

Maine Learning Innovations

Minutes for a Meeting of the Board of Directors held June 17, 2025

Pursuant to email and public website notices, a virtual meeting of the Board of Maine Learning Innovations was convened on Zoom at 4:00 PM, June 17th, 2025. Board members attending were Donna Pelletier, Stacey Blanchard, Cherieann Harrison, and Susan Walters. Tina Meserve was excused. A quorum was present.

Attending for Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) were Melinda Browne, Don Fournier, Christina O'Grady, Lena Vitagliano, Chelsea Osgood, Jennifer Hight, and Stephanie Emery.

Attending from Stride was Tom Travia.

Opening Items.

Approval of Minutes. Cherieann motioned to approve the minutes of the Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) Governing Board Business Meeting of May 20th, 2025. Susan seconded. All in favor, so moved.

Finance Report.

Two-Year (FY26 & FY27) Budget and Three-Year Financial Plan Discussion.

Jennifer Hight shared the budget summary. Jennifer said that the summary is in the desired format requested by the Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC). Jennifer met with Dr. Browne and Jillian Dearborn to review the proposed two-year budget prior to the board meeting. Jennifer reported that MEVA did receive Maine Department of Education (MDOE) notifications of FY26 federal grant allocations for Title I, IV, and IDEA. As a result, adjustments were made within the revenue summary. We were still waiting on the FY26 Title II information at this time. A placeholder figure for Title II was put into the FY26 revenue summary of \$20K. After the preliminary Title II allocations are received by MEVA, then we shall do an amended budget which will need to be approved by the board at a future meeting.

Other than the addition of federal grants, not much in the FY26 budget has changed since May. For FY '26, '27 and '28 we assumed we would get the same revenue from the grants; there was no increase or decrease in projections. We forecasted four-hundred-ninety-five (495) students for October 1st, 2025, but the increased enrollments would not yield additional revenues until the following year. Jennifer used a two percent (2%) inflator, then three percent (3%) for FY 28. Jennifer included a spreadsheet tab for personnel salaries in the summary, which provided a breakdown of departments, and a projected two percent (2%) salaries increase. Health insurance was a gamble right now, but Jennifer was hopeful the expense would level off in the following years. Jennifer used a fifteen (15%) increase as a projection for now. The office lease breakdowns were also listed within the summary and there should not be any surprises there. The audit fees typically increased a little each year, Jennifer was not sure of what the

increase was yet. Donna appreciated the breakdown and did not have an issue with a small surplus for the coming year but liked to have a balanced budget for future years.

Cherieann motioned to approve the Two-Year (FY26 and FY27) Budget. Susan seconded. All in favor, so moved.

Administration. Dr. Melinda Browne presented the Head of School Report.

SY-2024/2025 Progress:

- Drafted FY26 ESEA and IDEA grant applications, based on preliminary allocations.
- Received substantial approval for the FY26 IDEA application.
- Submitted Preventing Student Homelessness Grant Performance Report.
- Grades for Semester-2 have closed, and will be mailed to parents, with Spring '25 MAP Growth reports, this month.
- Summer programming begins on June 23rd and ends on August 8th. We have a schedule that includes a weekly summer faculty meeting.

Donna asked Dr. Browne if the summer program was a choice for students or was it mandatory? Dr. Browne stated that we strongly recommended the programming to students who needed it. Donna asked, of those who are supposed to participate, how many participated in the summer programs? Dr. Browne stated that participation was high for recommended students, typically around ninety percent (90%) or more. We followed up with students throughout summer.

Spring '25 Panorama Survey Results:

- MEVA administered the annual Panorama School Climate Survey to stakeholder groups in late March 2025.
- MEVA attained the participation requirements.
- MEVA is meeting/exceeding Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) expectations in accordance with our performance framework.
- MEVA distributed the results to board members and faculty.
- MEVA is disaggregating the survey results and sharing them with the faculty.
- MEVA has drafted an Action Plan for school improvement, based on the Spring '25 results.

Draft SY-2025/2026 Panorama Survey Action Plan:

- *Target **Rigorous Expectations (Students)**: Overall, how high are teachers' expectations of you?*
- **Action Plan (Students): Have a healthy competition in class.** From Panorama Playbook "Creating a competition around issues such as homework completion, note-taking, or talking during class is an effective way to motivate students to change behavior for the better. This move works to establish routines and increase engagement in what might otherwise be less-exciting activities."
- *Target **School Climate (Teachers)**: On most days how enthusiastic are students about being at school?*

- **Action Plan (Teachers): Increase training on how to encourage student engagement in the virtual setting.**
- *Target **Feedback and Coaching (Teachers)**: How often do you receive feedback on your teaching? How much feedback do you receive on your teaching? How much do you learn from the teacher evaluation processes at your school?*
- **Action Plan (Teachers): Increase teacher/peer observations and feedback through peer observations and presentations at department meetings.**
- *Target **Professional Learning (Teachers)**: Through working at your school, how many new strategies for your job have you learned?*
- **Action Plan (Teachers): Increase targeted professional learning/training at weekly Process Improvement (PI) Meetings.**

Donna had an input about the Spring '25 Panorama School Climate Survey results: MEVA showed improvement among the varying groups. She was surprised about the Professional Development section of the survey was dropping a little, but the feedback/coaching piece went up. This was a little confusing. Donna made the point that it would be good to address the needs.

Dr. Browne committed to analyzing the results with the faculty. The school would be working on the areas identified. The plan was to define/communicate professional development for the faculty better.

