

APPROVED



Advanced Math & Science Academy Charter School

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday January 7, 2021 at 6:00 PM

Meeting will be held via remote participation See AMSA web site for information on accessing meeting

Trustees Present

Benjamin Hammel (remote), Jessica Bowen (remote), Jill Schafer (remote), Kristin Carney (remote), Liz Saul (remote), Maura Webster (remote), Nicholas Poirier (remote), Raul Porras (remote), Roger Jarrett (remote), Sheila Kelly (remote), Sowmini Sampath (remote)

Trustees Absent

None

Guests Present

Ellen Linzey (remote), Liana McLaren (remote), Mike Nawrocki (remote), Sara Snow (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

Raul Porras called a meeting of the board of trustees of Advanced Math & Science Academy Charter School to order on Thursday Jan 7, 2021 @ 6:02 PM.

Vice Chair Raul Porras announced the meeting is being recorded, but live streaming on AMSA's Facebook page is not available this evening. The Board will hold an executive session at the end of open session to consider the purchase

and lease of real property, since open discussion could have a detrimental effect on the process. The Board will not reconvene.

The Vice Chair reviewed the agenda.

Time Keeper: Jess Bowen

B. Record attendance and guests

C. Public Comment

No public comment

D. Check for Board discussion items from Public Speak

No topics brought up for further discussion.

II. Votes

A. Approve BOT meeting minutes 3 December

Sheila Kelly made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees

Meeting on 12-03-20.

Liz Saul seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Sheila Kelly Aye
Benjamin Hammel Aye
Nicholas Poirier Aye
Raul Porras Aye
Kristin Carney Absent
Maura Webster Aye
Roger Jarrett Aye
Jessica Bowen Aye
Jill Schafer Aye
Liz Saul Aye
Sowmini Sampath Aye

Liz Saul made a motion to approve STEM Eagles Foundation...new member Lisa O'Connor renewed Director.

Raul Porras seconded the motion.

STEM Soaring Eagles 501 c3 foundation...support AMSA The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Roger Jarrett Aye
Liz Saul Aye
Sheila Kelly Aye
Nicholas Poirier Aye
Benjamin Hammel Aye
Raul Porras Aye
Kristin Carney Aye
Sowmini Sampath Aye
Jill Schafer Aye
Maura Webster Aye
Jessica Bowen Aye

The STEM Soaring Eagles Foundation is a 501 C3 Foundation created for the purpose maintaining funds (grants and fundraising) to help support AMSA.

III. Reports

A. Executive Director Report

See attached ED Presentation

Ellen Linzey opened her report with mention of the events of yesterday at our nation's capital.. She said it was a heartbreaking event to watch in our country and hopes for a peaceful transition in the White House.

Highlights of Report

PSAT: AMSA did not administer the PSAT in the fall, but we plan to hold them on January 26, for Junior only. The testing will occur on campus, breaking students up into small groups. This is especially important for students who hope to qualify for national scholarships.

HVAC: Facilities Director Eric Lane has been working with contractors to check airflow. The hope was to get each of the three building up to code for air flow transitions and get certification. However, the air flow control systems are no longer working and cannot be adjusted due to their age. The dampers are shut and stopping the air flow. The work on the control system for all three buildings is now out for bid. We do have air purifiers in each classroom that will kill the virus, but the purifiers are not powerful enough to accommodate large spaces such as the cafeterias or common areas. Once work begins on the HVAC, the process could take 2-3 months.

3rd Term Decision and Timeline: AMSA has committed to staying in a remote learning model through February 1, which is the end of second quarter. We are now faced with deciding to stay remote or consider the feasibility of attempting a hybrid model. To assist in making this decision, the school will conduct a survey to get feedback from teachers and staff. The results will inform the administration on how well the remote model is doing and to get an idea of their comfort level with returning to school. The survey questions will focus on quality of education and health concerns.

Academic Excellence Support Planning: AMSA's primary purpose is to educate our students, but we are also concerned with their social and emotional wellbeing. The question is "What is the best system to educate our children?" The administration has engaged in many conversations regarding this question. The staff survey will provide valuable feedback. Once a decision has been made regarding 3rd term, we hope to get the information out to parents by Monday, January 25.

