

OKLAHOMA SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD**  
**Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics**  
**1141 North Lincoln Blvd.**  
**Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**  
**October 16, 2025, 10:00 a.m.**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

The Board of Trustees for the Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics met on October 16, 2025, at 1141 North Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, OK. The meeting was held consistent with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act. Advance notice of this meeting was transmitted to the Oklahoma Secretary of State on November 8, 2024, at 11:33 a.m., and the agenda was posted on the outside main door at 1141 North Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, OK, on October 14, 2025, at 9:05 a.m. and posted to the OSSM website on October 14, 2025, at 9:20 a.m. in compliance with 25 O.S. § 311.

Present: Dan Little, Tom Adelson, Lance Benham (ZOOM), Jerry Burger, Brent Bushey, Gary Ellis, Marian Free, Sonya Jones, Dr. Michael Jordan, Dr. Lara Mashek, Ron Mashore, Sen. Adam Pugh (ZOOM).

Ex-Officio Members Present: Dr. Melinda Cro (OSU/ZOOM), Dr. Goldie Thompson (OSRHE).

OSSM Staff Present: Tony Cornforth, Talita DeNegri, Shannon Gorbet, Dr. Cecil Lewis, Covell Lindstrom, Lauren Vela, Linda Waters.

Guests: Madalynn Martin (Assistant Attorney General), Dr. Raegan Qualls (OCCY).

- I. Having noted a quorum, Chairman Dan Little called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.
- II. **Take action on Minutes of the Board of Trustees Regular Meeting of August 21, 2025.**

Mr. Little asked for discussion, corrections, and approval of the minutes from August 21, 2025. Jerry Burger moved for approval of the minutes. Ron Mashore seconded. The vote is recorded below:

Dan Little	Yes	Sonya Jones	Yes
Tom Adelson	Yes	Dr. Michael Jordan	ABS
Jerry Burger	Yes	Dr. Lara Mashek	ABS
Brent Bushey	Yes	Ron Mashore	Yes
Gary Ellis	ABS		
Marian Free	Yes		

Motion passes.

Chairman Little moved forward to Item IX of the agenda – Discussion and possible action on the schedule of the OSSM Board of Trustees and OSSM Executive Committee regular meetings for the 2026 calendar year. After no discussion from the Trustees, Ron Mashore made a motion to adopt the proposed dates, and Dr. Michael Jordan seconded. The vote is as follows:

Dan Little	Yes	Marian Free	Yes
Tom Adelson	Yes	Sonya Jones	Yes
Jerry Burger	Yes	Dr. Michael Jordan	Yes
Brent Bushey	Yes	Dr. Lara Mashek	Yes
Gary Ellis	Yes	Ron Mashore	Yes

Motion unanimously passes.

### **III. Report from Chief Fiscal Officer.**

Budge Request was submitted on October 1<sup>st</sup> with four items listed: 1) Armed Security; 2) Licensed Counselor Position; 3) Residence Hall Roof Replacement; and 4) Fiber Upgrade, to include Wi-Fi Expansion. The two One-Time Request items (RH Roof Replacement and Fiber Upgrade/Wi-Fi Expansion) will be submitted to the Long Range Capital Planning Commission. However, the Commission’s submittal process has changed and is not finalized. Installation of new chillers will occur when temperatures are cooler.

OSSM is currently obtaining bids for engineering services for both the air handling unit projects, which have funding, but the fan coil unit project will depend on the cost of the air handling unit. It will then be determined how much, if any, of the fan coil unit project can be completed. Hopefully, one or two units can be completed.

OSSM transitioned to a new food service company. The new company is S&Bz Bistro, which is under the Department of Rehabilitative Services. DRS offers a program designed to assist individuals who are visually impaired. This company met the school's needs and began serving the students on September 29<sup>th</sup>. The transition has gone very smoothly, and both students and staff are pleased.

The Budget-to-Actuals Report compared first-quarter expenditures for FY26 to FY25. Increases in Personnel Costs are reflective of the salary adjustments given due to the additional appropriations received. Also highlighted was the increase in Professional Services for Magellan Executive Services for strategic planning purposes.

Total Expenditures for FY25 are also reflective of the entire year. The amount, \$1,977,691, will become a carryover and will be budgeted into the current year's budget. The amount will be reduced once the chiller project is completed. Therefore, an anticipated carryover amount of approximately \$1,600,000 will be reported, and the budget revision process is expected to be completed within the next month, with the revised budget presented at the January Board meeting.