SY-2024/2025 Annual Monitoring and State Reporting:

- We are submitting documents for the SY-2024/2025 annual monitoring.
- This includes gathering school performance data, which is collected on a shared workbook. We will share the workbook with the governing board in advance of our August meeting.
- The deadline for submissions is July 11th, 2025. We are on track to fulfill our reporting responsibilities.
- All state reporting is submitted or in progress ahead of deadlines.

FY26 ESEA Application Feedback:

- MEVA opened the public comment window on April 7th.
- We announced the window at our weekly schoolwide faculty meetings, and in our Monday messages, monthly newsletters, and board meeting agendas.
- The feedback received was reviewed and considered.
- The FY26 ESEA Application public comment window is closed. This will be recorded in the board meeting minutes.
- The FY26 ESEA Application will be submitted when the allocations are finalized by the Maine Department of Education (MDOE).

Dr. Browne reported that MEVA received a little feedback from the public, which would be factored into the FY26 ESEA application. The FY26 ESEA application for public comment window was now closed.

SY-2025/2026 Enrollment:

Enrollment numbers looked great so far for incoming enrollments, we are on track to have a full school for SY-2025/2026. Special Education enrollment numbers showed MEVA at around twenty-four (24%) of the student body, which was on par with prior years.

Donna asked if we were concerned about the seventh (7th) grade enrollment being a little low? Dr. Browne shared that these levels were typical for this time of year.

Stephanie made the point that the seventh (7th) grade class typically ran smaller in number than the other grade levels. We currently had a bunch of families who were enrolling students entering seventh (7th) grade working on their applications; we just did not include them in the approved numbers yet.

6/13/25 Update				
55 Seats Left			New Interest = 3	Sent CTE's = 88 out there total (of which 22 are being moved to working this week)
GRADE	New	Returning	Approved Grand Total	Working on Applications
7	7		7	6
8		10	40	50
9		20	29	49
10		31	71	102
11		17	111	128
12		16	88	104
Grand Total	101	339	440	59

SE Counts:

SE	
GRADE	New & Returning
7	
8	14
9	16
10	33
11	35
12	22
Grand Total	120

Donna asked, on average in past years, around June we had a small number for seventh (7th) grade, and then it filled up closer to start school? Stephanie confirmed, yes. Donna said she would like us to watch that number and keep her informed as we continued with enrollment. Dr. Browne committed to continuing to share the enrollment breakdown each month in the same format.

Governance.

Strategic Goals:

- We attended a strategic planning workshop, hosted by the Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC), on May 22nd.
- We are retaining MEVA's five-year math proficiency and reading growth goals.
- We are adding a five-year reading proficiency goal.

Dr. Browne said that Donna and her discussed prioritizing an inclusive learning environment for our students. Donna agreed and said that they were looking at the subgroups as part of our goals. Dr. Browne committed to submitting the goals to the MCSC sometime this summer. We plan to monitor the progress over the coming year.

Crisis Management Plan/Emergency Response Guide:

- We updated the Crisis Management/Emergency Response Guide to include information about how to address staff concerns for students/families' well-being.

The manual was updated to help address staff concerns for students & families' well-being. We recommended a communication chain, so that communications were streamlined and people were not receiving duplicate calls or messages. This fell into the guidance department's hands to manage, and for families to be put in touch with community resources. Everyone would still be involved, but the communication would pass through the counselors.

Donna added, would we have a date of revision on these new additions? Stephanie confirmed, will do. The document would have the date before final distribution.

Lena mentioned that the wording in the plan was extremely important and needed to be clear. Lena said that outreach should not be done until all staff and parties involved with the student are informed properly and on the same page. It was important for individuals to have a thorough understanding of a situation before action was taken.

Donna thanked Lena and expressed that it sounded like there was a need for more training in that department. Lena should work with Melinda on this outside of the board meeting.

Dr. Browne acknowledged the valuable feedback and committed to incorporating it further into a training this August.

Susan motioned to approve the Crisis Management Plan/Emergency Response Guide. Stacey seconded. All in favor, so moved.

Related Services Procedural Manual in Progress:

- The updated Related Services Procedural Manual is in progress and expected to be ready for the July 2025 meeting.
- We value all the hard work that our special education administrator and teachers to coordinate related services for IEP students.

- We hope the manual provides structure and answers questions that may arise when conducting the IEP process.
- Once approved, we plan to distribute the manual to contracted providers, as well as MEVA special education faculty.

Dr. Browne reported the Related Services Procedure Manual was being worked on and we would try to have it ready by July for approval. Then once the manual was approved it would be distributed to contracted providers.

Grade 11 and 12 Curriculum Maps:

- Many thanks to the teachers and committee members for all their hard work creating the curriculum maps.

Grade eleven and twelve (11 and 12) Curriculum Maps were sent to the board ahead of time for review. Dr. Browne and Donna thanked all the staff members involved in this process.

Cherieann motioned to approve the Grade eleven and twelve (11 and 12) Curriculum Maps. Stacey seconded. All in favor, so moved.

Public Discussion.

Donna congratulated the board members; We met our MCSC board goals for Professional Development (PD). This year we were looking good in our MCSC annual monitoring performance measure. Donna gave the board a heads up that the MCSC was changing the expectations regarding board training a little bit going forward. Dr. Browne said congratulations to the board members as well.

Stacey motioned to enter Executive Session under 1 MRSA §405, sub-§6, ¶A & ¶E to discuss employee evaluation. Susan seconded. All in favor, so moved.

Susan motioned to exit Executive Session. Stacey seconded. All in favor, so moved.

Adjournment.

Susan motioned to adjourn. Cherieann seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 5:18 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Emery and Dr. Melinda Browne
Secretary pro tempore