

Maine Learning Innovations

Minutes for a Meeting of the Board of Directors held March 15, 2016

Pursuant to email and public website notices, a meeting of the Board of Maine Learning Innovations was convened by Secretary Peter Mills in the MEVA Conference room in Augusta at 1:00 PM. Attending were Directors Peter Mills, Virginia Smith (by phone), and Ed LeBlanc. Absent were Amy Carlisle and Kevin Pomerleau. Also present were Melinda Browne, Jessie Thoman, Kim Whitman, David Jenkins, and Kim Quinn-Hutchinson.

Upon motion by Peter, seconded by Ed, minutes for the meetings of January 19, February 8 and February 23, 2016, were unanimously approved.

Finance Report

We have a number of large and complex invoices from K12 to review and pay. Kim Whitman is helping to review and process them.

David Jenkins conducted a review of a budget draft for 2016-17. We should refine and accept the budget by May 15. For the coming year, we are authorized to increase maximum enrollment from 297 to 360 students for whom we may need one or more additional teachers. The draft budget is based on a 2.5% increase in the cost of living.

David explained that certain costs were higher in the first year because of what needed to be purchased to gear up, such as teacher laptops, other computer equipment, and office supplies. For next year's electives, it will generally be less expensive if we can find local instructors to teach in groups rather than to pay K12 on a per student basis through IST. K12 is converting many of its physical material to digital format which will reduce reclamation fees. Our management fee will continue at 8% and our technology fee at 7% of revenue. Our current enrollment is 76% high school and 24% junior high. These percentages form the basis for dividing costs into the Maine Chart of Accounts.

Head of School Report

The faculty are pleased to be working together in smaller departments or teams that Melinda has organized as follows:

English, History, Health & PE meet on Tuesdays.

Math & Science meet on Thursdays.

The Intervention Team (Special Ed & Title I) meet on Fridays.

An ILP Transition Team (Jessie, Melinda, Kipp and Bob Beecher) focuses on post secondary plans. In the future, we hope to develop ILPs within 9 weeks of a student's enrollment.

We are continuing to ask that faculty spend at least three days per week at the MEVA office, but with the faculty now functioning in teams, there are good reasons for them to periodically assemble. A faculty review process is being developed and put into place.

Melinda has been attending to a number of compliance issues, e.g., fire, HVAC, water, boiler inspections, school nurse and physician coverage, faculty fingerprinting, a crisis response plan. Some of this is important for our End of Year Report to the Commission.

Upon motion by Peter, seconded by Ed, the Board unanimously approved the Contract for School-Based Physician Services and a form for travel expenses. 44¢ per mile is the approved auto rate.

Melinda met recently with Bob Kautz and Roberta Lukas and on Friday will meet with Mike Wilhelm and others from the Commission. The Commission Review Team will spend May 25 at MEVA from 9:30 to 3:00. On July 12, they will meet with the MEVA Board. We need to do a self review and send out surveys to families.

Melinda has been on the phone two hours each day contacting as many as 25 families per day. They report that they love their teachers. They feel well supported even though school was often difficult in the beginning. Melinda is going to Snow Pond tomorrow to discuss collaborative opportunities.

Program Manager's Report

We have closed down enrollment for the current year except for special cases. We have 109 students who have already said they will re-register. 158 have yet to reply. March 10 is the soft deadline for re-registration. Those who do not reply by June 22 will be dis-enrolled.

There are three assessments required by the state:
the MEA in math and ELA for 7th and 8th graders;
the MEA in science for 8th and 11th graders; and
the SAT for 11th graders on April 12.

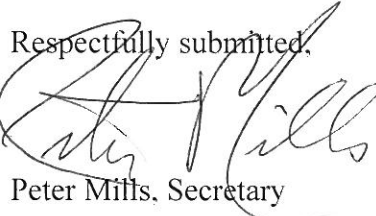
These require at least two faculty proctors at each site. We have required each teacher to proctor at least one assessment.

In addition to the standard state assessments, our charter (in §3.4.3) requires us to administer two NWEA exams during the year "in a proctored setting." This year we also administered a non-proctored NWEA at home during mid-winter.

Since the NWEA is a formative, low stakes test with instant feedback designed to inform instruction, Peter questioned whether it should be necessary to ask families to drive their students to a proctored site. Would electronic monitoring be sufficient? Requiring families to get on the road for an extended stay at the test site discourages participation. Connections is not required to proctor their formative tests. They are said to be using Scantron rather than NWEA.

Jessie mentioned that it might be helpful to administer the first NWEA right at the beginning as part of enrollment to give us a better gauge on the student's academic placement to supplement or confirm information from the student's school records.

At 3:20 PM, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Mills, Secretary