

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - April 17, 2026

Individuals in Attendance:

Dan Chuhta
Trey Cox
Craig Cunningham
Deb Eustis-Grandy
Alicia Jalbert
David King
Gabe Kirmani
Joel Pike
Sadhand Prasad
Marian Reagan
Ray Rice
Paul Stancioff
Rob Constantine

M. Reagan called the meeting to order at 12:25pm.

No Public Comments were received.

C. Cunningham moved to accept the 01/24/26 meeting minutes, seconded by D. King
Edited needed - Paul Stancioff attended virtually.
Roll Call Vote. Passed unanimously.

T. Cox moved to accept the 04/17/26 management report, seconded by J. Pike
Roll Call Vote. Passed unanimously.

R. Constantine commented on the report - He hopes board members see a lot of great work happening along with a lot of challenges. Our world is changing - expectations to meet challenges are changing. Meeting those challenges becomes harder each year as our funding decreases.

Residential Life is in a good place vs. a challenging start to the school year. Our residential life program is equally important to our academic program.

Academic challenges - mid year transitions are difficult. Appreciation to the faculty and students committed to "making the best of it".

We have reduced to 3 FT positions in Residential Life. We are at the margin of what we need in order to provide what we need to.

We are not staffed to meet all the expectations - don't have the necessary resources.

What can we realistically deliver?

Really excited about discussions on what we are doing in the classroom.

Grade/Achievement focus in the past - which was not the best for future preparation

How do we build what we need?

The lowest FTE reduction has been in teachers - but still a loss of 2 FTE over 5 years.

Advanced topics course to replace some of the AP courses - more efficient. AP courses represent a step down in content compared to what our faculty can offer (richer experience)

Associate Degree - may not always align with what we want/need to offer for our MSSM curriculum. R. Rice commented on the complexities of the Associate's Degree. It has to be approved by the higher up regional accreditor for UMPI. He agreed that it is a good move for MSSM to reassess that the focus should be for MSSM first, then see how UMPI fits in. R. Constantine - MSSM needs to develop what we need - then see how it matches with dual enrollment. Faculty willing to engage in conversations to put in the work/time into what is best for the students.

M. Reagan - "Off-shift" transportation - increasing demands from students that has MSSM banking on the goodwill of employees. Looking at updating policies to spell out what we can reasonably provide - all else would require additional charge from parents.

J. Pike mentioned that "trying to do more as much as we can with less" seemed to be the common theme of the leadership team report. He was disappointed to hear that summer camp is not happening this summer. Hopefully we can get a vibrant return of the summer stem experience. Teacher turnover - mix of short term and long term. "Look at how amazing kids come out despite the challenges." RIs - current number & attrition rate of RI's is concerning.

R. Constantine - Hard decision on taking a year off from summer camp. Have not met goals of what the experience should be. The employee responsible did not have time to properly plan.

EE Ford Grant has been submitted - will know in June. A campus visit is planned for May 8. Grant proposal includes vibrant external outreach hopefully to include 2027 Summer STEM Experience.

Teacher attrition/retention - a variety of reasons. It is commendable that students don't know the reasons for teachers leaving. Teacher retention is declining overall - not just at MSSM. Money is usually not the issue for faculty leaving - most likely leave for other reasons. Demands from students, parents needed interactions for faculty. The state of education in general is trending as "too hard". Many are leaving education entirely.

Promising work - Apprenticeship opportunities with UMaine at our public boarding school (unique model). We need certified teachers to be able to accept students in the apprenticeship

program. More adults to grow the pipeline of teachers. We have been talking with colleges in Maine with teacher programs.

G. Kirmani indicated that students feel that they can access better, more stable courses at their sending school.

R. Constantine mentioned less curiosity/engagement noticed among students.

D. Chuhta noted the progress on the Emergency Management Plan. Rob said that paper copy will be available for the May meeting. It was suggested to keep working to try to integrate the LCS safety plan and integrate law enforcement.

Unanimous vote to approve management report (T. Cox was not present for vote).

