

June 2022

Dear MA Community,

*The MA Board held its monthly meeting on Thursday, June 9, 2022. In keeping with our goals for open communication with our community, highlights from the meeting are included in this update.*

### **School Spotlight**

Each month, the Board honors individuals who have gone above and beyond for Monument Academy. Anyone in the school community can submit a nomination. If you have a teacher, staff member, or parent you would like to nominate for recognition at a future meeting, please email: [board@monumentacademy.net](mailto:board@monumentacademy.net).

This month the four Board members continuing their terms honored the two Board members completing their 3-year commitment: Chris Dole and Megghan St. Aubyn. The Board presented Mr. Dole and Mrs. St. Aubyn with a plaque commemorating their dedication and servant leadership to Monument Academy.

### **COO Update**

Mr. Holmes reported on the continued work at MA over the summer. The Administration continues interviewing and hiring to fill open positions. Employment opportunities can be found on the MA website under [job openings](#).

Mr. Holmes reported that District 38's transportation team would assist MA in having our bus inspected and with training to license bus drivers. Once the bus is inspected and has certified drivers, Monument Academy could use the bus for transportation to athletic events and possibly for transporting students between campuses. More information will be communicated in future meetings.

Fourteen teachers and staff members have formed two focus groups: Classical Education and Character Education. Mr. Vinchattle, MS Principal, is leading the Character group, and Mr. Kennington, HS Principal, is leading the Classical group. The goal of the focus groups is to gather staff input to inform future decision-making and instruction in each area. We are thankful for the willingness of our teachers to volunteer during summer break and serve our students in this meaningful way.

Mr. Holmes announced that Mrs. Sara Molsen, who has worked the front desk at MA for many years, will be the new Registrar. Congratulations, Mrs. Molsen, and thank you for your continued service. If you know of families interested in learning more about Monument Academy, please send them her way.

### **SAAC West & East**

The SAAC East Committee completed the end-of-year survey and made recommendations to the Board. Survey results can be found on the MA Website, and the letter is included at the end of this update.

Both SAAC Committees are seeking volunteers for the 2022-23 school year. If you are interested in serving MA on this important accountability committee, please reach out to Ms. Barrett at the West Campus or Mrs. Duca at the East Campus.

### **Future Recording of Board Meetings**

The Board voted to begin recording meetings with the option to live stream or post within 72 hours. One of the challenges the Board faced in the past was having the proper technology and expertise to make this commitment. Therefore, the Board allocated funds for a stipend staff member to coordinate and for the appropriate hardware to ensure success. The Board values the engagement of MA teachers and parents and has received feedback that the community desired a remote option.

### **Policy Review**

The Board approved changes recommended by the Governance Committee on two policies: 1525 (State Assessments Refusal Policy), 1526 (State Assessments Administrative Policy), and reviewed 1527 (Student Retention. Policy) and 1528 (MA Homebound Instruction Policy) with no changes made. You can find the updated policies on the MA website under [Board Policies](#).

### **Student/Parent Handbook Review**

Mr. Holmes and the administrative team began the process of redlining the current Student/Parent Handbook. Board Members Misty McCuen and Lindsay Clinton have formed a parent committee to review the Handbook and give recommendations to Administration. Changes to the Handbook will be presented for Board approval at the July 2022 meeting.

### **Board Member 2022-23 Positions**

The Board voted on the following Board of Directors positions for the July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023 term:

President: Ryan Graham

Vice President: Lindsay Clinton

Secretary: Emily Belisle

Treasurer: Joe Buczkowski

Directors: Craig Carle, Misty McCuen, Danny O'Brien

### **FASTER Survey Results**

The Board reviewed the results of the FASTER survey. No motion was made to move forward with the program at this meeting. The Board will continue discussing this important topic of school safety at future meetings.

### **HWY-105 Recirculation**

Mr. Graham reported that MA did not receive any bids for the construction of the recirculation project. As a result, MA put the project back out for bid on June 8, with a bid deadline of July 26, 2022. Because of this delay, MA has resumed discussion with the neighboring church to extend the use-agreement of the church driveway. More information will be sent to our community in July. The IFB is posted on the MA Website under [Contact Us](#).

### **Manager of Development & Mission Engagement**

The Board voted to approve a new position on the organizational chart. The Manager of Development & Mission Engagement will work to develop and execute an overall fundraising plan for Monument Academy. The job will be posted on the [MA website](#) and other recruiting sites this week. As a charter school, MA depends on parents to give their time, talent, and treasure to continue providing an excellent education for our students. This position will work to increase giving among the MA community.

*We appreciate your interest and involvement in your child's education. It is our honor to serve the community to work in partnership for the good of Monument Academy and all it stands for. The Board is always open to receiving your feedback at [board@monumentacademy.net](mailto:board@monumentacademy.net).*

Respectfully,

MA Board of Directors

Enc: SAAC East Recommendation Letter

June 1, 2022

Monument Academy Board of Directors,

The East Campus School Accountability and Advisory Committee (SAAC) would like to thank the Board for your service to MA and for your response to our mid-year recommendations. We appreciate the opportunity that the SAAC Parent Survey gives for parents to provide feedback and for the Board to demonstrate action in response.

As is typical, the end of the year survey had a lower response rate than the mid-year survey, with approximately 30% of families participating. The analysis may or may not be representative of the majority of our families. However, based on these responses and continuity from the mid-year survey, SAAC is providing the following information and recommendations:

Of those surveyed, the percentage of parents satisfied with their child's academic progress remained around 87%. "Satisfied" consists of three categories: extremely satisfied, more than satisfied, and satisfied. Across both middle and high school, the responses trended downward, increasing in satisfied and decreasing in extremely satisfied, indicating a decrease in perceived excellence. Parent comments cited concerns about staff turnover-including use of long term subs or staff teaching outside their area of expertise or passion and too much reliance on technology/iPads. We recommend that the Board continue to build upon efforts to attract and retain excellent teachers and examine the use of iPads/technology in relation to a Classical Education.

Likewise, there was satisfaction, yet a downward trend in excellence, in response to the atmosphere and opportunities to develop the whole child at MA (character, leadership, electives). Parent comments reflect the need for additional electives and extracurricular opportunities as our school grows. There were numerous concerns relating to increased negative behaviors including bullying, lower character expectations, and more rivalry between grade levels. We recommend that the Board support review of Character Education and Behavior Standards at the Secondary level.

Parents expressed a strong desire for more communication from teachers, both through more consistent use of Canvas and in communication about curriculum. Although nearly 90% of parents report knowing how to check grades on Canvas, it is clear that many parents do not know that they can use each course's Canvas Homepage to see the topics that will be covered in the classroom every week. SAAC has asked Mrs. Bartlett to include and highlight parent use of the Canvas Homepages during Back to School events. We will also provide guidance on this in the Lynx News next fall. We advise the Board to consider more uniform training and standards for Canvas teacher use, including posting assignments and grades.

Please review the survey data, posted on the MA website, and reach out with any questions.

In Service,

Emily Davis

SAAC East Chairperson