

MINUTES  
 ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR MATHEMATICS, SCIENCES,  
 AND THE ARTS  
 BOARD OF VISITORS REGULAR MEETING  
 September 11, 2007  
 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. Luke Gordy, Chairman, convened the Board of Visitors regular meeting into open session at 5:00 p.m. and welcomed all of the Board members.

**II. ESTABLISH QUORUM**

**Members Present**

Mr. Luke Gordy, Chair  
 Ms. Marynell Branch, Secretary  
 Mr. Mickey Cox  
 Mr. Luther Lowe  
 Mr. Charles Nelson  
 Dr. Lynda Samons

**Members Absent**

Mrs. Lynne Dardenne, Vice-Chair

**Ex-Officio Members Present**

Ms. Ann Biggers, designee for Dr. Ken James, Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education  
 Dr. Gail McClure, designee for Dr. John Ahlen, President, Arkansas Science and Technology Authority  
 Dr. Karen Wheeler, designee for Dr. Steve Floyd, Interim Director, Arkansas Department Of Higher Education  
 Mr. Wayne Williamson, President, Parents Association  
 Mr. Alex Cooper, President, SGA

**Ex-Officio Members Absent**

Ms. Joy Pennington, designee for Ms. Cathie Mathews, Director, Department of Arkansas Heritage

**Administrative Members Present**

Dr. Janet Hugo, Director  
 Mrs. Melanie Nichols, Dean of Academic Affairs  
 Mr. Chris Robbins, Director of Outreach  
 Mr. Mike Carpenter, Director of Institutional Development  
 Mr. William Currier, Dean of Residential Affairs  
 Mrs. Lorraine Munroe, Administrative Assistant

**Administrative Members Absent**

Mr. Jeff Nixon, Director of Admissions  
 Mrs. Kay Provus, Fiscal Administrator

### III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of December 5, 2006 and May 1, 2007 were approved with a correction to be made in the May 1, 2007 minutes changing "Mr." Ann Biggers to "Ms." Ann Biggers. A motion was made by Mrs. Samons and seconded by Mr. Nelson to approve the December 5, 2006 minutes and the amended minutes of May 1, 2007. Motion passed unanimously.

### IV. CONSENT AGENDA

#### 1. Director's Comments – Dr. Hugo

Dr. Hugo reported that she had a meeting with University of Arkansas President, Dr. Sugg, Dr. Ferritor, Vice President for Academic Affairs, the UA Fiscal Office and the General Counsel's office on Friday, September 7 at ASMSA. Dr. Hugo stated that she gave the group a tour of the ASMSA campus and looked at areas that are under renovation. The group came to a consensus for ASMSA to issue an RFP to hire an architectural firm to help the institution develop a master campus physical plan. Dr. Hugo reported that there has been much discussion over the years for a multi-purpose building in order to promote the Arts program. She stated that the Hot Springs Music Festival is behind the school in wanting to have a performance venue for the school. Dr. Hugo stated that the city officials are talking about donating some property behind Charter Field for this purpose.

Dr. Hugo reported the progress of the renovation of the Chapel. She stated that all of the asbestos has been totally abated and the renovation work is being paid for by the City of Hot Springs. Dr. Hugo commented to the Board that she would like for them to look at the work that is being done at the school. Dr. Hugo reported that the work on the seventh floor is about done. She stated that showers have been installed, grout work has been completed and painting is the only thing that needs to be done to complete the work. Dr. Hugo reported that work on the other student floors desperately needs to be completed.

Dr. Hugo stated that the former Convent has been renamed the Distance Education Complex and the HVAC work is approximately 99% completed. She stated that there are thirteen offices on each of the three floors and the ODE staff is now larger than the residential school faculty. Dr. Hugo reported that all of the wiring is defective and has to be replaced and that the school is now in the process of finalizing the specs for the electrical bid and is hoping the project will be completed by the end of January.

