

## Maine Learning Innovations

Minutes for a Meeting of the Board of Directors held February 28, 2023

Pursuant to email and public website notices, a virtual meeting of the Board of Maine Learning Innovations was convened on Zoom at 3:00 PM, February 28th, 2023. Board members attending were Donna Pelletier, Stacey Blanchard, Nicholas “Nick” Gannon, Tina Meserve, Amy Carlisle, and Peter Mills. A quorum was present.

Attending from MEVA were Melinda Browne, Donald Fournier, Christina O’Grady, Chelsea Osgood, Stephanie Emery, Jillian Dearborn, Lena Vitagliano, and Jennifer Hight.

Attending from Stride were Todd McIntire and Tom Travia.

### Opening Items.

**Approval of Minutes.** Tina motioned to approve the minutes of the Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) Governing Board Business Meeting of January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Nick seconded. All in favor, so moved.

### Finance Report.

**FY23 Quarter 2 Financials.** Quarter 2 FY 2023 financial summary by Jennifer Hight: The new financial processes put into place in FY 2023 are running smoothly and effectively. We approved our FY 2022 990 at the Board Meeting in January. At the end of Quarter 2 for FY 2023 we show Revenue in Excess of Expenditures for the six months ending 12/31/22 of \$443,362. Salaries and benefits remain our largest expense. At this time, we are fully staffed and do not expect a change in personnel as we continue into the 2022-2023 school year.

Jennifer said that the \$443,362 surplus included covid funding; projections would be balanced out over the twelve months.

Nick motioned to approve the FY23 Quarter 2 Financials. Amy seconded, all in favor, so moved.

**FY24 ED 279 Review.** Donna presented the FY24 ED 279, sharing the enrollment counts and allocations on page 4, and the various funding totals on the following pages.

MEVA ED279 Comparison to Prior Year:

- FY23 Adjusted State Contribution = \$4,686,222.16.
- FY24 Adjusted State Contribution = \$4,903,230.90.
- YOY Delta = \$217,008.74.
- YOY Increase = 4.63%

### FY24 (Two-Year) Annual Budget/Three-Year Financial Plan Discussion.

Progress on the Financial Plan and Budget Performance Target:

- Charter District Leadership publishes a 3-year annual financial plan that includes a 2-year annual budget and a 1-year projection for year 3 that is board approved.
- June 30, 2023: Leadership/Board has a finalized 3-year annual financial plan.

- **Meets Expectations:** Charter District Leadership annually publishes a 3-year financial plan that includes a budget for the next 2-years and a 1-year projection for year 3.

MEVA has hosted two planning and budgeting workshops on Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. A third workshop is scheduled for March 2<sup>nd</sup>. MEVA is aiming to have the FY24 budget and 3-year financial plan ready for governing board approval at the May 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Administration.** Dr. Melinda Browne gave the Head of School Report.

Dr. Browne noted that the weekly schoolwide faculty meetings always began with reviewing MEVA's mission and vision statement. The mission and vision had not changed since the school was founded. Based on stakeholder feedback, it continued to reflect what we do and why we do it. Dr. Browne said that the faculty were continually operationalizing the focus/points (underlined) in the service of students and their families. MEVA's mission and vision represented its value proposition as a public charter school.

MEVA Mission and Vision:

School Mission:

Maine Virtual Academy's (MEVA) mission is to develop each student's full potential with learner-centered instruction, research-based curriculum and educational tools and resources to provide a high-quality learning experience for grade 7-12 students who are in need of alternative educational options. MEVA will develop an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) with specific learning goals to meet each student's needs. MEVA's rigorous curriculum is aligned to the eight Maine content areas, the Maine Learning Results, the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards.

School Vision:

- MEVA will be a leading 21st century public charter school in Maine and will improve student learning outcomes through individualized instruction, as evidenced by student academic proficiency, student academic growth, post-secondary readiness, and the demonstration of 21st century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and self-direction. MEVA will empower students to acquire the academic and life skills needed to succeed in post-secondary education and career opportunities. Our graduates will be prepared for college or other postsecondary career training opportunities.

