

Surrender Maddela - Parent

Tell the community a little bit about yourself:

I am confident in my ability to represent the perspective of parents based on my personal experience as a dedicated father of two children with MSA.

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

As a devoted father of two children with MSA, I am well-equipped to confidently represent and strongly advocate for the perspectives of parents.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to the Board?

I am currently serving multiple groups at work and have been a divisional senator for the past two years. Additionally, I have volunteered in local public schools for STEM programs, which has given me valuable skills and experience that I can bring to the table to enhance the development of current and future students

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

My goal is to enhance the quality of education, increase student enrollment, establish permanent school buildings, and improve the quality of life for teachers and staff.

How would you evaluate if MSA is delivering its intended mission?

I aim to promote student success and foster a positive and harmonious relationship between students and teachers for the betterment of all.

How would you weigh the input from parents, teachers, and the administration in making Board decisions?

I agree, as it is the foundation of our education system. It is crucial to implement policies and approaches that are relevant and appropriate for the current generation.

What does the MSA mission and vision mean to you?

Indeed, it is of utmost importance, and we should encourage one another to strive for excellence and continuous improvement.

Kinni Jegeno - Parent**Tell the community a little bit about yourself:**

My name is Kinini Jegeno. I am a father of four girls. My family and I reside in Cottage grove. We lived here since December 2012. One of my daughters, Seenaa Kinini, attends Maths and Science Academy. I work for MN Bureau of Criminal Apprehension as Business Intelligence Analyst. Before joining BCA I was at MN Department of Human Services for about eight years. I have Masters of Science in Business Intelligence and Data Analytics and Masters Degree from Stuttgart University of Applied Sciences in Photogrammetry and Geoinformatics. I served as a Board member for Oromo Community of MN for 4 years from 2005 to 2009. I am serving as a secretary for the Board of Sikko Mando Community of MN (local non-profit organization) Thank you, Kinini.

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

I am interested to be part of the school community for my child's school. I know that I am a member now but would like to involve more and contribute as much I could.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to the Board?

I was and am a board member of a non-profit organizations. I alway bring in different perspectives and try to look at issues from different angles. I am pro-teachers and recognize their challenges and understand the parenting role they play besides the academic responsibilities.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

Creating Positive learning environment and reducing conflicts among the students and the entire school community Creating a vibrant and energetic the school community.

How would you evaluate if MSA is delivering its intended mission?

MSA is a great school and I believe more work is needed to meet the challenging standards.

How would you weigh the input from parents, teachers, and the administration in making Board decisions?

Parents will contribute a great deal with their participation in the board.

What does the MSA mission and vision mean to you?

MSA mission and vision is a foundation for building a diverse and vibrate future leaders in all areas.

Tsion Mekonnen - Parent

Tell the community a little bit about yourself:

I am an educator that service in public school as Special education teacher. In my field my main focus advocating for the community I serve to get better education and their voices to be heard. Currently I have two students at MSA and it's my hope they are served well.

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

I am interested serving as board member to make difference in MSA community by giving back what it is giving to my children.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to the Board?

I believe to bring a representation of the East African students and parent voice and prospective to the school culture. Also with my 14+years of working in special education experience I hope to advocate for students and family who needs the board support.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

Equity and diversity practice needs to be taken into consideration of when the school makes policy decisions. An intentional effects should be made in the hiring process to ensure student and teachers representation is considered.

How would you evaluate if MSA is delivering its intended mission?

As a parent the wellbeing of my children and being prepared for college is very important. I do think MSA is doing well on preparing students for college.

How would you weigh the input from parents, teachers, and the administration in making Board decisions?

Everyone I put is valuable to teach students. Even though the board is the final decision maker teachers, students and parents input is very important.

What does the MSA mission and vision mean to you?

It gives me confidence that my children are in good place for their learning journey.

Kari Koerner - Parent**Tell the community a little bit about yourself:**

My name is Kari Koerner, and I'm excited to be running for the parent position on the MSA Board of Directors. I live in Woodbury with my husband and two sons, who are both in sixth grade at MSA.

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

This year, I have spent a lot of time at MSA as a parent and a volunteer. It has been a pleasure to get to know the students, staff, and families. MSA is such a special community, and I want to ensure that MSA continues to be a high-quality school for our children.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to the Board?

