

School Expansion Possibilities Committee Agenda

Tuesday, April 28, 2020

4:30 pm - 5:30 pm

Zoom Meeting

Members: ~~John G~~, Shannon F, ~~Tom J~~, Ken L, Emily W, ~~Dan E~~, Girish J, Jeff E, Noah, and Lisa A (Leadership: Chair, with help from the BOD members and the Director)

Purpose: The purpose of the School Expansion Committee is to research possibilities for expansion. If the determination is made to expand, the committee will have to develop and implement a plan for expansion.

Remember: This is a BOD Committee, so we do have to abide by open meeting laws, therefore, agendas and meeting notes will be published. This Committee is open to the public.

1. Future MSA enrollment, budget projections, impact of COVID

- A. One question that we should keep in mind and think about how to communicate effectively is: If the reason for expansion is the budget, but our budget is in the black for the next 5 years, then why do we need to expand? We will have to seek ways to effectively communicate this to community
- B. How does Covid impact our strategies?
 - Community building with the incoming 6th graders and 9th graders is an issue but every other school is in the same boat.
 - Maybe more people will want to come because we are a small school, and we might be able to better maintain our rigor.
- C. Does Covid change the conversation regarding our desire to grow?
 - Parents are going to watch how each school is managing distance learning. Many do not understand how big the impact is going to be. But now schools will have a plan for distance learning going forward.
 - So if MSA has a new facility with all the newest technology, parents might believe that MSA is more prepared for distance learning than other schools.
- D. How do we continue to develop our idea about expansion, while at the same time keeping in mind that distance learning might be the new thing?
 - Will we still need all of the space? Many businesses are recognizing that they don't need to require all of their employees to work from the physical building and they can save money.
 - At the same time, we believe that personal relationships are the key to education, so we don't want to just push that off.
- E. What will the fall look like?
 - We don't know what the fall will look like, it will probably be different, but probably not back to normal yet. Harvard is saying schools will not be back to normal until 2021.

- Maybe we can use the survey from parents about Distance Learning to glean some information.
 - The entire country might be coming back in fall, so we might be able to take advantage of the economic situation. There may be more buildings available because of the economic situation. But we might need spaces that look different because of Covid.
 - We will have to continue researching about expansion, but it might look a little different now.
2. Preparations for Annual Stakeholder Meeting
- A. Since there is nothing new to report about expansion, the Stakeholder meeting will just be the regular May Board meeting
 - B. Jeff will take a little more time to talk about expansion at the Board meeting.
3. Next steps and decision timeline
- A. We should put together some questions for the 3 consultants, complete a phone survey and request a RFP, including a summary of how they are paid.
 - B. Do we still have a timeline to find a contractor/consultant?
 - It was supposed to be done before the end of the school year, but will probably be completed this summer.
 - Having a consultant might also be helpful as a symbol to the new and returning parents to signal our intent to expand.
 - C. We will have to seek ways to effectively communicate the idea that although we are in the black for the next 5 years we still need to expand.
 - Next year, we are only \$2300 in the black, so it is very slim.
 - And the following years, the margin is very slim.
 - Although Governor Walz seems to have the intent to fund schools, they are going into the break soon. And Covid has presented many new funding needs for the State. So our budget rides on the fence because of the hold back and we are never quite sure how much the State will hold back or pay us as a charter school.
 - D. Timeline:
 - RFP
 - Choose the consultant by the end of the school year
 - Create an FAQ for next Fall?
 - Mr. G and Jeff and have not had the time to put together the budgetary examples that might help show the justification for why we need to expand.
4. Next Meeting will be May 26 at 4:30