

## Maine Learning Innovations

Minutes for a Meeting of the Board of Directors held February 27, 2018

Pursuant to email and public website notices, a meeting of the Board of Maine Learning Innovations was convened in the Maine Virtual Academy offices in Augusta at 2:00 PM. Members attending in person were Amy Carlisle, Ed Leblanc, Peter Mills.

Also attending in person were: Jennifer Hight, Gina Post from the Charter Commission, Melinda Browne, Fadia Afeneh, teachers Chelsea Osgood and John Gilliland, and the following personnel from K12: Liz Roth; and Corey Cowell and Ben Lannen who are IT personnel. On the phone were Jillian Dearborn from MEVA staff and Patti Ashley from K12 finance.

**Minutes.** Minutes for the meeting of January 16, 2018, were unanimously approved.

**Head of School Report.** Melinda and the staff are evaluating math data and focusing on how to improve student performance. The courses are designed for daily lessons, but our lessons are not on a daily schedule. The question becomes what to leave out. We have moved the MEA testing date to April 4 so that we will have more instruction time before the assessment.

John Gilliland, who teaches math, spoke about pacing, how to focus on what's important. Because the curriculum has a large number of learning links and the opportunity for 3 or 4 assessments per week, it is hard not to fall behind by one or two units by the end of the semester. Seven units are provided for each semester. An eighth unit is available for an honors curriculum. If students have shown some shortcomings on the formative assessments but do well on the summative test, it is the summative test that takes precedence in grading the student's achievement.

Melinda said that MEVA could use another staff person 20 hours per week to work for Mike Susi on truancy and attendance. Mike's work on transcripts and truancy takes him away from academic advising. Mike is using Grad Plan technology to track student progress toward graduation.

**Health Coverage.** Chelsea Osgood reported that she is having greater difficulty this year in getting prior approvals from Community Health Options. John Gilliland said he had a similar issue with the tiers in his formulary for prescriptions. For drug pricing, Amy recommends consulting the website called "Good Rx." Drug prices among pharmacies vary across an extraordinary range.

**Financial Report.** Jennifer said we have a significant operating surplus so far this year, but we also have more staff to pay. We are current on all our grants. Bangor Savings recommends an ICS Insured Sweep Account to insure our balance over \$250K. Our state money could be deposited directly into the Sweep Account. Upon motion by Amy, seconded by Ed, the finance report was unanimously approved.

**Teacher Course Reimbursement Policy.** After discussion upon motion by Peter, seconded by Ed, it was unanimously voted to reimburse teachers up to \$3000 per academic year for professional development courses. Melinda will draft a policy to implement this change.

**K12's Technology Services.** Corey Cowell, IT director for K12, has been with K12 for 15 years. He oversees 26 technicians to support 6500 teachers across the U.S. with 24/7 support as needed. They run a national help desk with three priority levels under the Service Level Agreement. Priority 1 is when a teacher's access to students is out of commission which requires restoration that day.

Ben Lannen serves MEVA and K12's language program in Middlebury, VT. His office is in Middlebury, but he is frequently in Maine. He has family in Greene. K12 purchases computers and installed software from a single vendor to get discount pricing and quick service. The goal is to keep a standard computer in front of each teacher complete with a uniform series of software supports. Computers have a life cycle of three to five years. All computers are backed up daily. The current replacement cost is \$830.

For each computer in service, MEVA pays \$54.60 per year for utilities including Office 360, Acronis online backup, and Webroot AV. The technicians are able to take control of a teacher's computer for remote repair by using Connect Wise automatic remote access.

Jennifer said that we bought 8 new laptops in 2017, perhaps for new teachers. They have 14" screens. MEVA has 30 computers presently in inventory. Some are older machines held for backup use.

**Health Insurance.** Upon motion by Amy, seconded by Ed, it was unanimously voted to authorize Amy and Peter to have Chad Cote create a Health Reimbursement plan to supplement MEVA's present policy.

**Programs and Operations.** Fadia reported that enrollment reached our cap of 390 on the first day of the second semester and then we stopped enrolling. We have lost a few since then but will not replace them from the waiting list. Because our family indoctrination program is more intense, we are losing very few students from the newly enrolled. Katy Wormwood is calling them all for individual sessions. We had about 30 new families this semester.

Melinda said that our request to go to 420 students next year is tabled at the Commission. The math program is the issue.

We are allowed to prioritize our enrollment toward 7th and 8th graders. New students at the 11th and 12th grade levels are too often just trying to avoid going to school because they are coordinating a job. Our grade 12 has only 50% attendance while the Junior High is close to 100%.

At 4:33 PM, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Mills, Secretary