Maine Learning Innovations

Minutes for a Meeting of the Board of Directors held January 4, 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 by phone were Amy Carlisle, Peter Mills, Ed LeBlanc and Donna Madore.

Also attending by phone were: Melinda Browne, Fadia Afaneh, Jillian Dearborn, and Chelsea Osgood from local staff, CFO Jennifer Hight, and Patti Ashley and Liz Ross from K12.

Minutes. Upon motion by Donna, seconded by Ed, minutes for December 19, 2017, were unanimously approved after making two changes: (1) Omitting Kevin Pomerleau as a director; and (2) including as a telephone attendee Mary Markert, the Director of NE Finance for K12.

Finance

After discussions with Bob Kautz and Tyler Backus from DOE, Jennifer is now satisfied that our finances are back on track with adequate funds to meet our budget needs. There is no need to amend our budget submissions to the state. Because the recent report omitted Special Ed allocations, it understated our revenue by $520,000.

On the assumption that we would enroll 375 students, our budget was based on revenue of $3.196 million. On October 1, the census date, we had 393 students. It is hard to tell in advance what the total revenue will come to because each student yields a separate revenue figure depending on where they originate from and Special Ed allocations vary as well. The new number for total revenue according to the state is $3.431 million. For future budgeting, we did the right thing by estimating the student count a little below what we anticipate.

Bob told Jennifer that he believes we have a 10% buffer. Thus we could have enrolled as many as 429 if we had chosen to. That is the number the state used for our ED 279.

Melinda met with the Commission on Tuesday to propose that we be allowed to register 429 next year. Our request was tabled until the spring. Commissioner Wilhelm had suggested February but the others said April because they want the benefit of more data to see how the school is performing. Our test scores in math were poor last year.

Jennifer reported that our surplus should be about the same this year as last, thus building toward the reserve that our charter requires us to develop and maintain. Melinda recommends that if we hire more teachers we should consider another middle school math teacher. Every 7th grader we take in is new to us and we have little time in which to build up their skills before they take the MEAs administered each spring for both 7th and 8th graders. Because the scores are not returned until the following August or September, the tests provide untimely feedback for instruction.

Open Seats

We have 26 open seats for next semester which begins January 29. Our new registrar has just been hired by K12 and enrollment should begin now if we wish to fill those slots. Bob Kautz confirms that we have no obligation to fill the empty slots and, indeed, we have no financial incentive to do so because they add a few costs under our contract with K12 without adding revenue. But it's the right thing to do to keep the school as close to capacity as we reasonably can.

Upon motion by Peter, seconded by Donna, it was unanimously voted to open enrollment to fill the 26 vacant positions that we are presently carrying; however, if students drop after January 29, we should not try to fill those new open positions because it is an imposition on teachers and unfair to students to try to bring them along to catch up after classes are already under way.

Health Insurance

By compiling information from Chelsea, Jillian and Jennifer, it was reported that we have:

7 employees enrolled in the individual plan,
1 carrying family coverage,
5 covering themselves and children,
1 carrying spousal coverage, and
2 with no insurance through MEVA.

Our plan requires each participating employee to contribute $20 a month toward the individual premium and pay the total premium for any coverage for family or dependents. MEVA's total cost per month is $11,000.

The deductible had gone up to $1000 this year and it appears that the deductible resets each January 1 even though enrollment takes place in August.

An HSA plan can be used to mitigate the out of pocket costs but only one employee participates. Jennifer recalls that we did authorize MEVA to contribute $100 per month to enhance HSA participation. To use an HSA requires enrolling in a plan with a lower premium but with a higher deductible of $1300.

Peter will ask Chad Cote of the Clark Agency to participate by phone in one of our up-coming board meetings to help us decide how to improve our health benefit program for next year.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Mills, Secretary