Committee Reports

- Student Welfare - S. Prasad
The committee did not meet the last few months - many other needs from other areas in the school. Improved communication & greater understanding. Residential Life doing well despite turnover. Athletics and extra curricular activities are going well.
- Audit - J. Pike
Currently reviewing RFP. Joel will get feedback to Marie with a goal of selecting a firm and getting an audit scheduled.
- Governance - T. Cox
Meeting regularly to review policies and have readings for some policies today in the action agenda. Sarah Forester did review all policies set for readings today.
- Advancement - R. Rice
We have had two meetings. Continued growth/development between Foundation & MSSM. Foundation has been updating MSSM on gifts. EE Ford process highlighted the need for continued improvement between MSSM & MSSM Foundation.
- Finance & Facilities - D. King
Defer to action agenda for budget approval as well as the Additional dollars in the newly revised budget to be discussed prior to budget vote.
- Program - P. Stancioff & A. Jalbert
We have had several meetings. "Curiosity Meets Challenge" - The most updated version of the Mission Statement is printed on the back of nametags:
Maine School of Science and Mathematics offers promising and engaged students relevant STEM-based learning experiences where curiosity meets challenge. The goal is to approve at the May meeting. Vision statement and value statement are also being cultivated for future board approval.

Also planning meetings for faculty, staff and student feedback.

Homework for Board Members - 3 bullet points on vision & values by noon on May 5th.

It's been a fun experience to get feedback from all sorts of different stakeholders.

The Mission Statement is very promising - lots of talent behind it.

Break @ 1:30pm

Meeting reconvened at 1:45pm

T. Cox returned to the meeting and mentioned that he appreciated seeing the conversion to Blackbaud as a continued measure to increase efficiency and find cost savings.

R. Constantine described that Blackbaud will increase transparency & accountability by allowing budget managers to see data in real time.

Action Agenda

- T. Cox moved to approve the second reading of GDB - Vacations and seconded by D. King. He explained that this is a substantial narrowing of policy. The new version is straight forward and much less in the weeds. Passed unanimously.
- T. Cox tabled the JICJ - Personal Electronic Devices During the School Day policy due to new legislation just passed.
- T. Cox moved to approve the second reading of JFAA - Residential Requirements and seconded by R. Rice. This policy follows closely with what is required for residency in the state statute. Sarah definitely agreed with the language. Policy reflects statute change. T. Cox suggested a friendly amendment of reference to the statute at the bottom of the policy. R. Rice agreed with the friendly amendment. Passed unanimously.
- T. Cox moved to approve the second reading of EBBD - Temperature Standards for MSSM and seconded by D. King. T. Cox suggested a friendly amendment to add Fahrenheit to degrees as well as remove "in the building as a whole" in the 4th paragraph. D. King agreed with the friendly amendment. Passed unanimously.
- T. Cox moved to approve the red circled version 26-27 fiscal year budget and seconded by C. Cunningham. R. Constantine reviewed the red circled changes made after the board materials were posted. MSSM was notified that they received \$300,000 in one-time funding for infrastructure from LD 2008. The revenue side shows \$300,000 in one-time State Appropriations. On the expense side - \$10,000 added to Ops of School (Kitchen Equipment), \$10,000 to Ops of Dorm for deferred maintenance needs and \$280,000 to One Time Expenses for our HVAC system, chimney. R. Constantine made a suggestion to use the funds that remain after HVAC and chimney (~\$80,000) to set up Prism fund for savings for future repairs. This would allow for more time and save additional money for future needs. D. Chuhta pointed out that LD 2008 funds given are restricted for dorm infrastructure only. After much discussion and clarification a friendly amendment was suggested by T. Cox to put all \$300,000 in One Time Expenses. C.

Cunningham agreed. An itemized breakdown of the planned \$300,000 spending will be provided at the next board meeting. R. Constantine addressed a concern about cash flow for these projects. There should not be any cash flow issues given current quarterly projections and the fact that the cash flow typically is good in the first half of the fiscal year. It is also planned to renew our line of credit at the next board meeting.

Guest Troy Jackson spoke about how he is frustrated with how the State has funded MSSM over past years. He pointed out that his proposal included a \$1 million increase of on-going funding for MSSM. It was noted that MSSM is a jewel in the crown of Maine and is woefully underfunded. C. Cunningham and R. Constantine expressed appreciation for the funding from LD 2008. Passed unanimously.

- T. Cox 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 J. Pike at 2:34pm. Passed unanimously.
- Exited executive session at 2:44pm
- T. Cox moved to adjourn at 2:45pm, seconded by J. Pike. Passed unanimously.