Dr. Hugo reported that the second floor of the Administration Building is going to be gutted starting the last week in April. When completed, there will be three new Chemistry labs and two new Biology labs and all of the walls will be painted and new flooring installed.

Dr. Hugo stated that lighting in the Red Room and the carpeting in the Music Room have been replaced.

Dr. Hugo reported that ASMSA has received a \$300,000 from a bond issue that is slated to be spent in 2009. The money will be used for re-keying the entire campus with a card system and replacing the phone system.

Dr. Hugo stated that artwork that has been donated by local artists is hanging in the hallways of the Administration Building. She recently has contacted a local artist is donating some of her artwork to hang in the school halls, and Dr. Hugo is moving to also have student artwork be displayed in the school.

Mr. Nelson stated that he read in Mr. Nixon's report that there have been problems with some of the Little Rock schools prohibiting Mr. Nixon to speak to their students. (Mr. Nixon was not present to comment on Mr. Nelson's statement.)

Dr. Hugo responded that the statement was correct and that legislation is now in place to allow ASMSA to gain access to the school district campuses for the purpose of contacting students regarding potential enrollment at ASMSA. Dr. Hugo reported that one of the laws that passed in the 2005 legislative session stated that the ACTAAP scores would go back to the home districts and be counted in their statistical package. She stated that Mrs. Nichols' office submitted a report to the districts and determined that recruiting students from the home districts has not made any statistical difference to the home schools. Dr. Hugo reported that based on the report, ASMSA is not negatively impacting district statistics.

Ms. Branch asked Dr. Hugo if she could explain more about the Charter School application that was made several months ago.

Dr. Hugo stated that she received a request from Caroline Proctor from the Charter School Resource Center at Fayetteville. Receiving the request almost at the last minute, Dr. Hugo stated that a Letter of Interest was submitted; however, the process was done very quickly and Dr. Hugo and the System Office agreed to step back and look at the situation more closely and not rush the process. Dr. Hugo stated that ASMSA opening a Charter School is not a bad idea, or an idea that will not happen, but Dr. Sugg stated that he prefers to sit down and brainstorm about it to see which direction ASMSA should go.

Dr. Hugo stated that KARK reported it on the news and that they called Dr. Hugo and apologized for not checking out their source before reporting it on the news.

Ms. Branch wanted to know more about the thought process of why ASMSA would apply to open a Charter School. Mr. Gordy responded stating that the Charter School Resource Center was established to expand the Charter Schools of Arkansas. The State Board of Education and the Department of Education have a rigid timeline in the process. Mr. Gordy stated that the perception ended up being more than the reality of the issue. He reported that once the Letter of Indication of Interest was filed, the situation became a wild fire of misinformation. Mr. Gordy stated that there were many politicians that called him asking if the school was going to be moved, etc. He

reported that once the Letter of Indication of Interest was received, Senator Mike Wilson from Jacksonville, who is very passionate about education in Jacksonville, thought this would be an opportunity for the Jacksonville School District to disengage themselves from the Pulaski County School District. Senator Wilson thought it would be an excellent opportunity to establish a Charter School in Jacksonville. Mr. Gordy reported that Senator Wilson wrote him a letter on behalf of the Jacksonville citizens that they would like to advance the initiative. Mr. Gordy stated that Mr. Wilson was talking about the possibility of a non-residential math and science school which is what the Indication of Interest letter states. Mr. Gordy reported that the concept is an outstanding one. What it would do would be to have a non-residential school for ninth and tenth graders that have an interest in an ASMSA type of math and science curriculum. Mr. Gordy continued to state that the Charter School would be a pipeline to ASMSA's residential facility. Once the students advanced to the eleventh and twelfth grades, they would decide whether to go to the residential facility or once the Charter Schools continued to grow, of being in a non-residential math and science school. Mr. Gordy stated that it had gotten out of control. He stated that President Sugg and others at the University were stunned because they did not know anything about it. Mr. Gordy stated that he met with Dr. Sugg and reported that Dr. Sugg thinks it is an excellent concept. Mr. Gordy reported that it must be examined very, very carefully, from every angle of the issue to see if this is something that ASMSA wants to do. Presently, there is no advancement of the Charter school concept this year but it is still on the table for discussion.