MEVA Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) – Essential Questions:

Specific Learning Goal to Meet Each Student's Needs: MEVA students will explore their interests and aspirations through academic courses and enrichment activities, in preparation for postsecondary educational and career opportunities.

- What do you do or want to do with your time?

Career Readiness Experiences/Opportunities: Employment, internships, virtual job shadowing, volunteering activities, clubs and organizations, portfolio projects, and Career Planning, Early College and AP4ME courses.

- What can MEVA offer you to match your interests?

Our Narrative: MEVA is a High Performing Public Charter School:

- Academically;
- Operationally; and
- Financially.

- MEVA is on track to meet its performance measures and accomplish our mission.
- MEVA has a plan to sustain its results.

MCSC Recommendation from the SY-2021/2022 Annual Monitoring Report – Academic Achievement and Growth:

- Given the impact of the pandemic on academic growth, Maine Virtual Academy should develop clear and specific strategies for closing learning gaps to ensure students are prepared for rigorous academic work.

New MEVA Custom Target – NWEA:

- Student Median Conditional Growth Percentile on the MAP Student Growth Summary Report.
- Separate goals for each grade level (7, 8, 9, 10, & 11), a total of fifteen indicators/goals: The student median conditional growth percentile is the fiftieth (50th) or higher, as of the spring NWEA math, reading, and language usage, for each eligible grade level.

MCSC Growth Target – Middle School:

- At least 60% of students in grades 7 & 8 will achieve their NWEA projected growth from fall to spring in math, reading, and language usage.
- Partially meeting is reaching 50 – 59%.
- Not meeting is below 50%.

NWEA Data Analysis Strategies:

- Median student Conditional Growth Percentile.
- Percentage of students who met their projected RIT growth.
- Subgroup performance: Special Education, Section 504, Economically Disadvantaged, Gender, and Ethnicity.
- Longitudinal data of cohorts.
- Individual course data.
- Data analysis typically considers subjects (i.e., math, reading, and language usage), grade levels, and longevity at MEVA.
- Efforts inform schoolwide collaboration and planning.

Final Winter '23 NWEA Participation – Met 95%+ Participation Goal.

	Math	Reading	Language
7th Grade (N = 34)	100%	100%	100%
8th Grade (N = 58)	91.4% (53)	89.7% (52)	89.7% (52)
9th Grade (N = 64)	98.4% (63)	98.4% (63)	98.4% (63)
10th Grade (N = 95)	96.8% (92)	96.8% (92)	96.8% (92)
11th Grade (N = 113)	94.7% (107)	94.7% (107)	94.7% (107)
Schoolwide (N = 364)	95.9% (349)	95.6% (348)	95.6% (348)

Final Winter NWEA Growth Results as of January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Overall Growth by Grade Level Student Median Conditional Growth Percentile (MCGP):

Grade	Math MCGP	Reading MCGP	Language MCGP
7	54 <sup>th</sup>	33 <sup>rd</sup>	68 <sup>th</sup>
8	63 <sup>rd</sup>	41 <sup>st</sup>	42 <sup>nd</sup>
9	52 <sup>nd</sup>	54 <sup>th</sup>	56 <sup>th</sup>
10	36 <sup>th</sup>	61 <sup>st</sup>	72 <sup>nd</sup>
11	55 <sup>th</sup>	57 <sup>th</sup>	57 <sup>th</sup>

Exceeds = 66<sup>th</sup> %ile or higher.

Meets = 50<sup>th</sup> % to 65<sup>th</sup> %ile.

Approaches = 35<sup>th</sup> to 49<sup>th</sup> %ile.

Does Not Meet = Lower than 35<sup>th</sup> %ile.

Final Winter NWEA Growth Results as of January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Middle School Percentage of Students Meeting Growth Projection:

Grade	Math %	Reading %	Language %
7	63	40	63
8	60	48	46
MS	62	45	53

Exceeds = 70% or higher.

Meets = 60% to 69.9%.

Approaches = 50% to 59.9%.

Does Not Meet = Lower than 50%.

Dr. Browne presented extensive, final Winter '23 NWEA data analysis results/slides, which included subgroups and longitudinal data split between grade-level cohorts, as well as overall by number of years enrolled.

