



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING AGENDA
Collaborative for Educational Services
WEDNESDAY, September 30, 2020 at 6:30-9:00 PM

[HTTPS://COLLABORATIVE.ZOOM.US/J/92002632169](https://collaborative.zoom.us/j/92002632169)

TO CALL IN DIAL: 646-876-9923 AND USE THE MEETING ID: 920 0263 2169

Please Note: There will be a new Board member orientation beginning at 6:00 pm.

AGENDA ITEM	TIME
1. Call to Order and Introductions - Board Chair Dan Hayes	6:30
2. Public Comment	6:35
3. Approve Minutes of August 12, 2020 Board Meeting and September 22, 2020 Finance Committee Meeting (votes required) pg. 2 - 14	6:45
4. Election of Officers (votes required) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Election of Chair and Vice Chair - Election of At-Large Members of the Executive Committee 	6:55
5. Appointment of Secretary (vote required) Appointment of Treasurer (vote required)	7:00
6. Appointment of Finance Committee (vote required)	7:05
7. Appointment of Warrant Sub-Committee (3 members of Board) (vote required)	7:10
8. Appointment of Policy Subcommittee (vote required)	7:15
9. New Hires and Separations August 16 - September 15 (vote required) pg. 15 - 16	7:20
10. Vote that the Executive Director of the Collaborative for Educational Services (William A. Diehl) is authorized, empowered and directed on behalf of the Collaborative to sign, seal, execute and deliver any and all contracts, agreements and other documents on behalf of the organization, as allowed by law (vote required) Vote that the Deputy Director (Karen Rueter) and Director of Finance and Operations (Barbara Siegel) are each authorized, empowered and directed to act in place of the Executive Director to sign, seal, execute and deliver any and all contracts, agreements and other documents on behalf of the organization, as allowed by law, <i>if and only if the Executive Director is unable to fulfill these duties in a timely manner sufficient to meet specific deadlines</i> (vote required)	7:25
11. Fiscal Report	7:30
12. Planning for the future and development of a new strategic plan	7:45
13. Plans for transition of responsibilities	8:00
14. Presentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Title III - PLC / Job-alikes 	8:10
15. Executive Director Evaluation pg. 17 - 18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Process and timeline b. Goals for 2020-2021 (vote required) c. Evaluation Committee 	8:25
16. Executive Director's Report pg. 19 - 38	8:40
17. Adjournment (vote required)	9:00

Collaborative for Educational Services
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)
Wednesday, August 12, 2020
Zoom Meeting ID: 926 4440 1755

Present from the Board: Barbara Doyle, Carey Etchells, Carole Bergeron, Daniel Hayes (Chair), Donald Sluter, Gene Stamell, Heidi Gutekenst, Jennifer Mallette, John Cotton, Jonathan Schmidt, Kyle Belanger, Laura Fallon, Maryanne Reynolds, Matt Wilhelm, Maureen Nichols, Michael Merritt, Sarah Hall

Present from CES: Angela Burke, Barbara Siegel, Bill Diehl, Cheryl Rogers, Karen Reuter, Kathy Levesque, Kelly Hernandez, Sarah Molloy, Sherry Smith

A new board member orientation meeting was held at 6:00 PM

Attendees present were Bill Diehl, Maryann Reynolds, and Kelly Hernandez.

Call to Order and Introduce New Members

Dan Hayes called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

The Board did introductions and reviewed expectations of utilizing the mute option on Zoom and announcing your name when contributing and voting.

Public Comment

Dan provided time guidelines to allow all who are interested in commenting the opportunity. Twenty-two educators and staff from HEC Academy and from Special Education Services attended the public comment period. Four HEC Academy teachers and clinicians spoke about the reopening plans for HEC Academy and staff concerns about the plan, including concerns about when and how to begin conducting in-person education. Comments also included the incredible dedication of the staff; profiles of our students that may make social distancing or mask-wearing more challenging; concerns about budgets, job security and contracts; concerns about willingness to invest in building a better program that encompasses the SJE principles; people are the heart of HEC Academy.

Dan thanked all who have spoken this evening and reflected on HEC Academy. He has enjoyed meeting the students, speaking at graduation, and meeting the staff.

Approve the Minutes of the 6/24/2020 Board Meeting and of the 8/4/2020 Finance Committee Meeting (votes required)

A copy of the minutes from the June 24th, 2020 Board of Directors meeting were included in the Board packet.

Jonathon Cotton moved that the Board approve the minutes from the June 24, 2020 Board of Directors meeting. Jonathan Schmidt seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Maryann Reynolds abstained. None opposed and the motion passed.

A copy of the minutes from the August 4th, 2020 Finance Committee meeting were included in the Board packet.

Don Sluter moved that the Board approve the minutes from the August 4th, 2020 Finance Committee meeting. Gene Stamel seconded the motion. Maryann Reynolds abstained. None opposed and the motion passed.

