

Maine School of Science and Mathematics
Board of Trustees
Workshop
March 1, 2019

Summary by David Ferguson – Revised 3/11/19

General Discussion:

Board would like the options ranked by priority.

Need to sell the school better. We need to sponsor targeted events – robotics, science bowl, etc.

Public recognition – Need to have an outreach/marketing person whose PRIMARY job is to promote the school with coordinated/focused effort, can take advantage of all the students and parents are going attending to market to like-minded families.

US News and World Report – work with DOE to get our data reported so we show up in the rankings

Size:

Goal – grow applicant pool

Quality of applicant pool can be solved with more applicants

9th graders – focus on fit, not just academic but more importantly social – readiness to live away

Advertise benefits of a public boarding experience = outcomes, soft-skills, co-operation, etc

Alumni – 6 year graduation rate for MSSM alumni who go to college?

Focus on out of state students – why not a NH/VT partnership? As they do not have anything like MSSM for their students.

For potential number of students - % of 8th graders taking MEA which Exceed standards, % from underperforming schools? Target market.

Strong support for reducing the room and board fee – see it as a primary mission to serve kids without other good options.

Accreditation – some board support. Started down that road 10 years ago. Did not due to cost. Check to see who accredit our sister schools. NAIS?

Facilities:

Strong support for a campus plan, more of a campus feel to the school.

Additional residential life space, new dorms, campus center, etc was supported.

Facilities discussion centered around focusing on the 5 year time frame of this strategic plan. What needs to be invested in the school per the property condition assessment report.

How much will renovation cost to the existing building to achieve the outcomes the report specifies?
Is there a prioritized list of what spaces need to be renovated first?

Desire to push for funding now, while the legislature has a surplus and others are lining up for their share. How much would we need? \$4 million to renovate/build new academic space?

Location:

How feasible is it to move the school? Political support? Financial support?

Strong desire that school should not be ON a college campus. Near does not equal on campus, but a high level of concern for access, and issues proximity could cause, especially with 9th and 10th graders. Do the advantages in partnerships/connections offset the extra risks of being near a campus?

North Carolina School – only 11 and 12th grades. Can't walk to college campus – separated by a highway.

Residential life has major concerns about being near a college campus.

Is UMO a good spot to move to? If our mission is to serve underserved areas, being in the back yard of Bangor and its STEM academy and John Bapts would not be ideal.

Strong support for investing in current location – MSSM has never been properly funded to meet its mission in Limestone. If we want more online classes, more outreach, more partnerships, MSSM needs the annual funding to make those initiatives happen.

Board preference is to focus on short term (5 year plan). Lets invest in making MSSM the best it can be in Limestone. If after 5 years we are doing all of the other things well, but still having issues with recruitment of students, faculty and staff, then the Board should take a hard look at location. But there was a strong desire to see if we can make the current location work.

Board wants a plan that estimates the costs of needed renovations and costs of building new. Board wants to maximize the value of its existing assets, the dorm, faculty housing, the additional land we already own.

New agreement with Limestone regarding partnership of academic building will be needed as they take ownership July 1, 2019. Now is the time for MSSM to step up and be a good partner.