NWEA Longitudinal Data Analysis Summary:

The data indicates that MEVA is successful by:

- As seen on the Reading slide, the trendlines for all students who have been at MEVA 2-5 years are showing an upward trend. The only line that is not showing this trend are the students who have only been with MEVA since the fall.
- As seen on the Math slide, the trendlines for all students who have been at MEVA 1-5 years are showing an upward trend. The longer a student is at MEVA the steeper the trendline which indicates more growth as students continue with MEVA.
- As seen on the Language Usage slide, the students who have been at MEVA for 4-5 years are showing the highest level of growth.

These trends provided evidence that students who stayed with MEVA year after year were more likely to make exponential growth, which indicated the high success of MEVA.

Achievement Data Analysis:

- Winter NWEA achievement data provides more evidence that students who stay enrolled at MEVA are presenting better outcomes than their grade-level groups.
- This trend is illustrated by comparing their median achievement percentiles by grade level and is most significant in math and reading.

- MEVA teachers are doing a great job!

MCSC Accuplacer Target:

- 75 – 85% of students in their final year of high school will achieve the college ready score on the math and reading Accuplacer: 226 or above in math, and 239 or above in reading.
- Subgroups will perform within 8% of comparison groups.

Accuplacer Results as of February 21, 2023:

Subgroup	College-Ready Reading	College-Ready Math
With 504 Plan	41/45 = 91.1%	41/45 = 91.1%
Without 504 Plan	75/92 = 81.5%	82/92 = 89.1%
Delta	+9.6% (Meets)	+2.0% (Meets)
Special Education (SE)	11/17 = 64.7%	12/17 = 70.6%
Non-SE	105/120 = 87.5%	111/120 = 92.5%
Delta	-22.8% (Does Not Meet)	-21.9% (Does Not Meet)
Male	52/61 = 85.2%	58/61 = 95.1%
Female	64/76 = 84.2%	65/76 = 85.5%
Delta	+1.0% (Meets)	-9.6% (Approaches)
Economically Disadvantaged	36/45 = 80%	42/45 = 93.3%
Non-Economically Disadvantaged	80/92 = 87%	81/92 = 88.0%
Delta	+7.0% (Meets)	+5.3 (Meets)
<b>Total</b>	<b>116/137 = 84.7% (Meets)</b>	<b>123/137 = 89.8% (Meets)</b>

Accuplacer Results Analysis:

- Overall, MEVA is meeting this new performance measure in both reading and math.
- MEVA is meeting the subgroup comparison measures, except for the disparity between special education (SE) and non-SE students.
- The MEVA SE team is focused on closing the gap by offering individual and small group remediation during Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) sessions.

MEVA’s Successes:

- MEVA is accomplishing its mission and vision.
- MEVA students are presenting strong academic achievement and growth results.

MEVA's Concerns:

- MEVA is concerned about maintaining our 95% participation rate going back to in-person state testing.
- MEVA is mobilizing its faculty and resources to overcome this barrier.

MEVA's Plans for Moving Forward:

- Curriculum Maps/Standards Alignment.
- Continuous Assessment Plan.

9/11 - 9/15: NWEA MAP Growth (Fall).

10/10 - 10/13: Fall MEA Reading & Math (In Person).

1/9 - 1/12: NWEA MAP Growth (Winter).

4/29 - 5/3: NWEA MAP Growth (Spring).

5/13 - 5/17: Spring MEA Reading & Math (In Person).

5/20 - 5/24: MEA Science (In Person).

Graduating students will complete the Accuplacer reading and math throughout the school year.

Teachers will employ diagnostic and pre/post assessments.

- Professional Development (PD).

PD Priorities are data-analysis, data-driven instruction, leveled learning targets, and course design.

MEVA Delivered Curriculum Maps:

- At the 2022 Mid-Year Check-In Meeting, MEVA committed to developing curriculum maps for our core academic courses at all grade levels, aligned to the Maine Learning Results.
- One year later, MEVA has delivered on its promise. Curriculum maps are completed and can be viewed via the public link: <https://mva-5033.chalk.com/public>.

Cristina O'Grady, Curriculum Coordinator, presented the schoolwide curriculum mapping project progress, which aimed to align MEVA's courses with the Maine Learning Results/Standards.

