Memphis Academy of Science and Engineering

Minutes
August 20, 2019

The first meeting of the Board of Directors of the Memphis Academy of Science and Engineering for the 2019-20 school term was held on August 20, 2019 at 3:30 pm at the offices of Memphis Bioworks Foundation, 20 South Dudley Street, Suite 900, Memphis, TN 38103.

Present: The following directors were present in person: Steve Bares (Chairman), Darryl Jackson, Nathaniel Spates, Susan Huffman, Sondra Howell, and Marc Taylor. Also in attendance were Brandon Wellford (MASE CFO), Rodrick Gaston (MASE Executive Director), guests David Hill from Davidson Consulting, newcomer Holly Coleman from Hyde Foundation, and Artunyala Hunter (MASE HR Admin Assistant-recording).

Directors Absent
Daniel Copp, Gary Lynch and Jessica Becker

Call to order:
At 3:32 pm, the meeting was called to order by Chairman Bares and a quorum was present.

Dr. Bares made a motion to approve minutes from the MASE Board of Directors meeting held on February 26, 2019, seconded by Nate Spates and All Board Directors VOTED to approve the motion.

Executive Director Rodrick Gaston opened covering last school term’s ending progress and his plans for this school year 2019-20. He expounded on methods to raise the bar. Final results for last year’s data wouldn’t be available after October 2019’s testing. The 2018-19 school year ended with 595 students, which was above budget. Computer Science with a Code Crew was added for this year’s 2019-20 term. Although 610 students were registered, the campus’s current enrollment number was 585. The goal is targeted towards 625. An additional six new teachers joined the MASE Team, which fully staffed the
campus except Geometry. We’re utilizing retired math specialist Carl Johnson until such time that position is filled.

2019-20 Goals
Implement New School Academy Strategy; Executive 6th Grade Academy; Continue exploring endeavors to enhance STEM curriculum; 98% graduation rate; Improve teacher support by departmentalizing instructional coaches; Improve student attendance to at least 90%; Maintain 4.0 Operational Scorecard; and Expend million dollar scholarship club to $10 million plus.

Highlights
We started the Naval ROTC Program, which makes us the only Charter School in the City with this program. The eighth (8th) graders have a parallel program along with starting them to begin taking the ACT Test. All our high school students are taking ACT Prep courses, which should definitely increase our scores. The Freshman Pilot with Stand for Children will be on track to see difference in scores.

A decision was made against partnering with Southern Avenue. Instead, he was pleased to announce the opening of the Sixth Grade Academy. Mr. Gaston included a rationale for the Sixth Grade Academy handout, which was needed because in past years, we’d inherited so many sixth graders academically far behind. The sixth grader’s transition from elementary/grade school to middle school has proven to be very trying. Therefore, we implemented the academy for a structural change to give them special attention. By housing them separately in the Mississippi Blvd Church building, the sixth graders should be able to concentrate on their educational studies while feeling safe and avoiding possible bullying and harassment by upper classmen. The separation will also give them an additional year to mature before they’re exposed to their older classmates. Special emphasis will be placed on the academic growth rate as measured by state tests (particularly in math an ELA), the retention rate of sixth graders transitioning to seventh grade at MASE and an increase in daily non-academic interactions with faculty and staff members. The metrics in place will assist in determining the success of the establishment of the Sixth Grade Academy.

Improvements
Although our scores remained the same, we increased 3 levels in 2019 School Wide TVAAS Levels. So we’re focusing on both State scores as well as ACT scores. More AP was added. Most areas grew in 2019 High School Math City Wide Comparison.

Raising the Bar - Academic Press & Student Care
The bar has been raised for educational quality in order to close this gap between talent and skill. This will allow students to maximize their talents while living lives filled with opportunity. In order accomplish raising the bar, MASE is providing students increased academic press within the context of increased student care. By elevating our student’s care, we increase their motivation. The goal is to ensure every student is involved in at least one activity/group. We will one of the first charter schools to track data for student care.
Budget discussion:
Brandon Wellford discussed budget items.

Voted:
The Board voted and welcomed Holly Coleman as its newest Board Member.

Adjourn:
There was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

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Steven J. Bares, Chairman