

MINUTES

MISF BOARD MEETING

September 22, 2021

7:30 AM-9:30 AM

ZOOM MEETING



MINNESOTA
INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL FORUM

AGENDA

- Introductions and welcome new board members – Jim Hansen and Dean Broadhead
- 2021 Audit Report – Cathy Lydon, CPA, Audit Director – Redpath and Company
- Rebranding update – Megan Junius, President and Creative Director – Eight Moon
- Review and approve minutes from 6/23/2021 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
- Executive Committee Discussion
- Other business

MINUTES

Those present: Tim Benz, Tim Berner, Dean Broadhead, Jennifer Cassidy, Jim Hansen, Josh Killian, Michael Lamb, Anna Lima, Joel Landskroener, Brian Lynch, Teri McCloughan, Wyayn Rasmussen, Kelly Regan, Brian Sullivan, Kate Wollan

Staff Present: Michele Skare

Meeting began at 7:33 AM.

The Board welcomes Dean Broadhead and Jim Hansen to membership, introductions.

Audit Report

Cathy Lydon from Redpath walked the board through the Audit Management Letter, and Financial Statements and Independent Auditors Report for years ending June 30, 2021 and 2020. Redpath is pleased to report that the financial statement disclosures are neutral, consistent and clear, and the board recognizes Debbie Kaliszewski for her hard work and attention to detail. All audit documents are available [here](#).

Motion to approve the 2021 audit as presented was made by Dean Broadhead, seconded by Tim Berner. 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.

Motion to approve the minutes as written made by Brian Lynch, seconded by Michael Lamb, motion passed.

President's Report

"Back to School" is more complicated this year than in past years, but schools we have heard from are doing well so far. Tim continues to meet weekly with a coalition of school leaders, and all appreciate the opportunity to share information and communication.

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 Feds have 15 days to approve the model after they have received and reviewed it.

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 September, 2023.

Question: Are there restrictions on use of these funds? Yes – these funds are not for reimbursable expenses, but new expenses. Schools need to find ways to spend the money.

Question: What is the timeline for schools to spend these funds? Funds can be spent through September of 2023.

Question: Will MISF be holding a webinar/workshop to present this information to schools? MDE presents webinars that are purely informational. Workshops that MISF presents can discuss creative ways for schools to spend their funding, so they receive the most value.

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. A positive note is that MDE is listening to and acknowledging us, and know that we are the voice and conduit to all of the nonpublic schools in the state.

Question: Any other advocacy issues that we are following right now? It is likely that the Governor will submit a supplemental budget, and we will be advocating for full funding of the nonpublic school transportation line item, as well as expanding the Education Tax Credit.

Office relocation – Our current lease is up on September 30, and we will be moved into our new office by that date. Perhaps our next meeting can be held at the 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 and a \$50K grant from the GHR Foundation Program and sponsorship numbers are soft at year end, due to the pandemic.

Reports have been sent to Schulze Family Foundation and the GHR Foundation

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.

Question: Can the GHR Grant be a repeat grant? GHR doesn't normally fund for general operations, but for projects and programs. they understand and appreciate what we do for both our member schools and the broader nonpublic educational ecosystem.

Membership Report

We ended 2020-21 with 160 schools, a good increase over previous years. As of 9/23/2021, ten new schools have joined MISF.

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, and Tim will do direct outreach to those schools who may be "on the fence." Our renewal rate is generally around 94-95%, and we are on track for that again this year. At 10/1, member benefits will stop for those who have not paid.

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. The STEM Advisory Committee is meeting soon to talk about the conference and next year's STEM program.

School Leadership Conference will be held in person at the end of this month. So far registration is running at about 75% of attendance during a normal year... but the group so far represents a broad and diverse gathering across our entire membership.

Protocols: We are encouraging attendees to use their best precautions.

We are hearing that school leaders want to be out of their buildings and be together. To that end, we have built additional networking and "down" time into the conference.

Session topics this year include how to tell your school's story, dealing with the media, advocacy 101, digital wellbeing, and self-care as a school leader.

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 with \$214K in restricted funds, but our cash on hand position is strong, with not many liabilities.

Our income statement also shows that we had a strong, positive year. Our revenues are down, but expenses have been managed well.

The cashflow report shows us ending in a strong cash position next year.

Rebranding update

Megan Junius presented a rebranding update:

The first phase of MISF's strategic plan was the membership journey; taking members from joining to being an active participant.

The next part of our plan is Resource Development, encompassing how to widen our base of support and create critical partnerships to increase our impact. The challenge was to get a better handle on our story and image, which led us to look at changing our name and rebranding. The new name/tagline will be Mindependent: A Trusted Partner for Private and Independent Schools.

We will reveal the new name publicly at the School Leadership Conference. Looking forward, once the rollout of the new name/brand is complete, we will begin the next phase of the strategic plan which will be led by Veena Lakkundi.

The chair called for a motion to approve the new name for our organization. So moved by Brian Sullivan, seconded by Kelly Regan. Motion passed unanimously

Adjourn

There being no further business brought forth, the Chair asked for a motion to adjourn. So moved by Michael Lamb, seconded by Tim Berner. Meeting adjourned at 8:58 AM



Wyayn Rasmussen – Secretary

9/27/2021