CES Fiscal Year 2021 Budget as Amended

The following documents were included in the Board packet:

- FY21 Proposed Adjusted Budget
- Proposed Scenarios
- Acronym definitions

Status; context; considerations

Bill reminded the Board that every year in May, they are presented with a draft budget for the following fiscal year. Then, at the June Board meeting, a final vote is taken to accept the budget. Establishing a budget always has its challenges due to the unpredictability of services, students, grants, etc., but CES has always presented a balanced budget. FY21 is even less predictable due to the challenges COVID-19 has provided. Typically, CES does very well depicting a prediction of the coming year based on history and expectations. This Spring, the Board was presented with an annual budget for FY2021 which was based on a number of significant unknowns. This budget suggested a notable deficit, partly due to unknowns, and CES would benefit from additional time and information to present an amended and more informed budget. Therefore, at the June Board meeting, the CES Executive Director and Director of Finance and Operations requested that the Board schedule this special meeting to provide an amended budget that reduced some of the uncertainty. The deficit being presented is primarily related to COVID-19 expenses.

Presentation and discussion of amended budget; discussion of circumstances that impact the current deficit; presentation and discussion of scenarios for reducing the budget deficit

Barbara took the opportunity to thank all of the CES staff, department heads, and the Operational Continuity team for their effort to create this budget. She proceeded to present the Board with a deficit budget that is thoughtful and put together with conservative numbers, but with optimism about the capacity of CES to meet expanded expectations. The CES team has exceeded expectations before and believes they will again. The deficit was proposed to be \$1.125M. Details of the proposed budget can be found in the Board packet on pages 18-25. Barbara proceeded to narrate the details of the budget.

As part of the presentation, or In response to Board questions and comments, Barbara provided additional information, which included the following:

- Last year, the state reduced CES's indirect rate on many grants to 8%, which is not equal to the actual rate. All collaboratives received a fixed cap, most at 5%. CES

pursued a correction (to the actual indirect costs) last year, and continues to do so. Some grants and contracts from other state agencies do provide an accurate indirect percentage.

- Early Childhood has been making great investments to create and roll out new offerings, including PD, and people are working hard to make this happen to help offset the deficit.
- HEC Academy has a new goal of 25 in-person students or the potential of 28, if they can be serviced remotely.
- Related Special Ed Services is an area that has expenses that exceed the amount that can be covered based on the rates we charge. Increase in a rate would likely create a decrease in customers. While this has been an issue in the past, the Board had made the decision that it values these services and wants them to remain in place to support member districts. Work has been done to capture more of the time utilized and billed to cover more report writing, counseling, and attending meetings.
- Healthy Families and Communities along with Research and Evaluation are thriving departments that are providing a surplus. These bodies of work are in high demand.
- Licensure is hard to predict due to milestones and individual paces. Predictions are based off of prior years' data but it can vary with a possibility to break even. It was clarified that part of this program is practicums that take place in the classroom and needs to transpire to obtain the fee.
- Professional Development is an extensive team of experts and typically summer enrollment is usually the lowest semester of revenue. However, this summer they exceeded their revenue expectations. It is unknown if this is a trend yet and we will see how the next 2 semesters run. There is optimism built into this specific budget.
- ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education) Certification has had a lot of interest, including beyond MA. CES has been certified to provide this service remotely.
- It was clarified that if a district chooses to go remote rather than in-person CES is in potential danger to lose grants and contracts from DESE to serve districts, but do not know for certain. However, in the Spring, CES was allowed to provide adjusted deliverables and are optimistic this will be the case again.
- The \$150K COVID-19 costs include supplies, additional cleaning, and capital improvements to the Northampton buildings.
- The fringe costs were refined to the exact salary per employee with a small decrease in health insurance along with the dental insurance remaining nearly the same rate.
- Clarification was requested regarding the United Way grant that was put on hold in the Spring. It was advised it has been renewed but with a decreased budget.

Bill stated that the 2021 amended budget is not usual -- a balanced budget is typically presented each year. Bill also clarified that the operating budget and cash budget are not one in the same. The operating budget has depreciation listed, which is not the case for the cash budget. In addition, CES has been very proactive seeking ways to decrease expenses and is working to increase revenues. Having gone virtual seems to have benefited PD and we are looking at opportunities with Pre-K - 3 early literacy. Requests have increased for SJE assistance, as well.

The FY20 final budget will be completed and submitted for approval at an upcoming Board meeting. All of the final numbers have not been established but it currently looks like it is approximately a 300K deficit rather than the 400K previously advised.

The following options of how to improve our fiscal situation for FY21 were discussed in the Finance Committee meeting and brought to this Board meeting.