Curriculum Maps:

- The Curriculum Maps at Maine Virtual Academy are used as a guide that focuses on the standards alignment of a course. The maps are ever-evolving to reflect the student population's needs to access the grade-level standards.
- Each course in the core content areas (Math, English, Science, and Social Studies) has a standards-aligned map. Each map reflects the units of study, the standards per unit, and the standards-aligned assessments per unit.
- Future enhancements to the maps will include the objectives and the skills students should master for each unit.
- The curriculum maps can be found here: <https://mva-5033.chalk.com/public>

Gaps & Redundancies:

- The curriculum maps allow for an analysis of gaps and redundancies in the curriculum vertically and horizontally.
- Gaps - Maps are compared across content areas to ensure that all the standards are covered.
- Redundancies - Maps are compared across grade levels to identify areas of redundancies and opportunities for interdisciplinary work.

The presentation included an example of a curriculum map, comparison of science maps, comparison of high school earth science standards, and seventh grade course maps. Percentages of standards per course for English, math, science, and social studies, were shared.

#### Future Developments:

- The Curriculum Maps will reflect the objectives, skills, and additional resources for each unit of study. The goal is to accomplish this by the end of the 2024-2025 school year.
- Each course at Maine Virtual Academy will have a curriculum map that includes the standards covered and the standards-aligned assessments, including electives, by the end of the 2023-2024 school year.
- The maps will continually be updated as changes to the curriculum are made. Changes to the map must go through an approval process to ensure the high rigor of the curriculum.

#### Benefits of Pre-/Post-Tests:

1. Pretests outline clear standards and expectations.
2. Pretests establish a baseline of student knowledge.
3. Pretests and posttests measure student growth.
4. Pretest and posttest data improve curriculum efficacy.
5. Pretests build confidence in students for the posttest.

It was MEVA's goal to include Pre/Post Tests in the maps. A newly established team, Professional Learning Community (PLC), had committed to meeting monthly for the purposes of designing an implementation plan.

Donna and Amy complimented and enjoyed the presentation, both appreciated the team's work involved in mapping development.

#### Dr. Browne updated the board on MEVA's New Enrollment and Re-Registration:

- Last year, during Open Enrollment we received 35 Declaration of Intent to Enroll by 2/24/2022. There was a total of 51 ITE's received during Open Enrollment and seat offers were made to all 51 students. So far, we had received 68 ITEs for the upcoming 2023-24 school year! This was (quite obviously) an enormous increase.
- Reregistration started on Monday, 27<sup>th</sup>. Totals after Parent Session 1 – Registering: 170; Not Registering: 7 (non-seniors); Response Rate (Minus Seniors): 43.59% of those eligible to return. We are trending way ahead of prior years.

MEVA had robust interest. According to Stephanie Emery, Operations Manager, re-registration opened yesterday, and of the students who were eligible to return this coming fall, MEVA sat at 51% of its population (as of today's date) who were coming back for SY-2023/2024.

It was very possible we needed a lottery this year, as the public interest *may* surpass the available seats.

#### Dr. Browne highlighted MEVA's preparations for the Mid-Year Check-In Meeting:

- MEVA's 2022-2023 Mid-Year Check-In Meeting with the Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) is on March 1st, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm, via Zoom.
- The purpose of monitoring visits/meetings is to gauge the overall progress a school is making toward meeting the criteria on the Performance Framework.
- The MCSC will report its findings in writing approximately four – eight weeks after the meeting. The school will have an opportunity to preview the report prior to it being finalized. While the

school will be given an opportunity to respond to the report draft, the MCSC will determine the content of the final report.

Dr. Browne announced that the SY-2021/2022 ESSA Dashboard - <https://www.maine.gov/doe/dashboard>, was available for public view:

- In accordance with ESEA Program Assurances, MEVA disseminates ESEA and LEA Report Cards via the school's website.
- The 2021-2022 ESSA Dashboard indicates that MEVA's strengths are our expanding Teacher Workforce and Instructional Support Staff (Ed Techs). MEVA's attendance, safety, state assessment results, and four-year graduation rate are also noteworthy for our virtual school. MEVA's June 2022 four-year graduation rate is 95.7%.
- As a high-performing public charter school, MEVA is engaged in continuous school improvement, informed by feedback from our stakeholders. We are focusing on strengthening our state assessment participation outcomes by providing families and students with individual support.

