

## **Maine Learning Innovations**

Minutes for a Meeting of the Board of Directors held August 20, 2019

Pursuant to email and public website notices, a meeting of the Board of Maine Learning Innovations was convened at 2:00 PM, August 20, 2019, in the Maine Virtual Academy offices in Augusta. Board members attending in person were Peter Mills, Donna Madore, and Ed LeBlanc. Amy Carlisle attended by phone.

Also attending in person were Melinda Browne, Don Fournier, Chelsea Osgood, Jennifer Hight, Dee Pouzol, Patti Ashley, Sarah Berger, Adam Fox (K12 northern region coordinator), and Andrew Molchany from K-12.

**Minutes.** Upon Motion by Donna, seconded by Ed, minutes for July 16, 2019, were approved.

**Financial Report.** Jennifer said that we need better itemized receipts to support travel reimbursements. It was agreed that our policy on reimbursing for meals should be based on what is "reasonable." For example, breakfast should not be included for a day trip but only for overnight travel. For a day trip, a \$20 limit would be appropriate. For overnight travel, a \$40 limit on all meals seems reasonable. This is public money that must be accounted for with common sense. Our records are transparent. Even a single inappropriate expenditure could prove embarrassing.

In regard to capitalization for purchases, it was agreed to follow Jennifer's recommendation that we increase the limit from \$1000 to \$5000. The state will allow this and it will save on bookkeeping for unnecessary carryovers and depreciation.

The FY 19 audit has been rescheduled to September 4 and 5. Our accounts were not ready for the August date. Upon motion by Donna, seconded by Ed, the financial reports were unanimously approved.

### **Head of School**

Melinda is working on the renewal application by drafting a narrative with exhibits. Sarah is assisting to prepare some of the required student count data. At the suggestion of the Commission, we are preparing a specific report on graduation numbers divided by the number of years of enrollment in our school. There is a financial exhibit required to provide forward looking budget information. The Commission is maintaining its distance during pendency of the application. It is due by the end of September.

Our graduation rate for FY 19 was at 60.2% which is up by 11% from last year. It is not bad for a virtual school. We are reducing chronic absenteeism and NWEA growth is improving. High mobility and a high level of credit deficient students are typical of a virtual academy.

Chelsea said that we have had some juniors graduate early by doubling up on English. They can only do so by having a good plan in front of them.

Professional development this summer was done mostly by remote means. New teachers came in last week. The entire faculty met at Coastal Botanical Gardens this week. The Northern Region team from K12 have been giving presentations today.

For the first time, we will use the Panorama social and emotional survey this September. For our multi-year data report, we will not have the spring 1919 MEA results until next month. In response to Donna's question, Melinda said that we do have credit recovery courses that will be led by MeVA teachers. We have some kids taking two English courses in order to make up.

**Purchase of iXL.** Adam Fox from K12 reported that iXL is well received by other K12 teachers. It is easy for students to log in on the K12 platform. It has great diagnostics. Science & Social Studies only go up to 8th grade. English and math go up to 12th grade. iXL sends automatic reports to teachers and parents. You can watch the student complete an assignment and may monitor the amount of time spent logged in. Upon motion by Peter, seconded by Ed, it was unanimously approved to purchase iXL for 400 students for three years for \$21,000 subject to such concessions as we can obtain in case there is a need for early cancellation.

**Personnel.** Keirsten Harte, Kylie Tudela, Kristen Tripp, and Judy Wheeler have resigned and Linda Bailey never started. Kelly and Mindy are to be teaching high school Special Ed. We need someone for Junior High. In High School History, because Matt Corbett was co-teaching with Kristen Tripp, we are covered for now.

**Office Space.** The space looks great. Each room has an accent painted wall. Teachers are enjoying the new space. We have a carpet runner with the MeVA logo.

**Strategic Planning & Reports.** Lisa Plimpton, a researcher, has been hired by the Commission to evaluate how graduates are doing from all the charter schools. It is called an "Implementation Study" to determine whether each school did what it said it would do. She just finished one for Maine School of Math & Science. She would also be available to perform our third party evaluation for this year at a cost of \$16,000. Our last evaluation cost \$14,000 and was done by the author of "Selling Schools," a book not supportive of charter schools.

**Executive Session.** At 3:09 PM upon motion by Donna, seconded by Peter, it was unanimously voted to go into executive session under 1 MRSA §405, sub-§6, ¶A to discuss the compensation, employment, and duties of employees of Maine Virtual Academy.

At 4:08 PM, it was unanimously voted to close the executive session.

**Personnel Actions:** The following actions were taken by unanimous consent:

Michael Susi will be asked to work a full administrative schedule upon his return.

Dee Pouzol will be paid \$50,000 to work a full administrative schedule in FY 20.

Nicole Harte will be paid a stipend of \$3000 to coordinate title programs for the coming year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter Mills, Secretary