For over 20 years, I worked as a seventh grade Language Arts teacher. During my teaching career, I received specialized training and worked with students in the areas of gifted and talented education, culturally responsive teaching, and AVID. I believe that my background in education, along with my experiences working on teams and within diverse communities, make me an excellent choice for the Board of Directors.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

As MSA moves forward with expansion, it will be important that the Board of Directors ensures the continuance of a small-school community feel while providing big-school academic and extra-curricular opportunities. MSA needs to be a welcoming and safe home for all students.

How would you evaluate if MSA is delivering its intended mission?

MSA's mission statement and vision need to be at the forefront of all decisions and policies. Intentional data collection and open communication will provide a basis for transparent reflection and analysis.

How would you weigh the input from parents, teachers, and the administration in making Board decisions?

It is important for all the MSA stakeholders to have a place to share their thoughts, ideas, and concerns. People will have different opinions, and all voices need to be heard. My hope is that the Board of Directors makes decisions that are aligned with MSA's mission and vision and that promote excellence for our students.

What does the MSA mission and vision mean to you?

MSA is a school of excellence. We provide a rigorous curriculum that nurtures initiative and critical thinking. We search for new ideas and ways to best use our resources. We value kindness and respect for every person, the community we live in, and the world around us.

Anne Cardenas - Community Member

Tell the community a little bit about yourself:

I was in an internship at MSA (2004-2005) with Steve Pullar before I began my teacher program at University of Minnesota (Twin Cities). I earned my teaching licensure's (Middle school science and HS Chemistry) in 2006 and Masters in Science Ed in Science in 2012. I also was a former teacher (total 10 years) at MSA along with other schools (2 years at Capistrano Valley Christian Schools (Middle School Science 2007-2009), Park High (Cottage Grove (2009-2010), and Hastings High (2016-2017). I have always loved MSA. I also have significant "real world scientific experience" as I was a research scientist and Director of Quality Control in Southern California before my husband AND I were relocated to Minnesota with 3M in 2003 and back to California for three years in 2006, and back to Minnesota in 2009.

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

I'd love to bring my understanding of a rigorous curriculum and yet understanding of what needs to happen to help those that struggle with hard content in a math/science driven school. MSA is the best school for the parents/students we are lucky to get to teach/mentor at this school.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to the Board?

Research Scientist experience, Director level responsibility (including FDA audit responsibilities), later in life teaching licensures, 14 years of teaching responsibilities as an older adult, responsibilities during COVID (learning how to be a good teacher at MSA during a pandemic), Board member at MSA (2004-2006), Board Chair at MSA in 2021-2022 during COVID as well as being a teacher at MSA during COVID at MSA, board member 2022-2023 post COVID.

New statement issued 4-10-2024 at 1:43pm

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to the Board?

As a professionally trained research scientist for twelve years, I have Director level experience, including FDA audit responsibilities. Later in life, I obtained my teaching licensures, which resulted in 14 years of teaching responsibilities at private, charter and large public district schools. I have experience on the ground level of starting a charter school, which involved marketing, fundraising and growing the student body when I was the first President of the Parent Team at St. Croix Preparatory Academy (SCPA), where both of my children graduated. I understand the importance of charter schools, their differences and the role they serve in educating the future generation. As a former teacher and now community member, I know the rigor and the expectations placed on both teachers and students at MSA. I served as a Teacher Board member (2013, 2020-2022), was a member and co-chair of the Alternative fundraising committee, served as a Teacher Liaison to the Parent team where I was integral in the Annual grounds cleanup/ BBQ and the annual 6th Grade welcome BBQ, Flipping for Seniors Pancake breakfast at the Senior Party and the implementation of Give the Max Day at MSA, which I personally organized and oversaw. Finally, I served as the Board Chair from 2020-21 during COVID and prior to my retirement.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

How to navigate expansion, retaining MSA curriculum/graduation standards during this transitional period.

How would you evaluate if MSA is delivering its intended mission?

We need to create intentional standards for administration to uphold (financial, authorizer, and above MDE standards-our charter standards and mission/division)

How would you weigh the input from parents, teachers, and the administration in making Board decisions?

We need to implement EFFECTIVE communication and Parent, student, and teacher EFFECTIVE surveys to access how we are doing as a school and BOARD. Surveys are our VERB, we need to make sure to ACT on those surveys.

What does the MSA mission and vision mean to you?

Everything. "Vision: To be an innovative, sustainable model of academic excellence for all students that creates well-rounded, lifelong learners and global citizens. Mission: We provide accelerated and inclusive curricula and instruction in all subjects, with an emphasis on math and science." I was a Science Teacher at MSA for 10 years. I will defend this mission/vision with all of my heart and soul.

