/staff made since the March meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 8: APPROVAL OF CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL LEGAL SERVICES, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2022

Dr. Horton and Mrs. Gahagan personally thanked Mr. Sills and his firm for their help and support during the year. The new contract reflects a slight increase in the total amount as a result of increased activity regarding Title IX/504 matters and recent lawsuits filed against the School.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Jimmy D. Long Jr., seconded by Ms. Denise Karamales, and unanimously passed, the Board approved the 2022-2023 contract for legal services.

AGENDA ITEM 9: UPDATE ON SCHOOL'S DEAN OF STUDENTS AND DIRECTOR OF LIVING COMMUNITY SEARCHES

The initial candidate for the position of Dean of Students declined the offer due to a job offer elsewhere. The decision was made to divide the position into Dean of Students and Director of Living Learning Community to better define the roles and seek candidates best suited for those specific areas. Offers were made to two candidates who had previously applied; both accepted and will start work on Monday July 11, 2022. Both come from Northwestern State University and will allow for more diversity and representation at the Director level. Dr. Key's title will change to Director of Academic Affairs, Mrs. Shumate's title changes to Director of Enrollment Management and Institutional Research. Three new positions include Mrs. Ro Slutsky as Director of Student Support Services, which encompasses academic support, ACT/EOC/LEAP/PSAT testing, college counseling, and personal counseling; Mrs. Christie Price fills the new role of Dean of Students, which will oversee student discipline, 504, and Title IX; and Ms. Randi Washington fills the new role of Director of Living Learning Community, which includes food services, athletics and recreation, health services, and residential life for students. All six administrative Director positions report directly to Dr. Horton.

AGENDA ITEM 10: REVIEW OF LSMSA'S 2022-2023 PROPOSED BUDGET

LSMSA received an increase in state general funds to cover deferred maintenance and acquisitions. This money, combined with ESSER funds, allows for revamping of information technology infrastructure. Another budget adjustment will be submitted in August or September to increase inter-agency transfer authority to allow continuation of ESSER purchases and reimbursement.

This is the largest increase in nearly a decade; however, the projected shortfall in fall enrollment could impact the final numbers. The budget also does not include the \$75k requested for textbooks, which will be funded through Dr. Key's office and supplemental assistance by the Foundation.

Representative Charles Owen expressed concern that textbooks are not being funded and vowed to work with the School and legislature to find a solution.

AGENDA ITEM 11: REPORT ON DECISION BY LOUISIANA BOARD OF ETHICS – DOCKET NO. 2021-360 (RE: ANDERSON/MAGNUM)

The Louisiana Board of Ethics voted in favor of LSMSA in the matter regarding a possible violation of the Code of Governmental Ethics by Dr. Jason Anderson and Jennifer Magnum. The full confidential report is filed with the exhibits and notes from the June board meeting. The School was not found liable; the Foundation was not found liable; the two faculty members were not found liable; and the investigation is closed. The ruling came with a strong statement of caution indicating that the Foundation should not pay any faculty/staff member without expressed permission of the Board of Directors of the School.

AGENDA ITEM 12: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dr. Horton introduced Director of Student Support Services Mrs. Ro Slutsky, who was absent during the March meeting. He added that he's pleased to also have Mrs. Price and Ms. Washington as part of senior administration.

He further recognized and congratulated Mrs. Gahagan on the Lifetime Achievement Award she received from the Natchitoches Chamber of Commerce earlier this year, influenced in part by her work as LSMSA's Board Chair.

94 seniors graduated in May and received approximately \$20 million in scholarship awards. LSMSA is also moving closer towards an articulation agreement with LSU Baton Rouge. President Tate visited LSMSA earlier this year, realizing the importance of such an agreement since LSU Baton Rouge heavily recruits LSMSA students. UNO is the only school from the UL system that LSMSA does not have an agreement with. 65-70% of our students stay in Louisiana and/or return to Louisiana following graduation to give back to the state. This makes LSMSA a great investment for the state of Louisiana.

Dr. Horton recognized the challenges that may arise during the coming year if the pandemic and weather events again become a factor; but said the Louisiana School is ready to step up as before and has measures in place should the need arise to re-open enrollment. He concluded by proudly stating that LSMSA did not have one closure this past academic year and thanked the students, faculty and staff for helping to achieve that goal.

Mrs. Gahagan recommended the Board take a 5-minute break before going into Executive Session (2:25 p.m.)

The Board reconvened at 2:38 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 13: STATUS OF INVESTIGATION AND CONTINUING STEPS; AND DAVID DEVILLER v JIMMY D. LONG SR. LOUISIANA SCHOOL FOR MATH, SCIENCE AND THE ARTS, et al, 10TH JDC-93130

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Jared Dunahoe to enter into Executive Session to consider the status of Investigation and Continuing Steps for pending litigation in David Deviller vs. Jimmy D Long LSMSA and the State of Louisiana, Docket #C-93130-B in the 10th JDC of Natchitoches parish, pursuant to Louisiana Revised Statutes Title 42 Section 17 (A)(2) and (4), seconded by Ms. Chanda Johnson, Mrs. Lucas commenced roll call vote. (Senator Katrina Jackson had left the meeting and therefore did not vote regarding Executive Session.)

Mrs. Sharon T. Gahagan (Chair) – yes
Representative Beryl Amedee - yes
Dr. Jason C. Anderson - yes
Ms. Leanne Broussard - yes
Mr. Joseph E. “Jed” Cain - yes
Ms. Lisa DeJean - yes
Mr. Jared Dunahoe- yes
Senator Katrina Jackson – no longer in attendance/did not vote
Ms. Marian “Suzy” Johnson - yes
Ms. Denise Karamales - yes
Mr. Jimmy D. Long Jr. - yes
William “Bill” Luster, MD- yes
Ms. Tana Luther - yes
Ms. Meredith McGovern - yes
Representative Charles Owens - yes
Dr. Larry Tremblay - yes
Dr. Arthur S. Williams - yes

By unanimous vote, the Board entered into Executive Session at 2:40 p.m. to consider the status of the investigation and continuing steps for pending litigation.

Dr. Horton asked that Dr. Allen, Mrs. Slutsky, Dr. Key and Mrs. Shumate remain for Executive Session. All other visitors/guests were asked to leave the room. Cameras and recorders were requested to be turned off.

The Board reconvened from Executive Session at 3:50 p.m., with no items to be reported. (Dr. Tremblay left following conclusion of the Executive Session. Jared Dunahoe left upon the Board’s return to the Boardroom.) Having re-established Quorum, Mrs. Gahagan proceeded with the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 14: REPORT FROM THE FACULTY / AGENDA ITEM 15: ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF REPORTS

Mrs. Gahagan thanked the Board members for their patience. Rather than prolong an already lengthy meeting, she asked them to individually review the Faculty report in their binders, as provided by Dr. Anderson; as well as the Director reports, as provided by John Allen, Kristy Key, Emily Shumate, Ro Slutsky and Ali Landry.

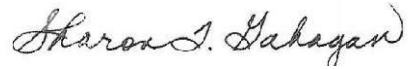
AGENDA ITEM 16: OTHER BUSINESS

The date of the next Board meeting is September 12, 2022. Tentative Board meetings are also set in a manner not to conflict with BESE. These include December 5, 2022; March 13, 2023; and June 12, 2023.

There being no further business;

Upon motion duly made by Dr. Art Williams, seconded by Ms. Suzy Johnson, and unanimously passed, the meeting adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



Sharon T. Gahagan, Ed.S.
Chair



Steven G. Horton, PhD.
Secretary