This year has been challenging for students and adults. To help support our students, Guidance Director Kate Driver was awarded a grant to set up a peer coaching program, will a start date of February 1. Upper School students will provide academic coaching to younger students. There is also the Lower School Math Intervention Program, led by Dave Peters, that is designed to target students with gaps in their math progress. In addition, plans are in process for an on-campus program that will bring students into the school who need extra support and/or need in-person supervision to keep on task while continuing with their remote learning. Supervisors will be hired to manage these students.

Principal Mike Nawrocki is working on an AMSA Specific Summer School, using our curriculum, and our own teachers (dependent upon the academic subject need). The program will support failing students but will also offer enrichment to support students who may have struggled but not failed. Massachusetts will be receiving federal money and may be bringing in as much as 815 million dollars!!!

Summer school usually has a fee, but we may not have to charge if the grant money is available.

All of our core towns are in the RED COVID category and well above the state average.

Ben Hammel asked if having the vaccine available will help the school's decision about 3rd term.

The ED responded that the school nurses will be in phase 1, but the vaccine rollout has been slow. Educators are scheduled for vaccinations at the end of February and it will take at least through April to get all the educators vaccinated. The Commissioner is considering whether to organize onsite school vaccinations or utilize local centers..

Sheila Kelly added that law enforcement is scheduled for phase 1, but the first shots will not happen until the end of February and for herd immunity it takes two shots within a large population. Ellen Linzey said the administration is following the rollout closely.

Liz Saul asked if the administration is looking to get teachers vaccinated and is there a concern about the students not being vaccinated. Ellen Linzey said she is strongly encouraging teachers to get vaccinated, but that is their choice. However, teachers and staff will be expected to return to school when we go back to in-person. There is concern about going back to the classroom. 40% of our staff are 50 or older. There is not enough information yet, so the administration will be very cautious in making decisions. We know there are AMSA families and staff members who have COVID and if we were in school together today we would be intermingling. As imperfect as it is, AMSA has one of the best systems in the Commonwealth.

Every school had to fill out a form for DESE reporting on how many face-to-face (synchronous) academic hours students are receiving during remote learning. The number of hours for interaction/connection for remote learning has been set by the state to be at least 40 hours. The state hopes to prevent student isolation and loss of connection to school. One third of school districts had to improve their programs by January 19. AMSA was cleared, as we provide our students with approximately 50 hours of synchronous academic hours during a two week period of time, which does include our Monday check-ins. ASMA has a strong system in place.

Razzle Dazzle

Diderot Society 2nd Annual Colloquium Night

Spirit Week 2020

New 6th Grade Hiking Club (according to Facebook, parents would like to see this for other grades)

Ski Club has 75 -100 kids.

Upcoming Events

January 12 Family Forums - one specifically for Freshmen and the other for Seniors

January 23 Board Training Session

January 27 Family Forum (Address 3rd term)

February 3 8th Grade Parent Night

February 27 Board Strategic Planning

B. Parent Representative Report

Maura Webster said that Ellen Linzey has covered every topic that parents had asked her to address. She believes the family forums have been helpful and she believes will continue to satisfy parent questions and concerns.

The ED monthly reports/slides are available on the website.

C. Faculty Representative Report

Jess Bowen said she did not have much to add, but she does know that teachers are generally concerned about their health and are fearful for family and possible working situations. However, teachers miss the face to face learning experience. The recent All Staff meeting was helpful and covered what is happening. Teachers seem to be comfortable with the decisions being made and with communication efforts. Teachers are interested in how and when vaccinations will be administered.

Jess Bowen mentioned that the diversity training before break was postponed, and she has received no relevant feedback.

D. Check for board discussion items

No topics were brought up for further discussion.

Raul Porras mentioned that the Survey Task Force now has the Fall survey results and is reviewing the data. The Task Force plans to report on the survey at the Board meeting in February.

IV. Chair Business

A. Chair Business

The Student Opportunity Act (SOA) was passed a year ago. This legislation was supposed to bring federal money to school districts at the end of last spring, but it was put on hold. Schools were expected to create a local plan to document how they are closing the achievement gap. It has come up again, and the plan will be due to the state on January 15. Reporting on our SOA plan will become part of the annual report in addition to reporting on the school's Accountability Plan.

