

## Maine Learning Innovations

Minutes for a Meeting of the Board of Directors held November 17, 2020

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, November 17, 2020. Board members attending were Amy Carlisle, Donna Pelletier, Peter Mills, Kim Whitman, and Ed LeBlanc (later in the meeting).

Attending from MEVA were Melinda Browne, Donald Fournier, Jillian Dearborn, Lena Vitagliano, Lisa Plimpton (consultant), Jennifer Hight, Chelsea Osgood, Christina O'Grady, Cheryl Brigham, and Mehry Mohammadi. Attendees from K12 were Stephanie Emery, Lizzie Malvicini, Mary Markert, Darren Reed, Christina Teller, Jordan Goldman, Todd McIntire, Susan Siler, Nic Taylor, and Natasha Bryant. Attending from the Charter Commission were Nichi Farnham, Bob Kautz, and Gina Post.

**Minutes.** Upon motion by Donna, seconded by Peter, minutes for the meeting of September 20, 2020 were approved.

**Finance:** Approval of our October financial packet must be postponed until our next meeting. We need time to clarify the status of our COVID expenses and to adopt one of three possible categories to which they should be allocated. In answer to a question from Donna, Bob Kautz confirmed that our submissions to the state are expected quarterly and not monthly.

Jenn reported that accounting for COVID grants has been a real challenge. We had to report early to the state how much we expect to spend before the end of December so they may allocate to others what we do not plan to spend. We did a lot of rough estimating. It was a lot of work. We will start in January to prepare a budget for FY 2021.

The audit for last year is in good shape. We may need to make adjustments for the COVID money because the books closed before we had the funds allocated. In response to a question from Donna, Jenn said we expect the audit to be complete by next month. It is finally due by December 31. Ordinarily, we have it done by November 30.

### Administration

**Panorama surveys** are provided by the Commission but they do not require them to be administered. This is our second year distributing them. K12 performs its own survey. The faculty wanted to do the Panorama Survey because it helps to promote socio-emotional learning. K12 offers a "Seven Mindsets" curriculum. We choose one to administer each day.

Kim said she can see why teachers find the Panorama surveys useful. Jenn Clark in guidance is able to look at the results student by student. It discloses more about work habits than anything more personal. Don said we were pleased to start with this tool in order to look at trends. We have a number of students who can benefit from it. Christina O'Grady has been helpful in putting the data together.

[Ed joined the meeting.]

We had 285 students participate voluntarily in the Panorama Survey this year, up from 200 last year. Lena said that schools focusing first on socio-emotional learning experience stronger academic growth. Starting first with content often leads to failure in later years. Focusing on self-knowledge pays dividends in helping students progress. From a research perspective it is helpful and teachers love to put it to use.

### Teaching math.

Melinda said the school is pacing the content out so that teachers can complete the curriculum and take out non-essential elements. The teachers are working as an entire teaching team using data to group students as appropriate, even changing weekly or monthly based on how students are doing on their assessments

using iXL as an evaluator. Jan White says iXL is not a teacher; it's an evaluator. There are other supplementary options. Sometimes they will have as many as five students in each of five separate mandatory remediation sessions.

Don said sometimes the groupings are changed daily, even in geometry and Algebra II. iXL does part of that particularly in middle grades. Students receive the bulk of their targeted help through iXL. Some do not want to participate in iXL.

**Progress on three points from Lisa Plimpton's FY19 Independent Evaluation.**

1. **College & Career readiness:** All the high school students are taking a career exploration course for active transition planning. In foreign language preparation, two years of the same language is not commonly pursued in our school. We are looking into why.

2. **Expanding summer school:** In 2016, we started a tutoring program for math and English. Last summer we started a credit recovery course supported by CARES Act funds. Our students recovered 50 credits.

3. **Teacher Professional Development.** We are teaching teachers how to do data driven instruction using data from K12, iXL, and NWEA. Zoom screen sharing is helpful to share data. Donna said it sounds like there is a lot of data available but it's important that it informs instruction. Don said that K12 offers many professional development opportunities. The iXL spread sheets enable teachers to specify skill sets for each student to focus on. We have a separate attendance team that meets weekly to discuss how to reengage absent students so that the departments may focus on instruction.

**Longitudinal Growth.** Melinda said the key question is whether each student is growing while attending MEVA and how to measure that. We have NWEA data going back to the beginning of each student's attendance at MEVA. Lena said it is important to challenge each student just enough. If they are over-challenged, they disengage. Kim said that she could echo that.

**Enrollment.** We have a certified enrollment of 430 (just one over our target number of 429). We have 100% approved reports. There are 8000 students missing from Maine's public education system. Stephanie said we are already planning for next year.

**Public Discussion.** There were no questions or comments from the public. Donna asked if there are any COVID cases among staff. Melinda said there are none. We do a health screen each day as staff come to the office. We wear masks when outside of our offices.

At 3:04 upon motion by Peter, seconded by Donna, the board meeting was adjourned and the board opened a public workshop on issues relating to the K12 contract for services.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Mills, Secretary