

MINUTES
ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR MATHEMATICS, SCIENCES AND THE ARTS
BOARD OF VISITORS REGULAR MEETING
October 2, 2017
5:00 p.m.

The Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences and the Arts (ASMSA) Board of Visitors met in the Boardroom on the first floor at 200 Whittington Avenue, Hot Springs, Arkansas.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Battle, Chair convened the Board of Visitors regular meeting into open session at 5:00 p.m. and welcomed all Board members.

II. ESTABLISH QUORUM

Members Present

Mr. Hayward Battle, Chair
 Mr. Timothy Barnes
 Mr. Gary Dowdy
 Mr. Steve Faris
 Mr. Brian Reed
 Mr. Todd West
 Ms. Ann Xu (via Zoom)

Members Absent

Ex-Officio Members Present

Mr. Patrick Ralston, designee for Stacy Hurst, Director, Department of Arkansas Heritage
 Mr. Tom Chilton, Director, Arkansas Economic Development Commission, Division of Science and Technology
 Mary Kathryn Stein, Ed.D., designee for Johnny Key, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education
 Mr. Zane Colvin, President, Student Government Association

Ex-Officio Members Absent

Maria Markham, Ph.D., Director, Arkansas Department of Higher Education

Administrative Members Present

Mr. Corey Alderdice, Director
 Ms. Valerie Carpenter, Director of Admissions
 Mrs. Vicky Hinz, Director of Institutional Advancement
 Mrs. Lorraine Munroe, Administrative Assistant

Administrative Members Absent

Mr. Bob Gregory, Dean of Academic Affairs
 Rheo Morris, Ph.D., Dean of Students
 Mrs. Ashley Smith, Director of Finance

Chairman Battle recognized and welcomed the new gubernatorial appointees to the Board.

Mrs. Munroe called the role of Board members who were present, and a quorum was established.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Since the May 8, 2017, meeting was in recess, the Chair resumed the May meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Faris and seconded by Miss Xu to approve the minutes of May 8, 2017. Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Battle stated that the October 2, 2017, meeting was now in open session.

Before the start of the Consent Agenda, Mrs. Hinz introduced the Student Ambassadors to the Board.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Director's Comments – Corey Alderdice

Director Alderdice introduced Steve Rice, who is ASMSA's new entrepreneurship instructor. He stated that adding a formal entrepreneurship program has been a goal in recent years. Director Alderdice reported that Mr. Rice's position is under the framework of the Coding Arkansas' Future initiative, which is the Outreach program focusing on computer science as part of achieving the Governor's vision. Director Alderdice stated that Mr. Rice is working with the Applied Research and Entrepreneurship Studies capstone sequence course. Director Alderdice reported that Mr. Rice splits his time between Hot Springs and ASMSA's satellite office at the Little Rock Technology Park.

Director Alderdice pointed out that construction has officially begun on the Creativity and Innovation Complex. He also stated that the \$4.7 million for the project has been secured. Live viewing of the CIC construction can be viewed at <http://cic.asmsa.org>. Director Alderdice reported that the sides of the foundation will be worked on in the next six to eight weeks. He reported that there were close to 20 community members in attendance for the ground breaking, which was held on August 25, 2017.

Mr. Faris commended Director Alderdice on getting the project started and having one of the best ground breakings of which he has been a part. Mr. Faris stated the persistence of the Director to find a way to move forward will open many doors of Foundations and non-profits to give the school the resources necessary to finish the complex.

Director Alderdice stated that without Mr. Faris' support while he was in the General Assembly, the Student Center project would not have happened. Director Alderdice stated that one of the greatest challenges for the institution is facilities projects. He reported that, unlike higher ed counterparts, ASMSA does not have tuition and fees to generate the revenue to bond against; and unlike the K-12 institutions, ASMSA does not have access to local millage for the state facilities funding program for K-12 schools. Director Alderdice reported that choices associated with the CIC funding makes future projects more easily available by prioritizing a portion of the annual funding towards them. He stated that he is looking for the CIC to be done by early 2019 as part of the 25th Anniversary celebration.

Director Alderdice stated that he and Steve Rice visited with Dr. Ron Hart, who wants to put together an event featuring some of ASMSA's successful alumni by recruiting those who are in the technology field. Director Alderdice reported that they are looking to start this process in 2018.

