

Maine Learning Innovations

Minutes for a Meeting of the Board of Directors held October 16, 2018

Pursuant to email and public website notices, a meeting of the Board of Maine Learning Innovations was convened on October 16, 2018, in the Maine Virtual Academy offices in Augusta at 2:00 PM. Members attending in person were Peter Mills and Ed Leblanc. Amy Carlisle attended by Skype. Donna Madore was excused.

Also attending in person were Melinda Browne, Jillian Dearborn, architect George Parker and accountants Patrick Nicholas and Danielle Tibbetts from Wipfli/Macpage. Sarah Berger from K12 attended by phone.

Minutes. Upon motion by Ed, seconded by Peter, minutes for the meeting of September 18, 2018, were unanimously approved subject to correcting the spelling of Sarah Butler Jessen's name.

Audit Report. Accountant Danielle Tibbetts and Patrick Nicholas presented our audit results. The management letter was a "clean report." There was one major adjustment entry. As of June 30, 2018, we owed \$55,000 in teacher salaries that had been earned during the school year but were to be paid by agreement during the summer. Rather than to record these as expenses when paid during FY19, the entries were restated as expenses for FY18 in which they were accrued.

MEVA has significant cash and reserves on hand. \$100,000 has been set aside for the possibility of expanding office space.

First Quarter Finance Report. Our financial package for the first quarter of FY 19 is ready to be submitted. Upon motion by Peter, seconded by Ed, it was unanimously voted to forward the package to the Charter Commission.

Architecture Plan Review. George Parker presented a drawing to show how we may expand our current space into the adjoining undeveloped portion of the second floor to provide an enclosed office for each teacher. After discussion, it was agreed to do another sketch with a conference room in the central space that is larger than what we have at present. In the meantime, we will ask each of the teachers to review and comment on the drawings and ask Peachey Builders to begin pricing out the cost of the improvements.

Head of School Report. As of October 1, we had an enrollment of just over our target of 390, but we will likely lose 3 or 4 of them. The sending school districts often hold on to school records perhaps in order to claim them in the October 1 census count.

We have 6 teachers for the middle school and 14 for high school, including Title and SPED teachers. The art teacher and a PE teacher bring the total teaching staff to 22. Middle school has a student-teacher ratio of 13 to 1. Middle school enrollment has doubled to just under 100 this year. High school student-teacher ratio is 19 to 1. Our overall ratio is 18 to 1. Our largest grades are 11 and 12; but we took in only two new seniors this year. With the Commission's knowledge, we are focusing our new admissions on grades 7 and 8.

We are working with 35 IST teachers to provide instruction in foreign languages, CTE and AP courses. That brings our high school ratio to 6 to 1.

The middle school meets five days per week with daily instruction in four core courses, math, science, social sciences and English. Art and PE are once a week. We keep students engaged all day.

For high school, math and English meet on Monday, Wednesday and Friday of each week in whole group sessions, each with new content. There are up to 50 students in each whole group but there are co-teachers, particularly in middle school. Title and SPED teachers both attend class and take students into breakout rooms.

Small groups are created by each classroom teacher based on formative quizzes. There is some team teaching particularly in the sciences. Vanessa and Caroline are collaborating in English. Students are able to review recordings of the sessions. The goal is to provide each student 5.5 hours of instruction every day and to keep each day highly structured. Connections has shorter lessons that are 30 minutes long.

This year, the teachers are on pace including middle school math. We have weekly department meetings. We have full time title teachers for math, Kylie for middle school and Nicole for high school. Our retention rate has so far increased by 15% over last year. Chronic absenteeism is between 13 and 17%. Mehry Mohammadi's work is having an impact. Middle school attendance is 80%. The high school is 60%. Both are up significantly from last year. This counts only attendance for live sessions, not recordings.

We encourage parents and coaches to log their involved time. We are seeing a dramatic increase this year. Attendance at field trips has mushroomed. 80 participated in the trip to the Maine State Museum today. The Senior class has elected officers. Results from last April's MEA exams came out in draft form yesterday and will be finalized on November 5. Middle school math improved by 5 or 6 percent.

Sarah Berger said that Erica Seybert could not attend today to report on first quarter assessments. We see improvements on lots of outputs but need to ask whether we have all the resources necessary to adjust instruction to meet the needs based on assessments.

Third Party Evaluation is underway. The quantitative portion of the report is done. The evaluator wants to survey parents again. We survey parents seven times a year and teachers four times. On Monday, we mailed the third survey for this year. K12 prepares and mails the surveys. The state DOE likes to see this done. The Panorama Survey was selected by the Commission to be issued each year in May to survey teachers, staff, parents, and students.

Employee Handbook. Attorney Dan Stockford has reviewed the employee handbook and Jillian is looking at it as well. It needs to be amended to align with our current policies and practices. Handbook review is also included in the suite of services provided by Paychex. Jillian will work with Paychex to develop a new edition of the handbook for us to approve.

At 4:10 PM, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Mills, Secretary