

Maine Learning Innovations

Minutes for a Meeting of the Board of Directors held December 20, 2022

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, December 20th, 2022. Board members attending were Donna Pelletier, Stacey Blanchard, Amy Carlisle, Nicholas “Nick” Gannon, Tina Meserve, and Peter Mills. A quorum was present.

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

Attending from Stride were Todd McIntire and Tom Travia.

Attending from Wipfli, LLP was Pat Nicholas.

Opening Items.

Approval of Minutes. Nick motioned to approve the minutes of the Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) Governing Board Business Meeting of November 15th, 2022. Tina seconded. All in favor, so moved.

Finance Report.

FY22 Audit. Pat Nicholas of Wipfli, LLP presented the FY22 Audit Report. Pat informed the board that it was a very clean audit and opinion. MEVA’s cash position was better than the year before, and MEVA did not utilize as much federal funding. Pat made the point that MEVA’s expenses were consistent from the prior year. MEVA’s net cashflow was \$496,655. Pat stated that MEVA had good internal controls. He acknowledged that MEVA made the switch to QuickBooks. Pat highlighted Note 2, Liquidity of Cash, by pointing out that there were no restricted funds.

Nick motioned to approve the FY22 Audit Report. Stacey seconded. All in favor, so moved.

FY23 Quarter One (Q1) Report. Jennifer Hight reported that the new financial processes put into place in FY 2022 were running smoothly and effectively. Quarter 1 for FY 2023, we showed Revenue in Excess of Expenditures of \$375,413.30. Salaries and benefits remained our largest expense. At this time, we were fully staffed and did not expect a change in personnel as we continued into the 2022-2023 school year.

Jennifer updated the board on the status of the ESEA and ESSER II grants, as there were monies in accounts receivable due to lags in state processing. Jennifer made the point that within the new Grants4ME system, she was only able to submit one invoice at a time. Jennifer said that she worked with Dr. Browne to make some minor adjustments to the ESSER II grant application projects to suit the school’s experience.

Tina inquired about the amount of outstanding ESEA (Title) funds (invoiced but not reimbursed).

Nick motioned to approve the FY23 Q1 Financials. Stacey seconded. All in favor, so moved.

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

SY-2022/2023 Progress – Highlights.

- Retention – 97.5% (427/438). MEVA’s retention had improved over the prior year.
- MEVA’s Winback “engine” of rapid interventions was working to retain more students.
- Faculty/student/family collaboration was at an all-time high, with dozens of meetings hosted each week to provide coaching and support.
- Faculty/faculty collaboration was constant. Teachers worked closely together in small groups, sharing data, planning lessons, and designing targeted interventions, throughout the school day.
- Expanded course offerings and student supports were strong.
- Enrollment and re-registration efforts maintained a fully enrolled school and guided families through the processes with individual attention. Providing positive experiences to the students and their families at every juncture was our highest priority.
- Comprehensive MCSC mid-year check-in data was forthcoming (planned for the January meeting). MEVA was on track to accomplish its performance measures, due to our teams’ strong efforts. Mobilizing our dedicated faculty, we were aiming to achieve our best (ever) overall results this school year.

SY-2022/2023 Enrollment.

- We were in the process of enrolling forty-five (45) mid-year students, who will begin on January 9th, 2023.

Dr. Browne addressed Donna’s question about mid-year enrollment targets, confirming that the level was in line with previous years.

Governance.

Facilities Plan. Dr. Browne and Peter Mills were able to get in touch with Greg Farris and Jim Day to inquire about getting some preliminary figures ahead of the lease renewal (June 30th, 2023). Donna requested that the team gather more information about facilities options and provide comparison details at the next meeting. Peter made the point that the building (Ballard Center) was lucky to have us, given the challenges they had with tenants and filling space. Currently, MEVA was in a good bargaining position, but we needed other options in our back pocket just in case. Jillian suggested contacting Wheelock, a broker in the area, and who we had used in the past. Amy Carlisle noted that the main suite was considered class A space; the wing was considered class B. As a result, it was worth comparing these two types of spaces. Amy’s impression was that the Ballard Center’s advertised rates of \$16 to \$33 dollars per square foot seemed very high in comparison to other facilities.

MEVA MDOE Required Policies Review.

Nick motioned to group MEVA MDOE Required Policies a-e.

- a. Motion to approve JRA Student Education Records and Information
- b. Motion to approve JRA-R Student Education Records and Information Administrative Procedure
- c. Motion to approve JRA-E Notification of Rights Under FERPA
- d. Motion to approve KBF Parent Involvement with Title I
- e. Motion to approve MEVA Teacher Certification Exemption Policy

Tina seconded. All in favor, so moved.

