

**MSSPA Board Meeting
September 27, 2007**

Present

Leann Slama (guest)	Tom Richards
Sammie Thompson	Chuck Mogilevsky
Karen Charles	Dave Mahler
Betsy Maloney	Michelle Erickson
William Leaf	Bill Pierro (ex-officio)
Rob Sundy	

Absent

Eryn Warne
Cassy Furo
Katie Lee
Lori Suvalsky
John Montilino

Meeting called to order: 7:01 PM

Agenda – motion to approve by William Leaf, 2nd by Sammie Thompson – all approved

Minutes – motion to approve by William Leaf, 2nd by Betsy Maloney – all approved

Administrator Update

Auditor's Compliance – 471.87 & 471.88 forms distributed

Facility:

- Scott alluded that church is having cash flow
- Church informally agreed to cover HVAC system
- Plumbing issues might warrant renegotiation with church

Recruitment/Marketing:

- Good! Nearly full enrollment
- Postcards were key marketing tool
- Leann is documenting this & getting more visits from students & parents
- Leann distributed advertising quotes, plan for more info in folder - academics, performance schedule on a magnet
- Very import to improve transportation, website, and application
- Karen adds we will need to build a budget with 4 busses in it for 2008-2009 school year
- Leann is looking into ordering a retractable banner stand to use at any location

Finance:

- Did not receive the MDE grant
- Most recipients were outstate & community organizations
- Preliminary audit work underway – this is going fairly well

Staffing:

- All positions filled
- Hoping to get a Spanish teacher for 2nd quarter - ?capacity to offer >1 language

- Language classes have had the lowest enrollment of all classes
- Math is off to a shaky start again – Karen & Alida are working together
- Alison Maud-Halin getting Gifted & Talented program up & running

Strategic Plan:

- Committee has draft of plan to grow three areas – will e-mail it to every member
- We need to develop a facility plan in conjunction with finance committee
- Committee requests that board members provide feedback by 10-12-07

Fundraising: Betsy is working on 4 grants

Policy Review

- Karen distributed Policy Review Calendar (letters indicate categories for instructional programs/policies based on the MN School Board Association)
 - Need to write - Instructional Program, Fiscal Management, Community Relations
- Sammie inquired about a policy regarding assessment for credit
- Dave Mahler will bring the “Standardized test score ‘success story’” to next meeting
- Executive officer & board member responsibilities need delineation by next meeting
 - Regarding policy, specific situation: Karen requested a vote for 1 teacher (Alison Maud-Halin) to have 1 extra day off after spring break (March 24) as a personal day – board decision as special circumstance **Vote: all in favor**

Financial Update

- Cash flow looks good in August due to summer salaries being accrued into last year
- Karen & Jacqui to meet with Tracy about special funds
- All checks are now being copied for accounting records
- Last year’s MARS accounting is still not correct
- 211 students this year gets us to break even, at 224 we have some cushion
- If we have 10% attrition, we could be in financial trouble
- Chuck’s questions/comments: Need to budget accurately so we can request grants
- Finance committee met last month, assigning tasks, addressing accounting for funds

Air Quality

- William raised the issue that we had a basement flood in the summer – mold damage
- The church repaired the damage
- William feels that the air quality should be tested as there is still 1 foot of mold behind the drywall in the storage room – Bill suggests testing every level, both sides of building
- Tom suggests we use report when we approach the church on lease – ?pre-existing
- **Vote: Board’s willingness to underwrite cost of testing (~\$250) – all in favor**
- There may also be federal grants available for such testing/work/repairs
- Church does not seem to have plans to fix this problem long-term

Committee Updates

- Marketing
 - Rob brought up that the committee needs to meet to implement the plan & unite items with Leann to avoid duplication of efforts
 - Rob is curious about donor stats & circulation information
- Strategic Planning - addressed previously in meeting
- Finance Committee – no further updates

Spark the Arts

- Currently at 124 attendees – can accommodate up to 136
- Have accumulated \$20,000 worth of auction items between live & silent auctions
- Attendance – mandatory for board members
- Auctioneer mentioned he will do a formal “ask” for straight donations
- Set-up help is needed on Friday during the day