Director Alderdice reported that he is seeking to add a licensed professional counselor to the staff. He stated that he and Dr. Morris talked extensively throughout the summer about adding the position and applications are presently being submitted.

2. Academic Affairs Board Report – Corey Alderdice (for Bob Gregory)

Regarding the STEM Pathways and GLASS initiatives, there have been increases in enrollment, with 1050 students and 50 schools that are now participating. This is triple the number of schools and teachers from a year ago. Director Alderdice reported that a new program that has been added this year is AP Biology Plus. This class is being offered in the digital cohort model similar to Coding Arkansas' Future.

Director Alderdice stated that summer was a busy time at ASMSA. There were summer residential camps that included Summer Arts Bridge, Acoustics and Music and Nerd C.A.M.P. geared toward the math and computer science students.

Director Alderdice also stated that ASMSA partnered with Dr. Stein's office to serve as one of the AEGIS site locations for Project M.A.R.S. This was a camp that was funded through a grant from the Arkansas Department of Education. Approximately 40 students participated in the program.

Mr. Barnes asked Director Alderdice if he had found any challenges expanding the AP Biology Plus Program throughout the state with an additional 14 teachers that are participating in the program.

Director Alderdice responded stating that this is a pilot cohort and the goal was to hopefully have ten teachers in the cohort. He stated with the computer science initiative there was a clear mandate from the Governor, where this program was less directed.

Director Alderdice reported that Dr. Whitney Holden had been teaching a turnkey AP Biology course, and Dr. Patrycja Krakowiak has been doing quarterly workshops for Biology teachers. He stated that the educator development model would be a better match than just offering a turnkey class. Director Alderdice stated that two main challenges that always exist are internet bandwidth for districts and access to laboratory environments.

3. Residential Affairs Report – Corey Alderdice (for Dr. Rheo Morris)

Director Alderdice stated that Dr. Morris officially came on board June 1st and has been a tremendous addition to the staff. He reported that Dr. Morris, who came from UCA, worked with the honors residents, has encountered ASMSA alumni and recognizes both the challenges and opportunities that come through this experience.

Director Alderdice reported that the two priorities that Dr. Morris has been tasked with is student-focused activities and a wellness component. Dr. Morris is in charge of the Student Development Curriculum that is a variety of wellness, life skills, relationships, and leadership building.

Both Briana Crowe and Kayla Roop are in their second year of leadership roles, and are growing into their positions after serving in previous residential mentor positions.

4. Admissions and Public Affairs – Valerie Carpenter

Ms. Carpenter introduced herself to the new Board members. Ms. Carpenter proceeded to give some statistics for the Class of 2019. She stated that there were over 230 applications submitted and 128 students were selected. Ms. Carpenter reported that the average ACT was 26.5 and no one who was selected had below a 3.5 GPA. Ms. Carpenter did state that there are some counties that are not represented by the 2019 class – Cleveland, Bradley, Chico, Ashley and Calhoun. Ms. Carpenter reported that ASMSA has a program called “upwARd Promise” for students who cannot afford to pay for the ACT test. She reported that as long as a student applies by December, ASMSA will pay for their ACT test.

Ms. Carpenter reported that Steven Sparkman has been hired as the new Admissions Recruiter.

Director Alderdice stated that the 3.5GPA was an intentional indicator going through the selection process. He stated that the strongest predictor of student persistence and success within the program is the GPA. He reported that he sees the GPA as a measure of work ethic. Director Alderdice stated that if a student is not putting in the work effort from the sending school, there is concern if they will be ready and willing to put in the effort once they arrive at ASMSA. Students have to learn a different skill set in the way that they approach school at the institution.

Director Alderdice complimented Ms. Carpenter stating that not one student withdrew between the end of the last school year and the beginning of this school year, which is a tribute to the level of engagement Ms. Carpenter has had with the students.

In response to Chairman Battle’s question as to the percentage of free and reduced lunches, Director Alderdice stated that this year 34% of the students qualify for free and reduced lunches. Director Alderdice reported that among the sixteen schools like ASMSA the national average of the benchmarks is about 15% of those students enrolled that qualify for free and reduced lunches. He continued stating that nationwide among all the students only 2% of low income students are performing at advanced levels. Director Alderdice reported that it has always been a priority for ASMSA to find a space for students from rural populations and low income backgrounds.

