

Maine Learning Innovations

Minutes for a Meeting of the Board of Directors held May 18, 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, May 18, 2021. Board members attending were Amy Carlisle, Donna Pelletier, and Peter Mills. Kim Whitman and Ed LeBlanc were excused.

Attending from MEVA were Melinda Browne, Jennifer Hight, Donald Fournier, Jillian Dearborn, Lena Vitagliano, Chelsea Osgood, Christina O'Grady, Lizzie Malvicini, Mehry Mohammadi, Stephanie Emery, Joel Randazza (IT), Meghan Reitchel, Nic Taylor, Cheryl Brigham, Kelli Boucher, and Nicole Hart.

Attending from Stride were Mary Markert, Todd McIntire, and Beth Perry

Minutes. Upon motion by Donna, seconded by Peter, minutes for the meetings of March 16 and April 27, 2021 were approved.

Finance.

Jenn has been busy. The audit is September 8 to 10 and will probably be remote again.

Third quarter financials: A \$25K deficit for this year is still projected but COVID funds may bring us closer to balance.

We still plan to adopt Quickbooks, although we have not yet bought the program. We cannot use the on-line version. We need the desktop version with remote capacity. The new IT person, Joel Randazza, will help us buy the package. Jillian and Melinda have signed up for Quickbooks training.

The FY 2022 budget is being worked on and is coming along well.

In last Thursday's meeting with the Commission, Joe Drago said they are looking for another financial report from the charter schools that would enable the Commission to see like-kind data from each school. The schools are not pleased about having to prepare financial reports in an alternative form.

In response to Donna's question, Jennifer said that MEVA should be live on Quickbooks by mid-June and ready to use it before July 1, the start of next fiscal year.

Upon motion by Donna, seconded by Peter, the third quarter financial package was unanimously approved.

Head of School Report.

With the Board's approval, the school is arranging to purchase laptops and course materials from alternative sources. For course and curriculum planning for the coming year, some teachers will be paid to design their own material. The cost per pupil from Stride is \$255 per year. Other vendors are less. These shifts in procurement could reduce costs by as much as half a million dollars. Opening procurement options provides teachers a chance to choose their own virtual classroom.

Christina, who teaches science, said that Accelerate will challenge her students with a varied and well-rounded curriculum.

Nicole Hart said that Savvas courses will be used as a link from Bright Space. It works like iXL does to determine what content students are ready for in math.

Chelsea Osgood, Cheryl Brigham, Kelli Boucher, and Nic Taylor endorsed the new procurement plan. Nic, who teaches middle school math, is excited to implement Savvas which offers good opportunities for differentiation and remediation. It has lots of bells and whistles for middle schoolers and the content is manipulative.

In response to Donna's question, Melinda said that the content is being aligned to Maine Learning Results and to Next Generation Science Standards. Teachers will be able to link standards right into the course material.

Upon motion by Donna, seconded by Peter, the proposed course procurement plan was unanimously approved.

Performance Report. 92.6% of our students have re-registered. Our target from the Commission's framework is for 85% re-registration. We have enrolled 53 new students. We have 23 working applications and are expecting to reach our limit of 431 enrolled students by the October 31 count date.

Panorama Surveys will be reviewed by the Commission in early June. Participation results as of May 24 included 72% of all students, 52% of families, and 100% of teachers. These surveys help to guide decision making and programing. Commission member Jana Lapoint liked the surveys as a means to inform school improvement.

Website.

MeVA would like to build its own website with its own information. We have bought the domain name Mainevirtualacademy.org. We looked at three design companies whose costs were about the same. We chose School Point that is widely used in Maine. The setup will cost \$4750 and the annual charge is \$6000. The Stride site lacks the depth that we want. We can benefit from controlling the content. The website will not go live until October 1 except for distributing internal information.

Upon motion by Donna, seconded by Peter, it was unanimously voted to approve development of a new website for the school.

Election of Board Chair. Upon motion by Peter, seconded by Amy, Donna was unanimously elected chair of the MeVA board effective from July 1, 2021. Amy will remain as a member of the board.

Compensation for FY 2022. Upon motion by Donna, seconded by Amy, it was unanimously voted to grant staff, teachers and administrators who were here last year a 2% increase in compensation for the coming year.

Educational Services Agreement.

Attorney Dan Stockford has asked Stride's lawyer to create a new draft of a Services Agreement for the coming year. Jennifer asked what fee percentage, if any, should apply to COVID funds. She needs to know for budget preparation. It is agreed that the 8% admin fee will be reduced to 4% and that the school will assume from Stride the payroll costs for the Family Academic Support Liaison (Lizzie Malvicini) and the Registrar (Meghan Reitchel). Stride will continue to pay the salary of the Program Manager for Operations (Stephanie Emery). Combining the new 4% Admin fee with the 7% Technical fee yields a total fee of 11% to be charged against revenues plus the cost of any a la carte products or services purchased from Stride. Whether the 11% fee should be applied to COVID funds is an open question.

Head of School Evaluation. Donna has reframed the evaluation form and added Melinda's goals into it. The Charter Commission and other public schools put one out in May and expect it to be turned in by June. Board members should submit their input to Amy to do a final write-up.

Title I Fund Applications. MeVA is again applying for title funds for FY 22. Our allocations are increasing, primarily as salaries for Title I teachers.

Adjournment. Upon motion by Peter, seconded by Donna, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter Mills, Secretary