Motion to adjourn: Tom, 2nd by Sammie – meeting adjourned at 8:18PM

Next meeting – October 25, 2007

MSSPA Board Meeting

October 25, 2007

Present

Karen Charles
Dave Mahler
Cassy Furo
Sammie Thompson
Bill Pierro
Betsy Maloney
Michelle Erickson

Lori Suvalsky
Chuck Mogilevsky
Tom Richards
William Leaf
Eryn Warne
Leann Slama

Absent

John Montilino
Rob Sundy
Katie Lee

Guest – Sarah Parker (marketing consultant)

Meeting called to order at 7PM

Agenda approval – Motion by Tom, 2nd by Cassy – all approved

Minutes approval – Approved after clarifications

Sarah Parker – Creative Communications:

- History & past successes/strategies reviewed
- Postcard mailings have been the most successful
- May use professional photographer for publishable photos
- Erin Scott manages the website & Sarah does the marketing piece
- Currently working on a Fall Info piece, a DVD, and a get-to-know the school calendar for local media contacts
- Sarah is open to people calling her with any questions they might have

Review of Alcohol and Drug Policy:

- Out of order per calendar of policy reviews, but current issue
- Issue: 4 students were found to be under the influence of alcohol &/or drugs and in possession of alcohol on school premises during school hours – students were recommended for expulsion
- Clarification of what the issues are – language of handbook
- Concerns that warrant a hard line with our school – not comparable to other large districts
 - Public image is that our school has a strong drug culture, zero-tolerance policy essential
 - Alcohol, as well as drugs, for those under 21 are **illegal**
- Questions about what zero tolerance means: expulsion?, consequences?, compassion?
- Karen pointed out that we are a school of choice & it is a privilege for students to come here
- Leann brought the MN Department of Education categories for punishment & shared these with everyone

- Karen offered to ask the school law expert Laura Staubs to come to a meeting to discuss other things on the policy regarding punishment to the December meeting
- We will set new policies by committee – committee will include Tom, Lori, Chuck, Michelle, and Karen
- Vote on final wording of Alcohol and Drug policy – all in favor except for Dave, who was opposed – new wording passed

Chemical, Alcohol and Drugs/Paraphernalia (includes possession, consumption, presentation and/or distribution) on site or at school events.	Suspension with recommended expulsion, <i>and</i> notification of police, <i>and</i> referral for chemical assessment.
Police notification of Chemical, Alcohol and Drugs/Paraphernalia (includes possession, consumption, presentation and/or distribution) off school grounds.	Immediate suspension from performance and other extracurricular activities for 2 weeks or 2 events (whichever is longer).

Administrator Update:

- Facility
 - Karen working with church – re: rooms they are renting, as they are not paying appropriately for them
 - Custodial contractor is unsatisfactory – need to look at other options for next year
 - Karen & Bill still need to set up getting cameras installed
 - LeAnn working on finalizing a rental policy
- Recruitment/Marketing
 - Current enrollment is 221 – started a waiting list for remainder of this quarter
 - Fall Theatre production of Full opens tonight at 7:30PM & runs through Saturday – collaboration with Stages with guest director Jon Ferguson
- Finance
 - Jacqui & Karen met with CMERDC to develop clearer accounting for revenues
 - Audit to be completed this week – identified some preliminary changes that are needed
- Staffing
 - LeAnn is working on a possible Spanish teacher for 2nd semester
 - Math instructor is on probation – Karen working with her on an improvement
 - Current national reports indicate a shortage of math & science teachers
- Fundraising/grants
 - Preliminary numbers for Spark the Arts as of this meeting: net \$99,555 – these numbers are subject to change as invoices Bill & Lori prepared start being
 - Expense ratio less than 22%
 - Many thanks to Stacey Mills and Sam Heins
 - Many thanks to committee members for endless time and effort

Electronic Funds Transfer: Karen (Principal) & Dave (treasurer) will have responsibility for transfer, LeAnn as back-up

Finance Committee:

- Compensation for teachers – need to look at MSSPA salary schedule vs Hopkins & other districts – we want to be close to equal
- Eryn has researched Q Comp through the state – provides extra money to teachers
 - Career Builder for teachers, providing professional development
 - Observations by teacher peers – 2 more peer observations before 10/08
 - Could get \$240 per student
 - Motivates teachers by providing advanced learning and development, as well as increased pay
- Betsy and Matt will work on the McKnight Foundation grant application
- We will send out another Ask letter prior to year – Cassy working on this
- We will do a Spring Ask Event again, same as in the '06/'07 school year
- The Arts staff will continue to do curtain call requests/asks at all performances

Strategic Planning:

- Worked out budget plan for 400 students – will re-do for 320 students
- Karen sent out Strategic Plan – many didn't receive so she will forward it again
- Committee assignments are in the draft
- Focus Groups to be held – parents, teachers, and students – either together or separately
- Will work on developing 1-3 year goals – these groups will report back to the board

MSSPA BOARD MEETING
November 29, 2007

Present

John Montilino
Sammie Thompson
Bill Pierro
Lori Suvalsky
Chuck Mogilevsky
Karen Charles

Betsy Maloney

William Leaf

Eryn Warne

Cassy Furo

Tom Richards

Absent

Michelle Erickson

Katie Lee

Dave Mahler

Rob Sundy

Meeting called to order: 7:09PM

Agenda/Minutes – all approved

Board Member Responsibility Policy – reviewed language and made changes

- Reviewed responsibility to attend 9 of 12 monthly board meetings, Lori will summarize for Chuck attendance for past year
- Suggestion made to add “board members are encouraged to come to the school during the school day if possible”

Vote on policy changes: all approved

Lease update:

- Karen consulted with a lease expert – none thought could be changed, but agreed lease is onerous
- Board members writing a letter to St. Joe’s board to ask for opportunity to renegotiate
- Ended last year at 2.59% indebtedness (0.09% in SOD) – have until 12/30 correct
- Need a negotiating committee to brainstorm ideas for this meeting with St. Joe’s

Financial:

- Biggest issue is last year’s finances & whether or not we will again end in SOD
- This year in better shape, but few areas in which we are over budget – ? wrong categories
- \$100,000 from Spark the Arts helps our finances quite a bit
- Good news is this year we will NOT be in SOD again
- Variance in the accounting service costs do not make sense – looking into this

Security System: (total will be under budget)

- Doors were done at the start of the year
- Cameras are to go in over Winter break – current estimate is \$6500 – cameras will be located outside the computer lab, in the hall by the office (monitoring all 3 doors), in the hallway to the cafeteria, in the back of the cafeteria; suggesting a 5th in the dance studio/dressing room
- Could save/download the recordings every month, can be monitored by Wire Master & Karen
- All of this is portable, so if we move, the system comes with us
- Tom wondered if we are going to post notices – sometimes this helps increase the security value

Administrator Update:

- Facility/Lease – Heating system is not working consistently throughout the building
- Technology/Administration – Need a technology plan into the strategic plan
 - Teachers computers will need to be replaced within the next few years
 - Need to examine a way to make technology more accessible to all students
- Recruitment/Marketing
 - Current enrollment – 212 – lost 4 at quarter change, 7 on a list to begin in January

- Enrollment for next year will begin in December – info meetings in Jan, Feb, Mar
- Current transportation plan in development to expand routes
- Current projections indicate we need 100-150 new students next year
- Staffing
 - A current student’s IEP requires a 1:1 para (reassign one of current paras to this)
 - - state only reimburses 68% of cost (financial benefit by coding para as a 1:1)
 - Peer observations on-going with all staff; staff observing math teacher to try to make suggestions for improvement to
- Fundraising – Karen & Betsy will work on General Mills grant in by January; as well as others
- Accreditation/School Plan/Charger renewal – accreditation site visit rescheduled for Feb/Mar due to time conflicts (we are accredited!)
- Curriculum
 - Gifted & Talented Coordinator training staff on differentiated instruction
 - Fine-tuning a proposal for ID process for G&T students & structure for meeting needs of these students (similar to special ed structure)
 - Coordinator will act as a “case manager” for identified students
- Miscellaneous
 - We offer our condolences to Dave for the passing of his father-in-law
 - Need to plan a reception at the Southern for all our significant donors from Spark the Arts, local community arts organization leaders, and corporate supporters (present & potential)

J term:

- Visited St. Paul Conservatory – they have 260 students
- They use J term (between semesters) – everyone must take 1 class to maximize time/space
- Students enroll in 1 of 16 courses that last 12 days – may be able to use for remediation
- Could be performance based or academic based – hope to develop by next year
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Committee Updates:

- **Strategic Planning Committee**
 - **Karen highlighted important parts of Strategic Plan, such as focus groups**
 - **All priorities in plan have 1-3 year goals:**
 - **Economics is 1st priority out of necessity**
 - **Facility is 2nd, given our difficulties with the lease**
 - **Curriculum/staffing is our 3rd (we are strongest in this area)**
- **Finance Committee**
 - **Ask letter is almost done (Needs signers, then deliver to Dave’s assistant for mailing; Cassy, Eryn, and Sammie working on finalizing mailing list**
 - **Goal is to have this completed by next Wednesday**
- **Marketing Committee – didn’t meet this month**

MACS – Tom moved we approve \$5000 to join the organization; Betsy 2nd – ALL APPROVED

**Motion to Adjourn: Betsy, 2nd by Tom
8:22PM**

Meeting adjourned at

MSSPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
December 20, 2007

Present

Chuck Mogilevsky	Cassy Furo
Rob Sundry	Eryn Warne
Betsy Maloney	Dave Mahler
Leann Slama	Samantha Thompson
Tom Richards	Karen Charles

Absent

John Montilino
Michelle Erickson
Katie Lee
William Leaf
Bill Pierro
Lori Suvalsky

Meeting called to order

Minutes/agenda reviewed – move to approve Dave, 2nd Cassy – all in favor - **APPROVED**

Strategic Plan Overview:

- New plan takes us to 2014
- Enrollment projections include a plan to “over enroll” by 10%
- Management of goals & objectives (from page 15 of plan)
 - Focus groups will assist in execution of goals
 - Board should review plan and give feedback & help with execution of goals

Facility Usage Policy:

- From the Hopkins policy, prices listed, need staff schedule for building supervision
- Groups will need permit (\$10 fee), own insurance, cafeteria usage through Royal Cuisine
- Our staff must be hired by the renting group to run equipment
- School retains right to deny access to groups deemed inappropriate for this setting

Move to approve policy – Tom, 2nd Cassy – all in favor – APPROVED

Administrative Update:

- Facility
 - Custodial services are improving
 - Heating system remains sporadic
- 5 Security cameras will be installed over break
- Recruitment/Enrollment
 - Enrollment is at 211 (have 9 students starting next semester)
 - Have 18 applications for next year; info meetings starting in January
 - Intent to enroll for returning students has been sent out
 - Marketing idea - using alumni/newly accepted (to college) students
- Finance
 - Auditor will present plan at the January Board meeting
 - Working on how to get collateral credit for when balance goes over \$100,000
- Staffing
 - Spanish teacher applications coming in
 - Long term subs due to maternity leaves, have aps for dance & science, theater covered by Marie Williams
- Grants
 - Betsy working on General Mills (after January 1)

- Looking at McKnight for February 1
- Student Discipline
 - Four students withdrawing due to drug related issues, assault
 - Fifth might withdraw due to terroristic threats
- Transportation
 - Plan still in place with Hopkins – will finalize the contract by 4/1/08
 - Want to add a southwest route
- Curriculum
 - Gifted & Talented started a Knowledge Bowl Team
 - Alison is working on a process for identifying G&T students
 - Differentiated instruction training is on-going
 - Still considering J-term for next year
- Other
 - Parent concern raised about low income families paying for senior trip to NYC – shared with her that we have a policy for scholarships

Financial Update:

- We are in SOD by 0.09%, waiting on State decision on 7 students from last year, decision available in January but financial report due in December
- Insurance check from last year's robbery might come arrive in time
- We have a current fund balance of \$69,000
- Projections indicate we will be out of SOD by school year end

Committee Update:

- Finance Committee:
 - Compiling information on comparable salary scales in the area
 - Ask letter went out last week
 - Reception being planned for Spark contributors at the Southern Show
- Marketing Committee:
 - At next meeting, plan to give the few areas of concentration, costs, projected return

**At next meeting (January), need to start planning board transitions – so think ahead!

Meeting adjourned – move by Dave, 2nd by Betsy