Brian Linzmeier - Community Member

Tell the community a little bit about yourself:

I am a Woodbury resident who has been a teacher for over 20 years. I have sat on a Superintendent's parent board for 2 years prior to moving to Woodbury.

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

Being part of the Woodbury community, I have heard of the school and the success that it has had. I would like to help continue the growth and success of the school and also the students.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to the Board?

With over 20 years of teaching experience, I have seen the teacher and admin side of issues. As a parent of the 833 district, I hear and understand the passion for success. I am forward thinking and expect to hold all members to a high standard for MSA and their students.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

The board needs to continue with the growth of the school. We need to maintain the academic excellence of the learner as we give them the skills necessary to be successful in their future.

How would you evaluate if MSA is delivering its intended mission?

The best way would be to listen to the conversations being had, watching students and their interactions. Being present at social events and at the school to make the necessary progression.

How would you weigh the input from parents, teachers, and the administration in making Board decisions?

As a board member we need to listen to what is being said from all those parties. We need to remember that governance is our role for the school and we need to continue to push for growth. This will help our students gain skills to be successful moving forward.

What does the MSA mission and vision mean to you?

It means to help the students become successful in life longer. We are helping students make a difference in their world.

Tamara Brooks - Teacher

Tell the community a little bit about yourself:

Greetings MSA ! I began teaching here at MSA in the fall of 2021. As a wife, mother of four, and step-mother of four, I am a true believer in life-long learning, and especially being open to learning from youth. Prior to my work here at MSA, I was employed with the St. Paul Public Schools for over 25 years. I have had the opportunity to work in many capacities during my tenure in Saint Paul, which includes work as a paraprofessional, a site coordinator, and finally as a teacher after completing my Masters Degree in Education at the University of St. Thomas. I am returning to District 833 after a 30 year hiatus from my high school graduation, from Park High School Cottage Grove, in 1992. This full circle return to this community has come at a time of great reflection for me. I am driven by my own life experiences to ensure the young people that I serve are met with respect and equity consistently.

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

I believe that I have a diverse perspective to offer the community here at MSA. I have come to know, love, and value our community. I have listened and learned so much in the 3 years that I have taught here. I learn from my students and colleagues everyday. I would be honored to continue my growth trajectory as a serving member of the MSA Board. I believe that all leadership should be in the form of servitude and I anticipate this role to be a continuation of learning how to better serve the MSA community and stakeholders.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to the Board?

I have the experience of being a professional team member for more than 25 years. In that time I have served on various committees and task forces throughout the Greater Eastside and in the St. Paul Metro area. I have worked through my church and various community organizations, working and volunteering to serve the needs of my community. From 2016 - 2020 I formed a youth serving organization called "Growing Flowers" that was dedicated to the memory of my Grandmother and her extreme love of physical and metaphorical gardening; planting seeds to feed the community. During that time, I brought programming to local recreation centers on St. Paul's Eastside and the North End communities to provide a meal and a craft project to the kids in the area. It was an amazing time to serve families and to be a resource in my neighborhood.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

As an institution we are charged with innovative ways of educating our youth in the 21st century and beyond. I feel that the board will need to focus on sustainability of our current role as educational leaders in Minnesota. To that end, I think that finances, recruitment of talented professionals, space for students and families, and equity are some of the most important topics to attend to.

How would you evaluate if MSA is delivering its intended mission?

The evaluation of our intended mission is through the collection of data and the commitment of our team to evaluate the data respective to our diverse stakeholder perspectives. This is not a once a year commitment, this is an ongoing endeavor that should continue to evolve as our school grows and embraces new community members.

How would you weigh the input from parents, teachers, and the administration in making Board decisions?

This is a work in progress from my perspective. I am pleased with the growth that I have witnessed during my tenure at MSA. I am also hopeful for the continuity of this growth. I believe that we have and will continue to develop ways to include our diverse community perspective as we develop processes and procedures that foster that effort. I believe that the input from all of these stakeholders is the most valuable way to gain insight and understanding into who we serve, the students, and their individual needs.

What does the MSA mission and vision mean to you?

The MSA mission and vision reflects our community's desire and commitment to welcome a diverse population of students and professionals to the environment. That commitment reaches beyond simply stating that "all are welcome" but puts into action the processes, policies, and behaviors that ensure its realization. Our dedication to a rigorous education that prepares our students for post-secondary life is a source of pride for our school. The guiding provision in our mission is to be inclusive, and to ensure that the opportunity for rigor is extended to each and every student that we serve consistently and without bias. As an MSA educator, it is what we strive for daily.