

Maine Learning Innovations

Minutes for a Meeting of the Board of Directors held April 26, 2022

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, April 26, 2022. Board members attending were Donna Pelletier, Amy Carlisle, Ed LeBlanc, Nicholas “Nick” Gannon, and Stacey Blanchard. Peter Mills was excused.

Attending from MEVA were Melinda Browne, Donald Fournier, Christina O'Grady, Stephanie Emery, Jillian Dearborn, Cheryl Brigham, and Jennifer Hight.

Attending from Stride were Todd McIntire, and Wei Wang.

Minutes. Nick motioned to approve minutes for the March 15, 2022, governing board meeting. Stacey seconded, all in favor, so moved.

Finance.

Q3 Finance Report – Jennifer Hight.

The FY22 Third Quarter (Q3) financials have not been completed yet. However, work will continue with Jillian tomorrow on Wednesday, 27th. Q3 should be wrapped up for board approval next month (May). Melinda asked Jennifer to prepare a narrative summary of her report to submit to the Maine Charter School Commission by May 5th, along with the spreadsheet template. Jennifer informed that board that the FY22 Audit, including the Single Audit (if needed), was tentatively scheduled for the week of September 19, 2022. Wipfli LLP had committed to do the work.

SY2022/2023 ED279.

Jennifer presented the preliminary FY23 ED279. EPS Rates were different based on grade level ranges (i.e., PreK – 8th grade and 9-12th) for students who were enrolled on October 1st, 2021. Students under disadvantaged categories fell under the weighted rates, including any English Learner (EL) students. Gifted & Talented and Special Education funds paid out will come back with some inflation increases. The Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) takes 2.45% (a slight increase from prior years) off the top of the state allocations.

Ed inquired about the EPS costs and how they are determined. Donna said that the allocations were dependent upon location/town costs. Teacher and student ratios have been reduced, which was also impacting some variances in the fee scales.

FY23 Budget Workshop, April 28th, 8:00 am.

The next budget workshop was scheduled for Thursday, April 28th at 8:00 am. Jennifer noted that the prior workshop (held on March 10th) was very productive. All board members were welcome to attend. The public notice and agenda were posted on the MEVA websites.

Administration. Melinda presented the Head of School Report. Preliminary results were shared ahead of the next Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Annual Monitoring Report for SY2021/2022.

SY 2021/22 Progress Report – Q3 Performance Measures/Progress.

Re-Registration – April 26th.

- Returning 90% (305/340).
- Not Returning 5% (17/346).

- Unknown 5% (18/346).
- MEVA's Performance Measure requires that 85% or more eligible students are returning. We are meeting/exceeding this metric.
- We are 3 re-registered students ahead of last year at the same time.

Post-October 1st Retention.

- Post-October 1st Retention 92% (403/437).
- MEVA's Performance Measure requires us to retain at least 85% of students who were enrolled on Oct. 1st, not counting students who moved to another state and/or who graduated. *We are meeting this metric.*
- Top Reasons for Withdrawal: Motivation Category: Student is not self-motivated or self-disciplined.
- Top Reasons for Withdrawal: Socialization Category: Desire to be with peers [in person]. Student misses friends. Student needs more interaction with other students [in person].
- MEVA is addressing these issues by offering opportunities for students to socialize with their peers in virtual clubs and other activities.
- MEVA has shown improvement in a couple areas, including serving students' needs with individual (1:1) supports.

Attendance Targets.

- Chronic absenteeism rate: 10% or fewer students classified as chronically absent on the last day of school. *MEVA is meeting the performance measure.*
- Average Daily Attendance Rate: Average daily attendance rate in grades PreK-8 of 93% or higher. *MEVA is meeting the performance measure.*
- Average Daily Attendance Rate: Average daily attendance rate in grades 9-12 of 91% or higher. *MEVA is meeting the performance measure.*

Chronic Absenteeism – March 31st.

- Grade 7 - 4.44%.
- Grade 8 - 7.01%.
- Grade 9 - 5.19%.
- Grade 10 - 6.66%.
- Grade 11 - 10.28%.
- Grade 12 - 10.67%.
- School Total - 7.89%.

Attendance Rates (ADA) – March 31st.

- School Total - 96.18%.
- Middle School (Grades 7 & 8) - 96.40%.
- High School (Grades 9 -12) - 96.13%.
- Grade 7 - 96.97%.
- Grade 8 - 95.93%.
- Grade 9 - 97.57%.
- Grade 10 - 96.77%.
- Grade 11 - 96.09%.
- Grade 12 - 94.26%.

Postsecondary Readiness.

- Of students in their graduating year, percent participation in post-secondary readiness opportunities – Target is 70%.
- Success rate of students participating in post-secondary readiness – Target is 70%.
- *MEVA’s current rate is 100% of students in their graduating year who are successfully participating in a postsecondary readiness activity. We are meeting this performance measure.*

Student Achievement and Growth.

- Projected Proficiency Grade 7: Math 50%; Reading 61.8%; and Language Usage 64.7%.
- Projected Proficiency Grade 8: Math 54.5%; Reading 72.1%; and Language Usage 64.4%.
- Projected Proficiency Grade 11: Math 50%; Reading 64.4%; and Language Usage 66.7%.
- *Projections were based on the Winter ‘22 NWEA Results.*
- MEVA students typically have the highest fall to spring growth in math but have the lowest proficiency in that subject (compared with reading and language usage).
- Spring NWEAs, May 10th, 11th, & 12th, with makeups on May 13th. Window opens on May 9th and closes on May 27th. We are aiming for 95%+ participation in Grades 7-11.
- NWEA Rosters are prepared to facilitate subgroup analysis utilizing standard system reports.