Chairman Battle asked Director Alderdice if he would mention to the new Board members the idea of having paid students enroll in the school.

Director Alderdice stated that during the legislative session there was a tweak to the institution’s legislation that would allow for charging international students in the future. David Slaymaker, who is the Assistant Dean for Outreach, has done some preliminary investigation on that subject. There are numerous procedures that would need to be handled and would probably be a few years out from being implemented. The institution has a few bed spaces for the international students, but getting to the point where you can have a successful international recruitment pool, more beds would be needed. Director Alderdice reported that, at the present, it remains in the investigative stage.

Director Alderdice reported that another item that was pursued during the legislative session was potentially opening the doors of ASMSA beyond the eleventh and twelfth grades. He stated that there are no immediate plans to do so at this time. Director Alderdice did state that if there are profoundly gifted sophomores of rare and exceptional ability, he would like to be able to consider the student, but details to this occurring have not yet been determined.

Mr. Faris asked how many schools comparable to ASMSA have basic sophomore classes. Director Alderdice reported that the Illinois Math and Science Academy leads in that area. He stated that their entire 650 student population enters as sophomores. The value of that experience is that in a two-year program, a student spends much of their junior year transitioning in and the senior year transitioning out. Director Alderdice discussed the pros and cons of the sophomore program.

Looking at the original documentation of the school, it talks about being a program for 300 students. At that time, because of different challenges, the enrollment permitted 230-240 beds. As the Admission's pool has grown, and we continue to see further interest in the program, Director Alderdice stated that the school is nearing a point in time to continue to work with the Governor and legislature about securing additional housing to meet the original vision for enrollment.

Director Alderdice reported that he met with the Governor's K-12 education staff members and walked them through a preliminary proposal to grow the student population to 300 students. It would require a one-time investment to gain additional housing and a request that the per-pupil allocation for the additional 70 students follow from their sending district to ASMSA.

Mr. Faris again stated that he likes the idea of exploring the idea of a sophomore class where the student can get to know what they need to know in their sophomore year.

5. Institutional Advancement Board Report – Vicki Hinz

Mrs. Hinz stated it is the first time the ASMSA Foundation has gone over \$1M in assets, totaling \$1,015,524. Mrs. Hinz reported that the total revenue for FY17 was \$370,043, which does not include the \$300,000 contribution made by The Oaklawn Foundation. Mrs. Hinz stated that the goal for FY18 is \$500,000.

Regarding the 2017 fundraising efforts, Mrs. Hinz reported that the numbers were just coming in from the Arkansas Golf Classic, amounting to approximately \$28,000 after expenses.

Since ArkansasGives will no longer exist, Mrs. Hinz stated that another idea will have to be created in order to replace that fundraiser. Director Alderdice stated that the Arkansas Community Foundation had always planned for it to be a temporary event to help make aware citizens philanthropy in the state. He stated that the institution is thinking of doing a one-day focus on giving for parents and alumni in the Spring.

Mrs. Hinz referred to the FY18 Goals that were included in her report.

Mrs. Hinz reported that she and the Student Ambassadors have met with Steve Arrison at Visit Hot Springs, the Chamber of Commerce and spent the day at the Oaklawn lake house hosted by Eric and Lynda Jackson. Mrs. Hinz also stated that Steve Rice arranged a day in Little Rock meeting with business leaders and companies in the tech fields.

6. Financial Report – Corey Alderdice (for Ashley Smith)

For the benefit of the new Board members, Director Alderdice stated that ASMSA is a non-formula higher ed entity, and that 85% of the institution's funding comes from the Educational Excellence Trust Fund (EETF), which is based on sales and use tax revenue. May and June were good for the state and the final forecast saw a 2.2% increase in the EETF, amounting to \$169,000. Director Alderdice stated that it was enough to keep up with fixed

cost increases and provide for a 2% COLA salary increase along with some performance based adjustments. He continued stating that 10% of the funding is the Revenue Stabilization Act funding, which is a direct line item from the Legislature. This has remained flat since FY11.

