

MINUTES
ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR MATHEMATICS, SCIENCES AND THE ARTS
BOARD OF VISITORS REGULAR MEETING
September 16, 2019
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. Barnes, 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. Timothy Barnes, Chair
 Mr. Todd West, Vice Chair
 Mr. Brian Reed, Secretary (via Zoom)
 Mr. Gary Dowdy (via Zoom)
 Marlene Battle, PharmD

Members Absent

Mr. Steve Faris

Ex-Officio Members Present

Mr. Tom Chilton, Director, Technology
 Development at Arkansas Economic
 Development Commission
 Mr. Patrick Ralston, designee for Stacy Hurst,
 Secretary, Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism
 Mr. Hays Denney, President, Student Government
 Association

Ex-Officio Members Absent

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

Administrative Members Present

Mr. Corey Alderdice, Director
 Stuart Flynn, J.D., Dean of Academic Affairs
 Rheo Morris, Ph.D., Dean of Students
 Mx. Charlene Feick, Interim Director of Admissions
 Mrs. Ashley Smith, Director of Finance
 Mrs. Vicki Hinz, Interim Director of Institutional
 Advancement
 Mrs. Lorraine Munroe, Administrative Assistant

Administrative Members Absent

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Reed and seconded by Dr. Battle to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2019, meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Director's Comments – Corey Alderdice

Director Alderdice stated that one of the things that he wanted to do throughout the year for the Board of Visitors' meetings is to highlight various student and faculty efforts, in particular student successes and initiatives of the school. He stated that he had two particular groups to share the exciting work that they are doing.

Director Alderdice introduced Mrs. Amy Svartak, who is an alumna from the Class of 2011. He reported that, for the past two years, she has worked with the school in helping to reframe and ignite the Association for Alumni and Friends of ASMSA. She also has agreed to attend the Board of Visitors' meetings to share updates in the AAFA. He stated that the school is looking for a pathway by which the AAFA would have formal representation on the Board of Visitors in the future. Director Alderdice reported that it may be requested formally during the 2021 session of the General Assembly.

Mrs. Svartak introduced herself to the Board and audience. She reported that, for the past year, a small group of alumni have been working to rebuild the Alumni Association. She stated that there have been several iterations of the organization that have not lasted. Over the past few years the group has started from scratch with a few people and have been going hard trying to get things started up again. Mrs. Svartak stated that when she first met with Director Alderdice she was excited that he was enthusiastic about supporting the efforts of AAFA with a particular interest of engagement between students and alumni. She stated that the organization has moved out of Institutional Advancement and into a more outreach-oriented role, which fit the organization's goals going forward. Mrs. Svartak reported that she held meetings inviting some students to figure out what the students wanted the AAFA to do. Mrs. Svartak stated that the alumni response was overwhelming saying that they wanted the Association to work with students and do some professional networking as well. Mrs. Svartak stated that, in the near future, she will be releasing a call for nominations for an Alumni Speaker Series where it is hoped that alumni will come and speak to students and guests about their careers, life experiences, and educational pathways. She reported that she has been working to set up this year's Homecoming Weekend. She stated that Steve Rice has agreed to serve as the institutional liaison. Mrs. Svartak thanked Dean Flynn, Director Alderdice, and Dean Morris for their continued support.

On move-in day, Mrs. Svartak stated that the Alumni Association did a hydration station for both the students and parents.

A question was asked of Mrs. Svartak about how the alumni are reaching out. Mrs. Svartak stated that one of the members of the association, Stephanie Wyatt, is devoted entirely to data, and is trying to work out contact information. Social media, email pushes, Facebook, and LinkedIn have been used but are not reaching the number of people that they want to reach. She stated that the page on the website where alums can update their information is not being utilized to its full potential. She encourages all alumni to update their contact information.

Director Alderdice introduced Steve Rice and some of the seniors working with him to make a presentation regarding entrepreneurship.

Mr. Rice stated that one of the things that is unique about ASMSA is the intersection of STEM and the Arts. He said that he sees a great opportunity to help students no matter what their interest or area of study is to really leverage this opportunity. Mr. Rice introduced some of his students to the Board that have worked with him over the last year. He stated that in the past year they were able to compete as an institution in the Arkansas Governor's Cup, which is a collegiate-level business competition. Mr. Rice reported that as a campus of the U of A System, ASMSA is the only high school in Arkansas that competes at this level. He stated that as he was working through all the logistics of how everything would work, the team took the school all the way in the first year.

He introduced the students making up Team Pedagogue and wanted to give them the opportunity to talk about their experience. He started by saying that the team had an idea for an app that would connect students on a college campus to class-specific tutors. They presented the app all the way to the finals of the Governor's cup (top six in the state).

Victoria Hwang, a current ASMSA Senior, stated that one of the take-a-ways she experienced by being on the team was that when people hear entrepreneurship in high school you can take a small idea and can expand it into a large business and can grow careers on top of the idea. She stated that one has to decide how much work one wants to dedicate to something and how much interest do you want to show in an area that you can further grow into a business, into entrepreneurship and into your own personal career.