Mr. Nelson made some further comments about the Charter school stating that the Jacksonville Air Force Base is growing tremendously and the parents feel that they would be better served if they can have a high echelon type of curriculum that can be offered in that area. Mr. Gordy responded by stating that Jacksonville is a high interest area but the charter school does not necessarily have to be located in Jacksonville. Mr. Gordy stated that he considers it an excellent idea to develop a high quality student in a non-residential setting that has an interest in the possibility to attend a residential school.

2. Financial Report – Mrs. Kay Provus

Dr. Hugo stated that Mrs. Provus was absent from the meeting.

3. Residential Life Report – Mr. William Currier

Dr. Hugo introduced the new Dean of Residential Affairs, Mr. William Currier, to the Board and advised the Board that Mrs. Hampo is now the new Community/Public Relations Coordinator and reports to Mr. Mike Carpenter.

Mr. Currier stated that he is pleased to be at ASMSA and the year is starting off smoothly with a good Residential Mentor staff and that the department is in good shape.

#### 4. Dean of Academic Affairs – Mrs. Melanie Nichols

Mrs. Nichols reported that there was much activity pertaining to professional development that took place during the summer months. Mrs. Nichols stated that the faculty worked with UALR on the No Child Left Behind Grant and Science Academy. Mrs. Nichols updated the Board by reading an addendum to her report regarding events that are scheduled for the remainder of the year.

Mrs. Nichols stated that ASMSA is in the preliminary stages of a pottery/chemistry class with National Park Community College. She also reported that there are six students who are going with Dr. Hugo to the NCSSSMST Student Conference in Washington, D.C. who have also been chosen as national merit semi-finalists.

Dr. Hugo reported that she started having meetings with UALR about two and one-half years ago regarding concurrent enrollment and currently ASMSA has twenty-seven concurrent enrollment courses with UALR.

Mr. Gordy asked the new Board members to introduce themselves.

Mr. Luther Lowe, a graduate of the ASMS class of 2001, introduced himself and stated that he was appointed in April 2007 and is very excited to be a part of the Board of Visitors. Mr. Lowe stated that while a senior, he was president of the SGA and a former ex-officio member while attending the institution. Mr. Lowe reported that he is honored to be on the Board and his focus and interests will be to ensure that the quality of life is high for the students. Mr. Lowe reported that he also works for the Alumni Association and stated that he wants to make sure that the alumni outreach is strong. Mr. Lowe reported that he works in Little Rock for General Wesley Clark, and is currently traveling around the country with General Clark appearing on news shows promoting General Clark's new book. Mr. Lowe is the first alumnus to be on the ASMSA Board.

Mr. Alex Cooper, president of the SGA, introduced himself to the Board. Mr. Cooper stated that he was from Little Rock and was pleased to be a member of the Board.

Mr. Gordy recognized Mr. James McKinney, former SGA president of the Class of 2007. Mr. Gordy reported that Mr. McKinney is attending the University of Chicago and urged Mr. McKinney to keep in contact with the school and the Board.

Dr. Karen Wheeler, representative from the Department of Higher Education, introduced herself to the Board. Dr. Wheeler is replacing Dr. Suzanne Mitchell, the former representative from the Department of Higher Education.

#### 5. Outreach Report – Mr. Chris Robbins

Mr. Robbins reported that there are \$2 million pending in grants. He stated that there are between 2,600 and 2,900 students enrolled in distance learning, or about 30% - 35% above last year's enrollment. Mr. Robbins stated that revenue has grown from

approximately \$1.1 million in receipts last year to an estimated \$1.5 million in receipts this year.