Given the short notice by the state and since the SOA document will need a Board vote, the SOA will be reviewed by the Education Committee on January 14. The Education Committee will then be able to recommend approval of the SOA plan to the full Board, and a vote will be taken at the Saturday, January 23, 2021 BOT meeting/training as the first order of business.

V. Committee Reports

A. Governance Committee report

Governance Chair Sheila Kelly said Sowmini Sampath is working with Committee Chairs to capture and track committee SMART goals. The Governance Committee is working on goal development and meeting efficiency for discussion topics at the Feb 27 meeting.

B. Finance Committee report

See attached Finance Statement and Grant Summary.

Highlights:

Tuition contribution was higher than projected in November, but the overage will drop in December.
Facilities expenses were 50K lower than the regular monthly expenses.
71K higher for income.
437K lower for expenses
Most of the capital assets have been covered by grants.
Ellen Linzey and Team have been aggressively going after grants and investing in the school.
It was a good month.

C. Development Committee Report

Ben Hammel reported that the Development Committee met in December. They discussed new tools to keep track of donations, how to expand the use of our investment, and how to keep track of development initiatives. Mike Finkle joined their December meeting in order to discuss opportunities to enhance the donation page on the school website.

An AMSA parent also attended the meeting and offered to assist the Committee with alumni communications, offering his experience in dealing with his own private school alumni.

D. Education Committee

Liz Saul reported that the Education Committee was unable to meet in December. The Committee will meet on January 14. They will be reviewing the Student Opportunity Act (SOA). They will continue to cover monthly updates on our remote learning progress.

VI. BOT discussion of items nominated from Public Speak, ED, Faculty Rep, Parent Rep

A. Discuss topics nominated from above

No topics were brought up for further discussion.

VII. Meeting Wrap Up

A. Review action items from past BOT meetings

Work on the Board SMART goals is still ongoing.
Grants review for the next Board meeting
Sowmini wants to add Board Recruitment as a topic, since it is time sensitive. Sheila Kelly said board recruitment will be discussed at Governance. The Board should get the message out "if you know anyone who would be interested in the board or interested in a committee role, encourage them to join a committee, Finance and Development especially." It is hard to network in this COVID world, but it is easier to participate in meetings.

B. Meeting Effectiveness Assessment

This meeting was efficient!

C. Candidate Agenda Items and Action items for Jan 2021 BOT Meeting

Agenda for January 23 Meeting:
Vote on SOA and Diversity Training

Agenda for February 25
If committees have finalized their own SMART goals that could be on the agenda.

Agenda for February 27
Board Goals may come from February offsite.

D. Summary of Action Items

Action Items from tonight's meeting:
Send recording of Diderot Society Colloquium Night to Board members.
Have slides and docs posted on the school website following the meeting...per usual.

VIII. Closing Items

A. Call for motion to go into executive session

Roger Jarrett made a motion to go into executive session to consider the purchase and lease of real property, since open discussion could have a detrimental effect on the process.

Raul Porras seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Sheila Kelly	Aye
Benjamin Hammel	Aye
Nicholas Poirier	Aye
Roger Jarrett	Aye
Raul Porras	Aye
Liz Saul	Aye
Maura Webster	Aye
Jill Schafer	Aye
Jessica Bowen	Aye
Sowmini Sampath	Aye
Kristin Carney	Aye

Add the Board will not reconvene after executive session.

Invited guests include Bob Baldwin, Lisa O'Connor, Ellen Linzey, Mike Nawrocki, Liana McLaren

Raul Porras adjourned the open meeting at 7:18. The Board will take a seven minute break and meet in Executive Session at 7:25pm.

B. Executive Session

C. Adjourn Meeting

Raul Porras made a motion to adjourn.

Maura Webster seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Benjamin Hammel	Aye
Jessica Bowen	Aye
Sowmini Sampath	Aye
Kristin Carney	Aye
Nicholas Poirier	Aye
Maura Webster	Aye
Jill Schafer	Aye
Raul Porras	Aye
Roger Jarrett	Aye
Liz Saul	Aye

Roll Call

Sheila Kelly Aye

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jill Schafer

Documents used during the meeting

- 1-07-21 BOT ED Report January 2021.pdf
- 1-07-21 Grant Summary fye 2021 with expenses.xlsx
- 1-07-21 November 2020 Financial Statements.xlsx