

Maine Learning Innovations

Minutes for a Meeting of the Board of Directors held November 16, 2021

Pursuant to email and public website notices, a virtual meeting of the Board of Maine Learning Innovations was convened on Zoom at 2:00 PM, November 16, 2021. Board members attending were Donna Pelletier, Amy Carlisle, and Nicholas “Nick” Gannon. Ed LeBlanc, and Peter Mills were excused.

Attending from MEVA were Melinda Browne, Donald Fournier, Christina O'Grady, Chelsea Osgood, Cheryl Brigham, Stephanie Emery, Joel Randazza, Mehry Mohammadi, Jennifer Clark, Dan Pierce, Holly Chapdelaine, Jillian Dearborn, and Jennifer Hight.

Attending from Stride were Todd McIntire, and Mary Markert.

Attending from other organizations was Stacey Blanchard, and Chad Cote (Clark Insurance).

Minutes. Nick motioned to approve minutes for the September 21st and October 19th, 2021, governing board meetings. Amy seconded, all in favor, so moved.

New Board Member. Nick motioned to move item IV E to start of Agenda, Amy seconded, so moved. Amy motioned to approve Stacey Blanchard as a member of the MEVA governing board, Nick seconded, all in favor, so moved. Donna welcomed Stacey to the board; pleased that Stacey is willing to do it. Stacey said that it was an honor to serve.

Employee Health Insurance. Nick motioned to move IV F up to the start of the Agenda, Amy seconded, all in favor, so moved.

Chad Cote, Clark Insurance, informed the board that the MEVA claims to premium ratio was \$1.20 (claims) for every \$1.00 (premiums). The recommended 2022 Anthem policy increase was 1.66% from the prior year. Chad noted that the 1.66% increase was one of the best rates that he had seen.

Chad said that at the current time, level-funded plans such as Firefly Health were not an affordable option for the MEVA employee group. Another barrier to exploring the level-funded (Firefly Health) option was the required individual health survey, which some employees did not fully complete for various reasons.

Chad explained that Maine employers were given a health insurance premium credit of \$39M (Governor's order) to help reduce expenses. The board discussed the option of sharing the MEVA insurance credit of \$2,350 per month with employees. Jennifer pointed out that the credit had already showed up on the November bill. Jillian said that she would look into the credit and gather information for further discussion.

Open Enrollment will begin in advance of the January 1st renewal date.

Chad reported that the MEVA Dental Plan premium had increased by 3% from the prior year. The Dental Plan was popular with MEVA employees.

Amy motioned to approve the recommended Employee Health Insurance, three Anthem plans, for 2022. Nick second, all in favor so moved.

Donna thanked Chad for his hard work on the MEVA Health Insurance Renewal.

Finance. Jennifer reported that the audit was done; Wipfli will present the FY 21 Audit Report at the December 21st board meeting. Wipfli was also preparing the Form 990.

Jennifer committed to providing monthly finance summaries, along with the quarterly reports, as requested by the board. The quarterly reports were formatted in accordance with guidelines from the Maine Charter School Commission.

Nick motioned to approve the FY22 Quarter-1 Financial Report, Donna second, all in favor, so moved.

Administration. Melinda provided a SY2021/2022 Progress Update on the following projects:

- Brightspace Analytics – MEVA is upgrading to Performance Plus so that on demand reports may be generated to inform school administration.
- Class/Brightspace Integration – MEVA is implementing Class, a Zoom-based virtual classroom that provides advanced tools to the teachers. MEVA is continuing to use Bongo, which is embedded within the Brightspace platform.
- Instructional Video Lesson Content – MEVA teachers are planning to create embedded instructional video content within their Brightspace courses to reinforce students' learning.
- Turnitin – MEVA is implementing Turnitin, which is a plagiarism checker.
- Newsela – MEVA is exploring Newsela as a supplementary English Language Arts curriculum.
- MAP Accelerate through Khan Academy – MEVA is exploring MAP Accelerate/Khan Academy as a supplementary math curriculum.
- Infinite Campus – The Infinite Campus implementation project is progressing on schedule.
- Website – MEVA's new school-based website is up and running.

