

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - August 23, 2025

Individuals in Attendance:

Gabriel Kirmani
Trey Cox
David King
Rob Constantine
Marian Reagan
Craig Cunningham
Deb Eustis-Grandy
Sadhana Prasad
Joel Pike
Ray Rice
Brad Choyt
Alicia Jalbert
Daniel Chuhta

M. Reagan called the meeting to order at 8:40am.

Written Public Comments were acknowledged

- 1) Economic and Community Development Commissioner Mike Duguay
- 2) Limestone Solar Committee

D. King made a motion to accept the minutes from the May 30 meeting, seconded by T. Cox.
Passed with 1 abstaining.

R. Rice made a motion to accept the Leadership Team report, seconded by C. Cunningham.
Passed unanimously.

R. Constantine summarized all areas of the Leadership Team Report

- Finances look good for 24/25 final projections and 25/26 initial projections
- Enrollment data is exciting! - Great work in enrollment. We have seen 27% enrollment growth this school year.
- Higher level courses are now getting to a critical mass for more robust learning
- Raw number of students is important
 - Affirms investment from the State
 - Creates revenue generation from R&B
 - Significant in school's financial picture

S. Durango describes new students as really excited to be here!

- A tribute to enrollment process - sharing the MSSM story and opportunity for transformative education
- Already have 2 completed application for 26-27 school year
- Really excited where we are and where we are headed!

Academics will share scores later in the Fall when they are available
Discussed outliers in testing - recognized not as much seriousness as should be
SATs remain on point with our students

We welcome five new faculty with extensive teaching experience
Talked in depth about new strategic plan in opening workshop with all faculty and staff present
Emphasized "JOY" in speaking about the year ahead

- MSSM does academic rigor well
- Prepare students for the world they exist in
- Instill "joy" of learning, being

Concerning attendance trends noticed at the end of the school year last year (not joyful)

What are you going to do today that will make everyone want to be here tomorrow?

Excited about the positive conversations/attitudes of faculty and changes in Residential Life staff

New faculty are anxious to interact/explore

Rob thanks Deb & Anthony for encouraging faculty to embrace "joy of learning"

Ray brings us topic of AI use in education. Anthony explains that MSSM is realigning focus of composition course to integrate durable skills. English/Humanities focus is now becoming skills gained vs final product. Deb explains there are different issues with AI on STEM side. STEM focus is content based examples and research topics/critical thinking.

Computer Science instructor received funding/donations for more hands-on learning - instructional piece of AI.

General sense to continue to learn/evolve with AI trends to ensure we don't become isolated.

Joel offered kudos for a successful revamp of summer camp - including bringing in external industry for additional learning components. Theme Weeks for summer camp including field trips related to each theme. Very appreciative to Bath Iron Works (huge STEM employer and economic driver in Maine) for their partnership during Summer Camp.

Financial Aid - hitting our budget figures. It will be an ongoing challenge for the future.

Dan mentions "Measure What Matters" - report released in January regarding future-ready education. It can be found on the Maine DOE website. Phase 2 will be using broad themes from reports to create a recognition system for skills gained.

Craig suggests that MSSM needs to be nimble to adjust to current needs - link to enrollment numbers.

Dan asked about our Emergency Management Plan update

- MSSM is currently working on improving
- Added an emergency notification system (Emergent 3)
- Maine School Safety System - priority
- Annual expectation of school boards to approve a school safety plan

Committee Reports

- Finance & Facilities - D. King

The last committee meeting was filled with laughter & joy - a refreshing change!

Projecting a net surplus for 24/25 fiscal year - approximately \$176k

Financial Viability - Rob offered a reminder regarding revenue levers and expense buckets described in more detail at the board's workshop on August 22, 2025.

Invested the \$500k strategically

Admissions to increase enrollment, increase revenue

Solar Array to garner savings

Accumulated deficit should be wiped out with new surplus from 24/25 fiscal year.

Continue to explore the possibility of borrowing from future revenues, if necessary.

Significant growth this year - some challenges with current student numbers

Math Courses, World Languages, Residential Instructors

We won't be able to project same student growth as we did for 25-26 school year

Limitations with Financial Aid (currently about 10% of total state appropriations) -
need for more financial aid

Concerns regarding finances in the 2nd year of the biennial budget.

Fund raising arm of our budget is not great - could be improved.

Recongnizing that relationships are important - MSSM working to do a better job to show the State's return on investment

Concern regarding the idea that if we don't talk about strategy we will be in the same place financially - need to plan better for financial viability

Work we are doing in enrollment highlights southern Maine, Maine DOE and unique opportunity to break generational poverty

Goal of out-of-state students to increase program robustness vs financial gain only

Projecting dramatic decrease in average age of plant - demonstrates investment in our facilities

Significant deferred maintenance concerns - dorm roof, crumbling chimney, HVAC system (from 1972) - total investment necessary is \$400k-\$500k

15 min break

- Advancement - R. Rice
First meeting will be scheduled for the 3rd week of September
- Governance - T. Cox
No funding increase, however there was an update to the State Statue regarding residency
- Audit - J. Pike
Board will receive as a draft and will review with subcommittee prior to October 11 board meeting
Marie Strouse offered kudos to Casandra and Rob for their help in a successful audit process - improved to make a year-long process vs only pre audit
- Student Welfare - S. Prasad
Next meeting scheduled for September 10
Shifting focus for this school year - how to support kids finding "joy"
- Program - P. Stancioff - M. Reagan
Has been functioning as the Strategic Planning Process
Rob gave an update on delivery of action plan for strategic plan - dedicated time towards this task at MSSM opening school year workshops. All employees were split into groups and discussed the following pillars: intentional learning, academic rigor, access & enrollment

Craig suggested the possibility of another event to bring awareness to businesses - same April time frame

An idea about hands-on activities presented by MSSM Alumni - possible themed weekend "Alumni Inspiration Weekend"

Action Agenda

- J. Pike moved to enter into Executive Session for discussion of personnel matters in accordance with Maine Statute Title 1, Chapter 13, Paragraph 405, Section 6A. Seconded by T. Cox. Passed unanimously.
- Exited executive session at 10:50am
- J. Pike moved to enter into executive session for discussion of real property matters in accordance with Maine Statute Title 1, Chapter 13, Paragraph 405, Section 6D. Seconded by T. Cox. Passed unanimously.
- Exited executive session at 11:06am
- T. Cox moved to authorize the Executive Director to negotiate purchase of real estate as discussed by Board of Trustee Director contract, seconded by R. Rice. Passed unanimously.
- T. Cox moved to adjourn at 11:18am, seconded by J. Pike. Passed unanimously.