Tom Adelson inquired if the food was better with the new company, and Ms. Gorbet replied that the students very much liked the food.

#### **IV. Report from Vice President of Academic Services.**

Dr. Cecil Lewis reported that he has completed his observations of the instructors, and all of them have been satisfactory, with a few who are outstanding.

Shantwynice Wright (correction made by Dr. Lewis; her last name is Garcia), the Academic Counselor, has focused on expanding mental health therapy and counseling options for students. In addition, he reported Mr. Cornforth is in the process of preparing a Memorandum of Understanding for a new provider, who happens to be an OSSM alum, to also provide counseling. It was also shared that in order to better accommodate our students with disabilities, Ms. Garcia is working on a more formal process for academic accommodations rather than leaving it at the discretion of the instructor. To demonstrate the school's need for a more formal process, 17% of the OSSM student population takes medications for ADHD.

Dr. Lewis expressed that his staff did not have a clear list of duties for each of their roles, particularly on a month-by-month basis. He conveyed that this list, which each staffer is making for him, will assist him in integrating these duties into each staff member's evaluation process.

It was communicated that OSSM had 20 National Merit Scholar semifinalists. Several students participated in the OSU Department of Mathematics Contest and competed very well, winning numerous awards.

Dr. Lewis also informed the Board Members of several upcoming school events for October and November.

Mr. Brent Bushey inquired of Dr. Lewis if the staff had job descriptions. He responded that the descriptions were very brief and were not clearly defined. Additionally, he is preparing one for himself.

**V. Report from Director of Admissions.**

Ms. Vela began her report by pointing out that the Goals she listed on her report remain the same, and she will continue to include them in her report for each Board meeting to ensure transparency and accountability.

Progress in the Admissions Department revealed that, so far, 47 different schools have been visited, with a total of 72 scheduled to be visited. Ms. Vela complimented the efforts of Mr. Andy Hayes, the Assistant Dean of Admissions, as well as the OSSM staff who have assisted in visiting schools across Oklahoma. As of the day of the Board meeting, 43 applications were in process, and a Ravena account has been created by the applicants. It is essential to note that the applications will not be completed until the spring, as the transcript requirement for the fall semester must be met. Two students have expressed interest in the OSSM virtual program. Twelve counties were represented by the 43 students applying. It is anticipated that there could be a projected number of 110-130 residential applications by the deadline of March 6<sup>th</sup>. Campus visit numbers continue to improve: 34 registered to shadow, 17 registered to tour, and 60 registered for Preview Day (October 25<sup>th</sup>).

Ms. Vela made a point to highlight important dates for the Board Members: Paper Screening on March 12<sup>th</sup> and Interview Day on April 18<sup>th</sup>. She strongly encouraged Board Members to volunteer and participate.

Chair Little commented that things appear to be going very well, and Mr. Cornforth added that a second Preview Day has been added to the calendar for February.

## **VI. Report from Director of Development.**

Mr. Lindstrom began his report by drawing attention to the Year-to-Date fundraising total of \$376,147 and the 185 gifts received. The total raised for 2024 was \$398,000, and he emphasized the goal of exceeding that amount. For Qtr. 3 of 2025, \$50,996 has been raised so far. Currently, 122 donors have contributed, with 22 of that total being new donors. Another category Mr. Covell highlighted was Individual Donors. These are defined as individuals who have no ties to OSSM – essentially, they are community members who want to support OSSM.

Two grants were submitted this quarter, totaling approximately \$15,000. They were to the Williams Companies (\$10,000) and to the Oklahoma Space Industry Development Authority Space Education (\$5,370). A total of 10 grants have been awarded so far this year. Grants awarded this quarter were from the Kirkpatrick Foundation (\$15,000) and the Oklahoma Arts Council (\$5,000).

The date for the 2026 Quantum Experience is May 1, 2026. The keynote speaker is James Dunlap from CO 94.

Other activities Mr. Lindstrom listed: 1. Finalizing the 2025 Annual Report, to be released in early November. 2. 2025 Annual Appeal, which is the annual push done at the end of each year. A rebranding of the annual appeal was conducted, with the assistance of a marketing firm. A video is also in production. Both the Appeal and the video will be released in early November. 3. In the area of Stewardship, the Foundation has been working very hard to develop a robust stewardship pipeline in order to provide all donors with a feeling of gratitude on behalf of the Foundation. Social media is another area of emphasis and an e-newsletter. *The Catalyst* was launched on October 3.