6. Admissions/Public Relations – Mr. Jeff Nixon

Mr. Nixon was recruiting and was not present at the meeting.

Dr. Hugo reported that a new recruiter, Ashley Muldrew, has been hired to assist Mr. Nixon.

7. Institutional Advancement – Mr. Mike Carpenter

Mr. Carpenter reported that ASMSA has received \$21,000 in pledges and commitments. He stated that two positions have been filled on the Foundation Fund Board by Mr. Luke Gordy and Mr. Byrum Walker, an attorney for the Rose Lawn firm and an alum of ASMSA. Mr. Carpenter stated that others have been asked to serve on the Board but no commitments have been made at this time.

Mr. Gordy interjected stating that if the Board had any ideas, or knew of anyone of influence who wanted to serve on the Foundation Fund Board, to please advise him or Mr. Carpenter.

Mr. Carpenter stated that presently there are twelve positions on the Board and hopefully the Board will expand to eighteen positions. In reviewing the goals that were outlined in Mr. Carpenter's report, Mr. Carpenter stated that an additional goal was to multiply last year's grant gifts by ten. This equals approximately \$350,000 in the coming year in new grants. Mr. Carpenter reported that he is confident that all goals will be met. Mr. Carpenter stated that a "Runner's High" flyer for the ASMSA 5K run was distributed to the Board members.

Mr. Carpenter also informed the Board that the school is working with the Hot Springs Documentary Film Institute. He stated that although it is not a fund-raising event, a softball tournament will be held at the end of the month. Mr. Carpenter stated that Mrs. Hampo, Public Relations Coordinator, is doing an outstanding job making sure that the institution's name is out in the public. Mr. Carpenter reported that the City of Hot Springs is really stepping up to assist ASMSA with expenses relating the softball tournament and the 5K run.

Dr. Hugo reported that the Class of 1997 is having their ten year reunion that will be held on September 29, 2007. Mr. Gordy stated that he would like the Board to be notified of the dates for any ASMSA events in the event that they would like to attend, i.e. an email distribution list to inform the Board.

8. Facilities Report – No report given

9. Parents' Association Report - Mr. Wayne Williamson

Mr. Williamson reported the Parent's Association (PA) was short of funds but has collected \$6,300 from the sales of t-shirts and donations. Mr. Williamson reported that almost ninety parents have joined the PA Yahoo group. He reported that many parents are willing to help with the various PA projects that are planned. Mr. Williamson stated that one of the goals of the PA is to contact each parent so they know what is happening from month to month.

Dr. Hugo stated that she would really like the Board to come and spend time to walk through the facility to see what ASMSA is really about. She also stated that she would like to set a board meeting schedule.

Mr. Gordy suggested that perhaps there can be a day when there can be an extended Board meeting that would start at 2:00 p.m. Mr. Gordy suggested that three or four dates should be picked and emailed to the Board to see who can attend an extended Board meeting.

10. Student Government Report – Alex Cooper

No report given.

**V. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business to report.

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business to report.

Ms. Biggers stated that Governor Mike Beebe and Dr. Ken James announced that the State of Arkansas has been awarded a \$13.2 million grant over a six-year period from the National Math and Science initiative and is funded through Exxon Mobile Foundation. Ms. Biggers reported that this grant will do many things to increase enrollment in advanced placement classes in the state, to increase a cadre of teachers in the state in the areas of math and science and to institutionalize the Foundation itself at UALR, and to create through higher education a tracking system of students from elementary grades through higher education. Ms. Biggers stated that Tommy Sue Anthony will be the president of the newly created foundation and is working fast and furious to get out the information. Ms. Biggers stated that Arkansas was one out of seven states in the United States to receive this grant.

**VII. AUDIENCE WITH INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS**

No request or comment from an individual or group.

# **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

Approved as written ✓ Approved as amended \_\_\_\_\_

Marynell Branch  
Ms. Marynell Branch, Secretary

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(Date)