Nick motioned to approve MEVA MDOE Required Policies a-e. Stacey seconded. All in favor, so moved.

Acknowledge MEVA Approved Governing Board Policies posted on the school's websites.

We have initially reviewed the required MDOE policies and adjusted the presentation document posted on the MEVA websites. Ongoing policy work is planned.

Lau Plan. English Learner Identification, Language Use Survey and Parent Letter. Named after the [Lau v. Nichols U.S. Supreme Court Decision of 1974](#), the landmark case that confirmed the rights of English learners to equitable education in English, Lau Plans are a requirement established by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) (Title VI, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.).

MEVA's current LAU Plan was posted on the school's websites. The proposed (new) plan was updated in accordance with the MDOE sample plan. We found that other districts had adopted and used the MDOE document.

Donna observed that clarification was needed on the dismissal (WIDA) cut score shown on the document (4.5 was the new change); the MDOE document stated 5.0, which was the old cut-score. Donna also asked if we had an ESOL certified teacher? Dr. Browne reported that we had two ESOL certified teachers, but only one was interested in fulfilling the ESOL role at MEVA. The WIDA test administration was set up and on track to be compliant in accordance with our current LAU Plan. The updated LAU was likely to be approved at next meeting.

SY-2022/23 WIDA

- MEVA is all set up to administer the WIDA to one continuing student in January 2023.
- We are currently researching the needs of one incoming (mid-year) student who was labeled as EL in the state system.

Maintaining ARP (ESSER III) compliance, Dr. Browne presented the Continuity of Education Plan and the Use of Funds Plan, which were posted on the school's website, and were reviewed every six months (December and May).

ARP (ESSER III) Continuity of Education Plan Review.

- MEVA is continuing its remote learning model in accordance with our mission and vision. MEVA is providing our teachers with two weeks of professional development/preparation prior to the first day of school.
- MEVA is communicating with families via emails, newsletters, and onboarding sessions. There are no changes to students' and families' experiences within their academic schedules, because of the pandemic (COVID-19).
- MEVA is expanding its remote instructional model to the summer for tutoring and credit recovery courses. The summer session addresses students' learning losses through targeted skills development informed by course grades and assessments. The school calendar includes the Summer Session dates.

- As usual, MEVA is administering the fall NWEAs, math, reading and language usage sections, during October, to establish an academic baseline for our students in grades 7 – 11. MEVA also plans to administer the NWEAs during the Winter in January, and Spring in May, as scheduled.
- For grade 12 students, seniors, MEVA will assess their progress towards graduation and postsecondary plans on an individual basis during the early fall and provide interventions as needed.
- MEVA administers school climate surveys to students, parents, teachers, and staff throughout the school year. The data informs our continuous school improvement efforts.

ARP (ESSER III) Use of Funds Plan for Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) Review.

Utilizing meaningful consultation with stakeholders, MEVA developed the following three priorities for the use of ARP ESSER funds. These priorities provide/facilitate:

- Data-driven, targeted instruction/interventions by co-teaching teams to address students' achievement gaps.
- Students' college/career readiness.
- Functional/social/emotional supports for students and strong communications with families.

MEVA's reservation to address the impact of lost instructional time will be utilized for the following evidence-based interventions:

- Summer Programming.
- Class-Size Reduction.

The remaining ARP ESSER Funds will support projects focusing on expanding/improving:

- School Counseling and Related Services.
- Facilities (Safety).
- Educational Technology.
- Family Communications.

SY 2023/24 Calendar.

- 180 Instructional Days.
- 190 Teacher Days.
- August 28th, 2023 – First Day.
- June 14th, 2023 – Last Day.
- MEVA does not have snow days.
- June 24th, 2023, to August 9th, 2023 – Summer Session.

Donna asked about the extra vacation days within the school year that were due to the unique calendar pattern. Dr. Browne said that MEVA was committed to starting on the Monday before Labor Day, and thus, had to absorb five extra days.

Tina motioned to approve the SY 2023/24 Calendar. Nick seconded. All in favor, so moved.

Public Discussion. None.

Dr. Browne proposed moving the next governing board meeting from January 17th to January 24th, 2023, 3:00 pm, to accommodate schedules. There were no objections. Dr. Browne committed to posting the date change on the school's websites.

Adjournment. Donna wished everyone a happy holiday. Tina motioned to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 4:27 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Emery and Melinda Browne
Secretary pro tempore