Other Performance Measures.

- 4-Year High School Graduation Rate – MDOE Target.
- 5 & 6-Year High School Graduation Rate – MDOE Target.
- MEVA is on track to realize large improvements in our SY2021/2022 graduation rates.
- Board Operations – Governing Board Meetings – Minimum of 6 per year.
- Board Operations – Timely publication of Board meeting agenda and minutes upon approval.
- MEVA is on track to meet/exceed the board operations performance measures.
- Reporting of behavior incidents. MEVA is meeting this requirement.
- Panorama Survey-Family Participation – Target is 40%.
- Panorama Survey-Student Participation – Target is 65%.
- Panorama Survey – Target is 70%.
- MEVA expects to meet/exceed the Panorama Survey participation targets as we have in previous years. The launch date for the stakeholder surveys is May 9th.
- Facilities Management – The school certifies that its facility (or facilities) meets all local and state requirements for public school facilities. MEVA is meeting this performance measure.
- Capital Improvement Plan – The school has a current Capital Improvement Plan approved by its governing board. MEVA is meeting this performance measure.

MCSC Recommendations for FY22.

As a result of the 2020-2021 monitoring process, the charter district is encouraged to consider the following: FINANCIAL PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY - The governing board needs to develop a process for long-term strategic and financial planning so that it is a consistent agenda item at board meetings and focuses the board's attention to long-term sustainability and excellence. School and Board should review how FY21 COVID relief funding was spent and be sure that FY22 budgets do not rely on a repeat of this funding.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND GROWTH - Given the impact of the pandemic and lower academic growth than in previous years, the charter organization should develop clear and specific strategies for closing learning gaps to ensure students are prepared for rigorous academic work.

MEVA is making progress towards accomplishing the SY2021/2022 MCSC recommendations.

Christina O'Grady, Curriculum Coordinator, shared examples with the board on the progress of standards alignments within various subjects. MEVA was purchasing Newsela to build tools for teaching literacy in the coming school year.

ESEA Comprehensive Needs Assessment.

MEVA is conducting the ESEA Comprehensive Needs Assessment at our weekly Process Improvement Meetings, which include the entire faculty.

The priority is Student and School Success: Rigorous, aligned instruction - Strengthening the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with State academic content standards - Engage teachers in aligning instruction with standards and benchmarks.

- Standards aligned units of instruction for each subject and grade level.
- Units of instruction include standards-based objectives and criteria for mastery.
- Units of instructions include pre/post-tests to assess student mastery of standards-based objectives.

The MEVA Curriculum/Instructional Mapping Progress is an active schoolwide initiative

SY2022/23 Enrollment.

Enrollment update as of 4/25/22:

- 41 students approved.
- 26 applications in progress.
- 6 outstanding seat offers.
- Numbers are ahead of projections and align with prior years. MEVA is in excellent shape to attain our target enrollment by October 1st, 2022.

Governance.

FY23 ESEA Grant Application – Seeking Input.

The FY23 ESEA Grant Application was already discussed prior. Melinda announced that feedback from stakeholders was welcome. Outreach to parents and community members for that purpose was underway.

MEVA MDOE Required Policies:

Nick motioned to group A-F MEVA MDOE Required Policies. Ed seconded, all in favor, so moved.

Nick motioned to approve A- F MEVA MDOE Required Policies:

- A. EBAA: Chemical Hazards.
- B. EBCA: CRISIS PLAN – Emergency Management Plan.
- C. EBCC: Bomb Threat.

- D. ECB: Pest Management.
 - E. GBEC: Drug-Free Workplace.
 - F. GBO: Family Care Leave and Medical Leave.
- Amy seconded, all in favor, so moved.

Board Training Platform Update.

Donna reported that the Maine Charter School Commission had posted two (2) more trainings for board members to take. Donna encouraged members to complete the posted trainings, which required about one hour each.

Discussion of Maine Learning Innovations Bylaws.

Donna informed the board that in the beginning there was a core group who pulled together a non-profit called, Maine Learning Innovations (MLI), to apply for, and to open a virtual charter school. Donna said that the MLI Board of Directors, needed to elect its officers annually. An annual meeting in September was planned for these elections, concurrent with the regularly scheduled board meeting. Melinda had already disseminated the copy of the Bylaws to the board members for their review. Donna encouraged board members to review bylaws and submit any nominations or adjustments prior to September 2022. Any desired changes to the existing MLI Bylaws required Maine Charter School Commission approval.

Required Signatures on Checks to Stride, Inc.

Melinda proposed to review check protocols to streamline processes by having one (1) signature versus two (2) on the Stride checks. This was considering that finances had been brought in house and fees had been substantially reduced. Donna asked Jennifer to see if this was able to be considered.

Jennifer stated that the auditors would be fine with this change, so long as this was documented in the minutes, and MEVA updated the process within the Financial Handbook. Auditors would check to ensure that MEVA was following its stated procedures.

Amy motioned to add Stride, Inc. to the list of vendors that may have a check drafted with only one MEVA signatory. Nick seconded, all in favor, so moved.

Public Discussion. None.

Adjournment. Nick motioned to adjourn. Amy seconded, all in favor, so moved. The meeting was adjourned at 3:23 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Emery and Melinda Browne
Secretary pro tempore