7. Student Government Association – Zane Colvin

Mr. Colvin stated that the State of the School address was on August 15, 2017. He presented the names of the students who are on the E-Board for the coming year.

Mr. Colvin reported that new floor representative elections were held on September 5th and joined the E-Board for the SGA retreat which was held on September 15th and 16th. The retreat was held at Gulpha Gorge campground. On the final day of the retreat, the days of Spirit Week were decided.

Mr. Colvin stated that several committees were established. The Food Service Committee is working towards expanding vegan/vegetarian options, and surveys have been created to be given to the student body and keeping track of what is served by the cafeteria every day.

Mr. Colvin reported that the Mental Health Committee is developing a set of questions and preferred skill set for the possible counselor that will be hired on campus.

Mr. Colvin stated that the Student Affairs Committee is revamping the Student Government Constitution and will be working on the Student Handbook later on in the year. He also stated that the Activities Committee is planning and getting the school ready for Spirit Week which involved publicizing and preparing for the Fall Fest and Halloween Dance.

Mr. Faris stated that he had met with Bob Woodall with the Arkansas Blood Institute, who commended the school for having over 60 people give blood. He stated that several people had to be turned away due to time constraints. Mr. Woodall told Mr. Faris that no other school in Garland County came close to the level of participation that ASMSA displayed.

A motion was made by Mr. Faris and seconded by Mr. Gowdy to accept approval of the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Battle asked if there were any questions or comments.

Ms. Xu stated that there was a discussion during the meeting about introducing a sophomore class and how the school should target it. Ms. Xu stated that she was looking through the minutes and that the averages for the new class were approximately 26.5 for the ACT, and that the previous class was a little over 30. Ms. Xu had asked if more information could be received, other than the means regarding those scores -- the standard deviations of students to see if they are truly falling around the mean, or if there is a viable distribution of how the students are doing. She stated that this would give the Board a better idea of who the school should be helping, and also who is already coming to the school, and if they are doing better individually from their baseline, or something that the school can target a bit more. Asking for this information, Ms. Xu stated that she would like to know how much the school is helping the students while they go through the experience, how much are the standardized test scores are increasing, and is there anything additional the school can be doing.

Director Alderdice responded that the information may be packaged a bit differently than Ms. Xu requested. He reported that the Class of 2017 had over 40 students with a 32 or higher composite. He

stated that there was no student who had below a 24 ACT and there were only 5 students who had lower than a 26 on the ACT. He stated that he did not break down the standard deviation but there were many students in the 28-29 range, and the tail starts tapering off after 33.

Director Alderdice stated that the reason that the school does not lean heavily on the ACT as a measure of growth is that it is a proficiency exam. He reported that there is far less room for growth for high-ability students to make on that than on the lower end of the ACT. He reported that as students are admitted, the minimum score is 19 across the composite, reading, math and English. In recent years, the school has held more to 22 being the baseline score unless it is noticed that there is something very specific in the student's application that gives the school good cause to take that risk. Even then, it is about appropriately matching students with the curriculum. He stated that it is not going to be the majority of the population of students who are being admitted with a 19-23, but many of those decisions are being made in order to try to keep in the one-third low income range to reach some of those students for whom it can be a transformational experience. Director Alderdice reported that he can look at what the standard deviation breaks are for the next meeting.

V. OLD BUSINESS

No old business to report.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Battle stated that the Board should look at electing new officers. He opened the floor for the election of officers. A motion was made by Mr. Faris and seconded by Ms. Xu to nominate Mr. Battle to remain Chairman of the Board. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Ms. Xu and seconded by Mr. Gowdy to nominate Mr. Faris for Vice Chairman of the Board. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Faris and seconded by Mr. West to nominate Mr. Barnes for Secretary of the Board. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Battle stated that the next meeting of the Board will be held on December 11, 2017, at 5:00 p.m.

VII. AUDIENCE WITH INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS


No request or comment from an individual or group.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

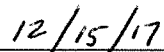
With no further business to conduct, a motion was made by Ms. Xu and seconded by Mr. Faris to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:37 pm.

Approved as written _____

Approved as amended _____



Mr. Timothy Barnes, Secretary



(Date)