

**Morris Jeff Community School (MJCS)
Board of Directors Meeting**

**Monday, February 11, 2019 5:30 pm
211 South Lopez St.
Library (2nd floor)
AGENDA**

Members Present: Shannon Williamson, Blaine Lescene, Leslie Lawrence, Missy Sparks (arrived at 5:39pm), Lisa Amoss, Brandy Smith, Maria Newman Carerre

Members Absent: Bill Payne (prearranged), Richard Perque

The meeting was called to order at 5:34 pm.

I. Review and consideration for approval of Board meeting minutes

Lisa Amoss moved that we approve to accept the minutes. Leslie Lawrence seconded. No discussion. Ms. Perkins noted one correction. Motion carries unanimously to approve minutes with minor correction.

II. Morris Jeff Principal's Update

Ms. Perkins complimented Lisa's facilitation skills for the academic director's retreat. One of the outcomes was clarifying roles and responsibilities, especially for the admin team. Ms. Perkins may reach out to Missy Sparks or other board members for assistance. At the retreat we also discussed strategic growth. Next year they will look at adding a section to Kindergarten but decrease the PreK to 4 classes. This makes sense financially as we lose money on PreK. The biggest barrier to growth is facilities. We are looking at both public and private possibilities for a 3rd facility. Even if they don't find a middle school facility, they will increase each grade by 10 seats.

The PYP 5th grade exhibition is February 20th. Please come by and support them. These 5th graders not only do exhibitions for the public but also do extensive reports in their classes. These projects are a culmination of months of work.

III. Finance Committee Update

Expenses this January went down because there are a few outstanding invoices. Year to date we're at a net loss \$557K. Jared is working on submitting reimbursements for the IDEA high

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cost grant. This grant is for students that cost more than 3x the average student. We've been applying for it and steadily increased but the rules around the application changed around what language needed to be in the IEP. Since the changes we worked with families and SPED staff to make any needed adjustments to IEP. The end result is we received significantly more money in the grant than we budgeted. There is another grant that provides gap funding for Orleans Parish SPED students. That process can't begin until the IDEA high cost assessment is in, as it fills gaps so Jared has begun that application process as well.

The Striving Readers grant is new revenue for January. Currently, you don't see expenses or revenues for nutrition as those invoices haven't come in yet. In maintenance and repairs we are currently at 97% of what's budgeted. Jared clarified that every year he has increased the budget for facilities, but every year we continue to spend more to maintain the warranty on this building and to maintain compliance with OPSB. We are on track to incur the deficit that we budgeted for.

Brandy Smith motioned to approve the financial statements. Missy Sparks seconded. No discussion. No public comment. Motion carries unanimously.

Lisa Amoss reminded the board that Brandy's term is ending and we need to recruit a new board treasurer. Please reach out to anyone you know who may be qualified.

IV. Morris Jeff Family Partnership Update

The family partnership is working on drawing more families to their events. They are working to focus on the events that already have strong attendance like the fish fries and the MJCS Mardi Gras parade. They are also looking at how to join other report card nights as those have been extremely successful as of late.

Shannon Williamson attended the MJFP Overcoming Racism training last month. About two dozen families attended and all participants seemed to really get a lot out of the experience. It was really nice to see parents considering things they may not have thought of before and trying to raise their children in a way that supports inclusion of others. Two of the high schoolers joined us as well.

V. Student Achievement Committee

The Student Achievement Committee met today at 4:30 before the General Board meeting. Overall when looking at all the data it seems that our students are outperforming both our state and parish peers in ELA and matching or almost matching our state peers in mathematics. Some particularly notable wins include all subgroups in the middle school showing growth,

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being on track to exceed our target of student who are at or above grade level in reading for K-3rd graders, and our 10th grade students' outstanding performance in English on the PSAT. It seems clear that some of the trainings the teachers have been doing have been particularly helpful (e.g. Making the Most of Classroom Interactions, Leading Educators, etc) in increasing performance in key areas.

VI. Student Support Committee Update

The student support committee met in January to review the matrix form and assess SPED staffing for next school year. The committee's recommendation was to maintain the current staffing structure (roughly one SPED teacher per grade level) with the understanding that Ms. Perkins will hire as information about the new student cohort becomes available through the summer. The group is planning to take a deep dive into data from PreK in the next meeting.

VII. Open Public Comment Period

Julie Thibodeaux met with several board members. Julie hope to do a board training at a future meeting so each board member has an elevator speech prepared and empowering them with information to advocate for fund development and give students specific facts about IB and costs associated with it. Julie and Crystal Daspit are working to make IB more prominent on the website as well. Julie will also contact board members with a list of potential donors so if you have any connections you can connect Julie to them. There is a grant for schools working to expand their IB offerings. The grant will focus on books and professional development. The Feria seems like a well-oiled machine but Jared and Julie are working on permits.

Lisa Amoss asked if there was a committee for the gala yet. Julie said she debriefed with a small group and will assemble a committee in March after Mardi Gras. One exciting news is that Preservation Hall has committed to the 2019 gala. We are hoping this will draw more outsiders to the gala.

Maria asked if there was a fundraising calendar to look at the various fundraising opportunities through the year. Julie discussed Give Nola day, Gala, and Feria details in response to the inquiry.

VIII. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:22pm

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