

MINUTES

MISF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

September 8, 2021

7:30 AM-9:30 AM

ZOOM MEETING



MINNESOTA
INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL FORUM

AGENDA

- Review and approve minutes from 6/9/21 meeting
- Board membership
- President's report
 - * Federal funds update – Emergency Assistance for Nonpublic School (EANS)
 - * Back to school topics – supporting schools
 - * Office relocation
- Development report
- Membership report
- Program report
 - * STEM Conference (August 3-4)
 - * School Leadership Conference (September 27-29)
- Finance report
- Audit
- Rebranding update
- Executive Committee Discussion
- Other business

MINUTES

Those present: Tim Benz, Teri McCloughan, Josh Killian, Michael Lamb, Joel Landskroener, Brian Lynch, Wyayn Rasmussen

Staff Present: Michele Skare

Meeting began at 7:42 AM.

The Executive Committee welcomes Michael Lamb to membership.

Motion to approve the minutes as written made by Wyayn Rasmussen, seconded by Teri McCloughan, motion passed.

Board Membership

Joining the Board this year are Dean Broadhead and Jim Hansen. John McCall has resigned from the board to focus on other endeavors.

President's Report

"Back to School" is more complicated this year than in past years.

EANS1 – is being managed by MDE. 232 schools applied and were approved for a collective \$40 million in funding. These funds may be used for reimbursement of money already spent.

EANS2 – MDE is still crafting the application and discussing distribution models. The Federal guidance on this is narrow, with one model based solely on the 40% FRL numbers which would make just 33 schools out of 450 eligible for funds. An alternate model leaves only about 1/3 eligible, and no schools who received PPP funds would be eligible.

We are working with MDE on a model in which any school that has any FRL students would qualify, and the amount generated would be based on only the number of FRL students in a school. Again, if a school has received PPP funds they are not eligible for EANS funds.

The state's application is due tomorrow.

Leftover funds would technically return to the governor, who has indicated that he would turn the funds back over to the nonpublic schools. The spending window on these funds runs through 2023.

We have been fielding questions on many back to school issues, including special ed/Title programs, transportation (especially out of district) questions, and masking policies.

Office relocation – Our current lease is up on September 30. Tim will go for a final walk-thru of the new space on Friday. Wyayn Rasmussen has graciously given MISF furniture that will not be used in AOWL's new location.

Development Report

2020-21 was a very good year in MISF Development. Highlights through June 2021 include grants awarded and received: \$25K from Xcel Energy for the STEM program, \$60K from the 3M Foundation for STEM program/underserved students. Pending is \$25K request to Mutual of America for STEM/We Share Solar. LOIs have been submitted to Athwin Foundation and Ciresi Walburn foundation for children.

A stewardship letter will be sent in late September/October in advance of a fall solicitation. Our donor base expanded with many new donors from the April Awards event.

With almost all of our schools open and in person last year, we will have a good story to tell donors this year.

Membership Report

We ended 2020-21 with 160 schools, a good increase over previous years. As of 9/1/2021, eight new schools have joined MISF, and only one school thus far has indicated that they will not be rejoining. That school was not active in its membership; Tim will be reaching out to them soon.

Renewal pace is steady. It takes longer to get renewals from schools that utilize Title funds for their dues, so while renewals are slower, we are not concerned about those. Reminder invoices were sent on September 1st.

Program Report

STEM Conference was virtual again this year, and while attendance was down slightly, we received positive feedback from schools. There is great value in being together in person for conferences like this one – we hope to be back in person next year.

School Leadership Conference will be held at the end of this month, and as of today we are planning an in-person

conference. Many of our regular sponsors have already signed on to attend. Question: Will we offer a virtual attendance option? Answer: We might offer that – still under consideration.

Finance Report

The Finance report is posted on the website. Brian Lynch highlighted a few items: The current PPP loan is still impacting the balance sheet and income statement. The first loan was forgiven; we submitted for forgiveness on the current loan last month, and anticipate that it too will be forgiven.

We ended the year in a strong cash position, and our balance sheet and income statements look great.

The audit exit interview is tomorrow afternoon – we anticipate a clean audit with no red flags.

Rebranding update

The subcommittee has continued to work on the rebranding project over the summer and have landed on a new name: Mindependent. They are still struggling with a tagline, however, and that is requiring more discussion.

There is a need to be careful with the use of the word “religious,” but the concern is that the word “private” may convey that schools are only for “rich kids.”

Also of concern is how to best convey what we do for our members. “Partner” may seem softer than what it is we actually do.

Ideally, the new name was to be announced at the School Leadership Conference, but the committee wants to make sure that they’ve covered all bases and have landed on the correct tagline, so more discussion is needed.

Stay tuned for more updates.

Executive Committee’s Role

Discussion – MISF has evolved and changed as an organization over the past few years, and there is no longer a need for a very “hands-on” EC that is involved in day-to-day operations. The question is raised: What is the EC’s role going forward? Does the committee still need to meet four times per year, or only when there is an important issue which needs to be resolved? Perhaps using this committee for strategic planning/outcomes/discussion is the best use of people’s time.

The committee will still review all reports which will be presented at regular board meetings; all reports will still be posted on the EC page on the MISF website. If there is an important matter which needs further review/discussion (example: the rebranding project), then the committee should meet in person (or via Zoom platform.)

The 9/22/21 Board meeting will be held via Zoom. Meetings after the first of the year may be held in person, depending on COVID levels and CDC/MDH guidance.

If feasible, the EC may hold its December 1st meeting at the new MISF office.

Adjourn

There being no further business brought forth, the Chair asked for a motion to adjourn. So moved by Josh Killian, seconded by Michael Lamb. Meeting adjourned at 8:43 AM



Wyayn Rasmussen – Secretary

9/14/2021