

Maine Learning Innovations

Minutes for a Meeting of the Board of Directors held September 20, 2016

Pursuant to email and public website notices, a meeting of the Board of Maine Learning Innovations was convened by President Amy Carlisle in the MEVA Conference room in Augusta at 2:00 PM. Attending were Directors Amy Carlisle, Peter Mills, and Ed LeBlanc. Absent were Donna Madore and Kevin Pomerleau.

Also present were: Melinda Browne, Jennifer Hight, Fadia Afaneh, and Kim Whitman from staff; and Elizabeth Roth, Mary Markert, and Patti Ashleigh from K-12.

Upon Motion by Ed seconded by Amy, minutes for the meeting of August 16 were unanimously approved.

Financial Matters

Jennifer reported that we have on hand \$540K in cash after receiving monthly stipends from the state of \$288K for July and August, up from \$228K last year. We have not been told how the new estimate was calculated, but it will, in any case, be retroactively adjusted based on the October 1 census. We have also recently received \$51K for local entitlement, \$30K for Title money, and \$15K for summer Title I work.

Our audit for 2015-16 is assigned to Danielle Tibbetts from MacPage. It will begin October 3 and should continue for about three days.

Our budget for the current year was approved long ago. We need now to make amendments and have a new one submitted to work from. The present budget was successfully up-loaded to the state. Tyler Backus is the DOE person who oversees it.

Accounting Services

Jennifer recommends that we hire someone with accountancy training and with experience in Maine school finance to work about 20 hours per week to take over from her. Although Jennifer could continue in an oversight role, there is too much weekly accounting to warrant having a CPA perform it.

The new staff accountant would upload financials, do monthly invoicing to the state, approve Kim's initial coding, review and approve payroll, reconcile bank statements, do budgeting, and keep the balance sheet up to date. It would be good to upload grant data monthly or quarterly, rather than only once as we did last year. Connections has a financial person who works about 20 hours per week. It would be a great job for a skilled person who wants to work part time with flexible hours

Upon motion by Amy, seconded by Ed, it was unanimously agreed to advertise the position at a salary to be negotiated.

Accounting System and Controls

Jennifer also recommends that we establish our chart of accounts within Quickbooks (the software costs \$300), load our transactions since July 1 into it and manage our finances within the MeVA office. It would accelerate paying of bills, be less cumbersome and might avoid the difficulties we encountered last summer in having to re-enter and re-code transactions to conform to state reporting requirements.

Mary stated that K12 needs its own financials within Intacct even if they are entered by a feed from Quickbooks. There would be a double set of books,

Kim said the approval process for paying bills within Intacct is time consuming and cumbersome with a number of built in delays.

Patti from K12 said that input to Intacct can now be initiated by MeVA as the result of operational changes made last year.

It was determined to proceed with advertising for our new financial manager and defer discussion about the accounting system until we have that person on board.

Head of School Report

Melinda reported that we are well into the new academic year with strong enrollments. NWEA test participation is approaching 90%. She has prepared a proposed data dashboard that can be used to track proficiency, growth and engagement as the year progresses.

Program Manager's Report

Fadia reported that we presently have 357 students with some continuing fluctuations. We have a strict cap at 360 and should have no problem enrolling to that number by October 1 using our waiting list. We are enrolling very few junior high students,. Most are entering the high school. We had about 180 carry overs from last year. In future years, we should carry over even more.

Family engagement is up 30% from last year thanks to Melinda's outreach, personal phone calls and note cards.

Fadia has asked the teachers to make direct referrals to her to solve any technical problems encountered by students and families. She has asked Katy Wormwood to start holding help sessions again, as sort of a help desk approach.

Physical Plant

It was unanimously agreed to authorize the purchase of a Universal Power Supply (UPS) system with battery back up to support our IT system in the event of power failure. Callahan has bid the price at \$2285. Melinda will check on whether the price is competitive before proceeding.

It was also unanimously agreed to authorize dividing the big room in the east side of our suite into three segments to provide more space for our teachers to work from. This will continue our present open office format with eye-level room dividers. The estimated cost to adapt the east side room is less than \$8000.

At 4:00 PM, the meeting was duly adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Mills, Secretary