Christy Hammer University of Southern Maine

Public education has a mission and goals different from business as the "bottom line" is, or should be, always beyond ROI. Public education is a major vestige of our democratic experiment, and the needs of the business community are not always in synch with public education. Therefore, the need for authentic representation and vote by faculty and student representatives on the UMS board of trustees is critical to keep a better focus on reality. For example, while public education will always lose when it is expected to meet private business-like outcomes, preK-16+ education has attempted to employ business-like methods but without those resources. As I ask my students as a sociologist of education, where is the R&D office in your local K-12 school? In your local public U? Generally, they don't exist. The point is that trustees made up entirely of business and philanthropy representatives with the power to vote has hurt public education, but the way to help overturn that is by adding additional voices to your vote. As is long suggested in many different spheres, "Who is missing at the table?" when decisions are made? As responsible trustees of UMS, I would implore them to add *as full voting members* not just faculty and student representatives, but also add a representative educator from K-12, if they're brave enough to ask the right others to "hold their feet held to the fire", and to include in their midst those that will remind them how public education isn't always like business.