MEVA was looking very good on the recently released ESSA dashboard for the prior school year (2021-2022). Some data were suppressed, such as MEVA's 95.7% four-year graduation rate, because of federal reporting parameters.

## **Governance.**

### **Maine Alliance of Public Charter Schools Membership.**

Maine Alliance of Public Charter Schools (MAPCS):

- To expand responsive public education opportunities for children in Maine, the mission of the Maine Alliance of Public Charter Schools is to serve, support and advocate for charter schools as they strive to achieve the goals of their charters.
- The Organizers have been working on the legal requirements for filing Articles of Incorporation and have filed the necessary paperwork with the State.
- There are annual membership dues.
- MEVA has received a \$5,000 unrestricted donation from Judith and William Jones. The check was deposited on Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Tina asked if the organization had a clear mission and vision, aligning to advocate, and make sure that the experience of the charter school was being represented in policy. Stacey was curious about what the dues were being used for and the plans on their use of funds.

Tina wanted to know who advocated for the charter schools when laws were brought forward? Was the Charter Commission supposed to do that? As the charters evolved it made sense that a group advocated for them.

Dr. Browne noted that the Commission held a neutral position typically. However, the prior executive director aimed to be more publicly supporting and advocating of the charters regarding proposed legislation.

Nick asked if differences between charters (e.g., size, location, etc.) impacted their position on proposed legislation. Dr. Browne observed that Maine's diverse charter schools were generally united. Dr. Browne said that virtual charter schools were often on their own with respect to testifying on bills related



specifically to them. Donna asserted that we would be represented by MAPCS if we were paying membership fees.

To address the board members' questions, Donna committed to inviting an alliance representative to come speak at the next MEVA governing board meeting. MEVA did receive the \$5,000 donation; it was unrestricted, and all charters received this check, which they could opt to soften the cost of the first two years of the alliance fees. If MEVA decided not to join, we would talk about what to do with the donation.

Peter requested to invite Shelley Reed to attend MEVA's next governing board meeting. Peter stated that accountability was what made us better, all charter schools were expected to follow through with charter contract demands. He said it would be good to know the plans and further mission of the alliance.

### **MEVA MDOE Policies Review.**

### **Collegiate Research and/or 3rd Party Studies Form/Administrative Procedure.**

Nick motioned to approve the Collegiate Research and/or 3rd Party Studies Form/Administrative Procedure. Stacey seconded, all in favor, so moved.

### **Job Descriptions.**

Dr. Browne reported that a statement requiring certification/endorsement to suit employees' positions, and active CHRC, was added to the following job descriptions up for board approval:

- a. SY23/24 Regular Education Teacher Job Description.
- b. SY23/24 Special Education Teacher Job Description.
- c. SY23/24 Regular Education Educational Technician/Support Teacher Job Description.
- d. SY23/24 Special Education Educational Technician/Support Teacher Job Description.
- e. SY23/24 School Guidance Counselor Job Description.

Tina had a question about the school counselor role. She noticed that the job description did not include anything about curriculum. Tina asked if outside of college admissions there was any curriculum that they covered with students? Were there any school counseling topics that they instructed?

Dr. Browne said that MEVA's guidance counselors did not deliver instruction. However, some topics related to students' wellbeing were delivered by the advisory teachers.

Donna pointed out that there were guided standards out there that MEVA could utilize. As the school defined the guidance counselor role further, we could revisit their job description.

Tina made the point that the idea of the school counselor was to provide support needed for students to achieve their academics. In other scenarios counselors may instruct, such as every 7<sup>th</sup> grader's cyber bullying education; the school counselor did not have to do it but suggested that MEVA work that into instruction. Christina observed that Maine had life and career planning standards that could be included in the advisory curriculum maps.

Tina motioned to approve the job descriptions, a-e. Nick seconded, all in favor, so moved.

**Public Discussion.** None.

**Adjournment.** Nick/Donna motioned to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 4:56 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Emery and Melinda Browne  
Secretary pro tempore