Mr. Lindstrom has been working on the alumni database. On September 20<sup>th</sup>, he and Mr. Cornforth met with alumni from the San Francisco Bay area. Mr. Covell is planning to meet with alumni from the New York/New Jersey area.

Tom Adleson inquired about plans for outreach, particularly since annual giving from alumni was not strong, and he also asked if any funds raised by the Foundation impact Legislative appropriations. Mr. Lindstrom's response was that, because the Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization, appropriations are not affected. He also clarified the Foundation is specifically targeting engagement with alumni and parents, where the majority of giving occurs. Dr. Michael Jordan inquired whether a survey had been conducted among the alumni to gauge their interest in fundraising and for what specific purpose. The Foundation is exploring various mechanisms to gather valuable feedback.

Chair Little expressed his appreciation to the Burgers for their strong history in supporting Quantum Experience. He also encouraged the Board Members to place QE on their calendars.

## **VII. Report from the President.**

Mr. Cornforth opened his report by highlighting one of OSSM's signature programs – the Mentorship Program – led by Dr. Theodore Mathuram. Seniors are paired with a mentorship that often involves research, sometimes here at OSSM but more often with off-campus partners. A new partner for this year is OAIRE (Oklahoma Aerospace Institute for Research and Education), which is affiliated with OSU. One of OSSM's extra laboratories will now host OAIRE as a mentor to four OSSM seniors. The lab was dedicated as the Center for Advanced Aerospace Engineering.

There is the ambitious goal to visit one high school in each of Oklahoma's 77 counties. Mr. Cornforth expressed his own initiative of visiting approximately 20 schools in the last 6 weeks. He emphasized the value and importance of a person, rather than a piece of paper, from OSSM. A takeaway Mr. Cornforth shared with the Board Members was that the primary focus, distinguishing factor, for OSSM is academics, not the common theme in other high schools – sports.

Mr. Cornforth reiterated the point of a new push to reconnect with alumni and spoke to the San Francisco visit. Another new incentive he addressed was "Coffee & Connection." This is a quarterly event held in the early morning, during which an alumnus comes to campus as a featured guest to speak to community members. The speaker for the first C&C was Josh Payne from CO92, a member of the inaugural graduating class. The speaker's agenda also includes speaking to the current students later in the day at an all-school assembly.

Ron Mashore stated that numerous individuals were investing in OSSM, specifically two main groups: the parents and the legislature. He remembered having closer ties with the Legislature and various events held with members. He inquired about future plans to revive several events, as he expressed that OSSM might not be as well-known to the Legislators as it once was. Mr. Cornforth shared that Teacher Appreciation Day is an event that is held, but the Legislative Breakfast could also be revisited. Senator Pugh commented that a small percentage of Legislators know what OSSM is, but it is not a negative relationship due to the population at large. He applauded OSSM for its efforts to share the highlights of the school's success. Appropriations were higher. Senator Pugh also offered himself as a resource to bring Legislators to the campus. Both Mr. Burger and Mr. Mashore commented on the need to promote OSSM to the Legislature as well as inform them of the number of students returning to Oklahoma. Senator Pugh added that overall, it is a major selling point. Dr. Jordan asked if there is

a presentation day for the mentorship program and if the Legislature could be invited. Marian Free offered the suggestion to invite OSSM alumni to the Oklahoma schools that are visited by President Cornforth and the Admissions Department. It was also suggested by Sonya Jones to bring a current OSSM student along on the visits.

#### **VIII. Report from the Board Chair.**

Mr. Little began his report by commenting on the progress of recruiting. This coming year, both quantity and quality are expected to be greatly improved, which will be a major accomplishment.

Preliminary work on the strategic plan is underway, and the initial discussions have been excellent.

This is the last full board meeting until next year. Mr. Little emphasized the importance of Board Members participating in the annual appeal. It is very important that Boards have 100% participation for grants submitted.

Mr. Little expressed his appreciation to the Board Members for their commitment to OSSM.

It was suggested by Chair Little to recreate the Legislative breakfast and name it “The Gene Rainbolt Legislative Breakfast.” It was Mr. Rainbolt who spearheaded the event.

#### **VIII. New Business.**

No new business was presented.

#### **IX. Adjournment.**

The motion was made by Ron Mashore to adjourn the meeting. Jerry Burger seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:01 a.m.