Melinda reported the following:

- 95% of MEVA students in grades 7-11 completed their Fall NWEAs during the testing window, Oct. 5th – Oct. 29th.
- NWEA data were analyzed utilizing projected proficiency in math reading, and language usage. Projected proficiency is defined as how students will likely perform on their Spring '22 state assessments, utilizing a generic linking study. Christina O'Grady shared graphs that illustrated the NWEA projected proficiency of grade levels and major subgroups.
- Informed by the NWEA data, internal goals at Maine Virtual Academy are: 1. Create an individualized learning plan (ILP) for every student, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and designing a plan for filling skills gaps. 2. Incorporate NWEA data in every classroom, using this data to inform instruction. 3. Train teachers to be proficient in analyzing NWEA data and utilizing it into their classrooms.

Melinda and Christina O'Grady summarized the results of MEVA's NWEA Projected Proficiency Analysis:

- Overall, Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) shows a relative strength in the areas of Reading and Language Usage. MEVA continues to show math as an area of improvement. The data shows that MEVA has made gains in this area in some grade levels, especially the 10th grade students who were with MEVA last year.
- Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) will continue to incorporate the latest pedagogical practices. MEVA's teachers analyze the individual student's NWEA scores and the gaps in their specific skills to assign supplemental work to fill those gaps. MEVA is going to dive a little deeper into some of the data to try to determine the causes of the proficiency differences between subgroups.

Melinda gave the Enrollment Update:

- MEVA has retained 98% of students who were enrolled on 10/1, excluding students who graduated or moved out of state.

- MEVA post 10/1 retention is slightly better than the prior year by approximately 2%.
- MEVA has added six (6) new students who will begin in January, on schedule to complete their Winter NWEAs, which begin on the 11th.
- New students are provided with a MEVA laptop upon request, prepared at our Augusta office.

MEVA is supplying/managing student laptops. Joel Randazza, Technology Coordinator, provided the steps that he takes to prepare the refurbished laptops for the students:

- Reset the device from within Windows, erasing all apps, settings, and documents.
- First making sure the Windows 10 version is current and all security updates are installed, I create shortcuts to Email and Brightspace on the desktop.
- Then, connect the device to Microsoft Intune by signing in with the students Microsoft account and wait for it to check in to the console, so it can be managed.
- Then, if it hasn't been done, take the back cover off and secure the SSD drive with a Velcro-disk.
- Finally, the laptop gets boxed up and shipped via USPS Priority mail.
- Parents/LCs do not seem to be using the ticketing system. Occasionally Joel gets a request through it, but no more than 10% of the time. Parents/LCs are primarily contacting him via email.

Joel noted that he had addressed computer issues that came through from the organization, Notebooks For Students (NFS), which was the source of the student laptops.

Governance. Donna presented the MEVA's Governing Board goals for School Year 2021-2022 that were informed by the recent Board Self Evaluation.

1. MEVA's governing board will systematically review, evaluate, and update policies to ensure compliance and effectiveness.
2. MEVA's governing board members will commit to performing their proper responsibilities by ensuring timely budget development including long range plans for MEVA and engaged participation in school governance.

Amy motioned to approve the MEVA's Governing Board goals for School Year 2021-2022. Nick seconded, all in favor, so moved.

The board discussed adjusting/reducing office space due to most staff working remotely, given the continuing pandemic. It was noted that on June 30th, 2023 the lease expires. Pre-pandemic expectation was 1 remote day and 4 days in the office. Future discussion/clarification with the Commission were planned regarding in office staff attendance and needed facilities.

Nick motioned to approve the MEVA Facilities Plan, as is, Donna seconded, all in favor, so moved.

The new Restraint and Seclusion law went into effect October 16th, 2021, requiring MEVA to follow the policy, provided by Drummond & Woodsum, in conjunction with their training that Melinda attended. MEVA planned to facilitate a future training for the teachers that incorporates the updated procedures.

Amy motioned to approve the MEVA Restraint and Seclusion Policy/Procedures, Nick seconded, all in favor, so moved.

Dr. Mary Madden- new 3rd party evaluator, is focusing on student/family enrollment experience. The Charter Commission has to review and approve the evaluator's resume and proposal, at their next business meeting, scheduled for December 14th.

Amy motioned to approve the Proposal for MEVA's SY2021/2022 Independent Third-Party Evaluation. Nick seconded, all in favor, so moved.

Nominations of Professional Staff – SY2021/2022. Melinda presented the new hires: Dante Castro, Ed Tech III, and Kristen Schmidt, Ed Tech I.

Executive Session. Nick motioned to enter Executive Session under 1 MRSA §405, sub-§6, ¶A & ¶E to discuss employee goals at 3:31 pm. Amy seconded.

Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 3:47 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Emery, Jillian Dearborn, and Melinda Browne
Secretary pro tempore