Solomon Ni, also a current Senior, stated that what he took away from his experience was taking a small problem such as tutors and expanding on it – taking a look back at it and seeing what areas could be fixed that enhanced the team's ability to problem solve and look at the big picture.

Mr. Rice stated that the group was phenomenal in the way that the team worked together -- as a dynamic, functional team. He stated that the night before the finals, the team was revamping the entire business plan in the early hours of the morning and was an incredible experience for all.

Director Alderdice welcomed Dr. Marlene Battle to the Board of Visitors, who is an alumna of the Class of 1997. He also introduced Stuart Flynn, the new Dean of Academic Affairs.

Director Alderdice discussed the next capital project on the roster – the Chapel and Convent renovation project. He stated that over the summer, Governor Hutchinson provided \$1million in discretionary funds for the project. Director Alderdice reported with the \$1million, combined with the \$1.5 million out of the FY19, FY20 and FY21 cycles, puts the school in striking distance of the \$3.5 million for the construction project. He stated that he has received a soft commitment from a national foundation for a ten-year, \$1million, 2.5% interest loan through a program related investment (PRI) fund initiative. Director Alderdice reported that at this stage he is working through the logistics, but he believes they will come through for the institution. He stated that the best outcome about the project is that it does allow at the outset a component of the hospital that has historic value preservation. Director Alderdice reported that it opens the door adding an additional 24 students to the program, which would put the school enrollment of 260 -- the highest the enrollment has been since 2002. It would also set the stage for the school to grow to 300 students, which was the original vision for ASMSA. Director Alderdice stated that the next step in the plan is to issue RFQs for design professionals for the project and hopes to get project approval in front of the Trustees this fall.

He stated that he would appreciate a vote of support for the project from the Board as he gets it ready to take to the Trustees later this year.

Director Alderdice stated that he is excited to welcome this year the inaugural cohort of sophomores. He reported that there are 20 students – 10 male, 10 female. He reported that the process was allowed through amendments to the institution's enabling legislation in 2015. Director Alderdice stated that one of the primary goals of ASMSA has always been to focus on students' academic abilities and their individual needs. He stated that, for years, students and their families have articulated that they were waiting through their sophomore year to have access to this opportunity. Director Alderdice reported that in the initial iteration of sophomores, the school is looking at students who are profoundly gifted. He is excited that the 20 students that have enrolled are coming into ASMSA with a 28.7 ACT composite (as high school freshmen) and are clearly ready for the academic demands. Director Alderdice stated that the main thing that was looked at during the admissions process was the maturity of the students and if they were ready to be a part of the residential experience. He reported that it has been a very exciting six weeks having the students on campus this year. Director Alderdice reported that he does intend to keep the cohort at that size for the immediate future.

Director Alderdice stated that 45% of graduating students in the Class of 2019 are attending colleges out of state this past year. He said that is a big shift of where the trendline has been in recent years. He reported that during the opening staff training this year, the faculty asked the question of what contributed to that shift. Director Alderdice reported that the financial aid component has often been an impediment. Director Alderdice stated that the school is very fortunate to have three great Student Success Coordinators. Nationally, the number of counselors per student is one for every 450 students.

Mr. West asked Director Alderdice about the how the sophomore class was made aware of the school or how are the talented students found across the state. Director Alderdice reported that the Admissions Department interacts with students identified by the Duke Talent Identification Program in seventh grade. He stated that the seed can be planted very early on, and the school also is in touch with science and engineering institutes and programs that ASMSA has with 8th and 9th graders. Students are also made aware of ASMSA through neighbors and schools, and parents are thinking about this process early. The Admissions Department is sending out about 16,000 individual pieces (combination of freshmen and sophomores), casting a wide net not just on those who traditionally have started the process but whenever possible to plant the seed early on as well.

Director Alderdice reported that the school will, for the first time, move to a full gigabit internet service for campus that doubles the current half-gig connection.

2. Student Government Association – Hays Denney

Mr. Denney stated that SGA has been improved by containing minutes of both the General Assemblies and meetings with the Executive Board and Administration.

Mr. Denney reported that the State of the School address was held in the CIC to introduce both the SGA and Executive Board to the student body. The entire Executive Board spoke at the event and discussed new goals for the coming SGA year.

Mr. Denney stated that floor representative elections were held, as well as hall representative elections for sophomores. He also said that a new Finance committee was established as well.

He reported that members of the student body may attend general assemblies and town hall meetings to voice concerns or introduce bills.

3. Academic Affairs – Stuart Flynn

Mr. Flynn introduced himself to the Board and stated he is very excited to be at ASMSA and appreciates the opportunity to be a part of the institution.

Mr. Flynn stated that all of the summer camps are continuing to operate at or near capacity. He reported that there is a lot of interest outside of the school. He stated that the institution is a school that serves the entire state by giving students opportunities that they would not otherwise experience. Mr. Flynn reported that the summer camps continue to demonstrate how effective the school has been in that regard.

Mr. Flynn stated that there were 38 students who attended the AEGIS Biomedical Sciences Camp and when asked whether they would recommend the camp, all of the 38 students stated they would. Mr. Flynn reported that the more he learns about the programs, the AEGIS program is the most robust and most outstanding.

Mr. Flynn made reference to the Arkansas STEM Pathways program that is serving 1,262 students this year. He pointed out that the Advanced Biology Plus program has continued to grow. Mr. Flynn stated that in 2017-2018 there were 12 schools (the pilot year) with 138 students and now there were 443 students from 27 schools across the state. Mr. Flynn reported that the AP exam scores of the students continue to increase.

Referring to the Fortnight orientation, Mr. Flynn made a personal observation stating that he has never seen a more extensive or more enlightened approach to orientating new students than what takes place at ASMSA. He stated that the students need a slow movement into the experience for them not only to get use to the campus but also getting use to each other and the teachers. He reported that they have two weeks where they can move gradually into their new setting and learn the ASMSA way. Mr. Flynn stated that this is invaluable to the students. Mr. Flynn reported that approach to new students is ultimately necessary to their success and more importantly, to their well-being and happiness.

4. Residential Affairs – Dr. Rheo Morris

Dr. Morris reported that a badge reader was added to the Fitness Center door for security.

Dr. Morris stated that the food provider, Aladdin Food Service, added a nutritional kiosk where the students can view, calories, allergens, and other information about food choices.

Dr. Morris reported that the Student Center has been battling humidity issues. She stated that an air quality test had been done to ensure that the quality was acceptable. Dr. Morris reported that Powers of Arkansas had talked to Conway Regional who were experiencing the same problems as the dormitory and a solution to the problem has been implemented.

5. Admissions – Charlie Feick

Mx. Feick reported that two new employees joined the Admission's team. A packet of the latest recruiting materials used by the Admissions Department was distributed to each Board member for their review.

6. Institutional Advancement – Vicki Hinz

Because of the resignation of Marta Collier-Youngblood, Mrs. Hinz reported that she is filling in as the Interim Director of Institutional Advancement while a search is underway.

Mrs. Hinz stated that the ASMSA Fall Golf Classic will take place on Friday, October 4th at the Hot Springs Country Club Park Course and room was still available if anyone would like to sponsor a team, or play. Mrs. Hinz reviewed the Institutional Advancement financials with the Board.

7. Financial Department – Ashley Smith

Mrs. Smith reviewed the Financial Statements for the FY19 reporting year. These have already gone through the legislative audit that took place in early August. Mrs. Smith reported that in the Budget FY20 for the new year, ASMSA received approximately \$175,000 in new funding, \$20,000 of that was in RSA funds and \$155,443 in EETF.

Mrs. Smith reported that the ERP projects is scheduled to go live on July 1, 2020. She stated that the project has been overwhelming in time and commitment but should provide a substantial benefit to campuses across the System.

Chairman Barnes asked the Board of Visitors for a motion of support for the Chapel and Convent renovation project. A motion was made by Dr. Battle and seconded by Mr. West to support the renovation of the Chapel and Convent. The motion was passed unanimously.

Chairman Barnes also asked the Board to make a motion to accept the Consent Agenda. A motion was made by Mr. Dowdy and seconded by Dr. Battle to accept approval of the Consent Agenda. The motion was passed unanimously.

V. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to report.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Barnes stated that meeting dates be established for the remainder of the academic year 2019-2020. The dates of December 9, 2019, March 2, 2020, and May 4, 2020, were mentioned. A motion was made by Dr. Battle and seconded by Mr. West to established the mentioned meeting dates for the remainder of the academic year. The motion was passed unanimously.

Chairman Barnes discussed having a Board retreat. He stated that one of the topics that was discussed in the Board of Visitors meeting with Dr. Bobbitt is the fact that it would be beneficial for the Board to have an informal/casual meeting to come to a partnership with individuals and the school with its mission. He stated that having a retreat shows the commitment as appointments to the Board of Visitors. Chairman Barnes also reported that it gives the Board an opportunity for members to be casual and frank in their discussions to have a positive advancement to be more productive and useful to the school. Chairman Barnes stated that a retreat would be a great opportunity to try to get information established for the Board to know what their role and expectations are and work together with the institution.

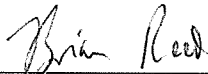
Chairman Barnes suggested getting some dates to see what would be available for the appointees and ex-officio members of the Board. Director Alderdice suggested that the Tech Park in Little Rock would be a convenient place for the Board to meet.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

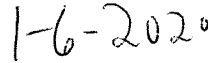
With no further business to conduct, a motion was made by Mr. West and seconded by Mr. Reed to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:21 pm.

Approved as written _____ ✓

Approved as amended _____



Mr. Brian Reed, Secretary



(Date)