1. Barbara spoke about the FY19 \$300K fund balance that was approved by the Board for use in FY20 for deferred expenses such as facilities improvements. That money was not spent before the pandemic closed schools and offices. A vote by the Board was requested so that these funds would be used in FY21. This would bring the deficit down to \$825K. Plans will also continue to find reductions in expenses and increases in revenue.
2. In addition, CES received a PPP (Payroll Protection Program) loan for \$5.824 million. If the loan is forgiven, it would result in a positive fund balance in FY20 which could then be allocated in FY21 to further reduce or eliminate any deficit. The PPP loan is based on CES's expenses in defined areas during an eight week time period at the end of FY20. These expenses included \$5.7M in salary/fringe, \$9K in mortgage/interest, \$18K in rent, and \$26K in utilities for a total \$5.754M spent and \$70,409 remaining. There are two options for the remaining balance - convert it to a loan to spend on other expenses or return it. Barbara recommended that CES return the remaining funds. If the PPP loan is forgiven we will have \$5.8M added to the FY20 revenue creating a surplus with the potential to move some of the funds to balance the FY21 Budget.

Some questions and comments were raised and discussed including:

- Timeline of the final date to return the remaining funds. It was advised these guidances have not been reviewed yet but more will be known by September. Barbara is currently working with the accountants to review the numbers, ensure they are accurate, and prepare for an application for loan forgiveness. The application is not yet available, but should be soon.
- Uncertainty, unknown, waiting to hear were consistent themes, along with opportunity, investigating revenue streams, and ways to improve. Acknowledgement of the entrepreneurial spirit continues to be strong at CES.
- Appreciation was provided for the hard work the team has provided establishing the budget and multiple options.
- It was acknowledged that it is definitely a very trying time, especially financially, and not knowing what the future holds.

Carol Bergeron disconnected from the meeting prior to voting the following motions.

Laura Fallon moved to accept the budget as amended and to add in \$300,000 of the fund balance that the Board approved for FY20 to reduce the FY21 deficit to \$825,065. Jonathan Schmidt seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Maryann Reynolds abstained. None opposed and the motion was passed.

Note: *Per Collaborative Agreement Section VII. Finance.C.12: Once approved, the Treasurer shall certify and transmit the budget and related tuition rates, membership dues and fees for services for the upcoming fiscal year to each member district.*

Laura Fallon moved that if the Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) loan in FY20 is forgiven, resulting in an increase in the fund balance, to use a portion of that fund balance to apply to the FY21 deficit, contingent on a final recommendation and Board approval at the November meeting. Don Sluter seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Maryann Reynolds abstained. Jon Cotton opposed and the motion was passed.

Laura Fallon moved that if the Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) loan in FY20 is not forgiven, hence not resulting in an increase in the fund balance, to authorize the CES Executive Director, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Operations, Cabinet members and other leaders, to reduce expenses and increase revenues sufficient to offset a deficit. Jonathan Schmidt seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Maryann Reynolds abstained. Jon Cotton opposed and the motion was passed.

A question was raised about whether additional authority is being granted through this motion. Dan explained that the Board has given the Executive Director this authority, but this motion makes that specific to this situation. The Board has asked to be informed of situations that arise. This motion recognizes that the Board understands the ED and Cabinet are working together to address the current financial conditions.

Adjustments to Tuitions for the HEC Academy and Mount Tom Academy

No adjustment to SY tuition; adjustment to daily rate for the Academies due to required changes in schedules (10 days of training) **(Information; No Vote Required)**

Bill advised that the Commissioner has mandated that the first 10 days of the school year be used as professional development and training days for teachers and staff. This has shortened the instructional school year by 10 days, but not the operational year. The Academies annual tuition will remain the same but the day rate will be adjusted.

Districts are receiving \$225 per student through the CARES Act for personal protection equipment expenses. Collaboratives receive no additional state aid but the recommendation from DESE is that this funding should follow the student. In the case of CES (and other collaboratives), this means the districts will receive the funds and the CES would then bill the districts for these funds to be forwarded and follow the district's student(s). A vote is needed to approve the billing of these separate funds.

Conversation was had to include:

- It was confirmed the \$225 per student COVID relief funds would stay with the school districts if the board does not approve billing the district for the CARES Act funds to follow the students.

- Superintendents were made aware of DESE's recommendation that this funding follow the student during Zoom meetings with Commissioner Riley and CFO Bill Bell.
- The superintendent that participated at the Finance Committee meeting thought it was logical that the funds should follow the student.
- Clarification was provided that these funds would not be rolled into the tuition cost, rather would be billed as a separate invoice.

Laura Fallon moved to approve the addition of a one-time fee for sending districts of \$225 for each student enrolled at the academies, covered by the CARES Act, therefore not impacting the districts original budget negatively. Jonathan Schmidt seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Maryann Reynolds abstained. None opposed and the motion was passed.

Review HEC Academy Reopening Plan

The following documents were included in the Board packet:

- HEC Academy: Comprehensive Reopening Plan Summary

Sherry Smith reviewed the details of the phased HEC Academy reopening plan that can be found starting on page 28 of the Board packet. As required by DESE, three options were presented: fully remote; fully in-person; hybrid of remote and in-person. DESE prioritized in-person learning and those guidelines are the primary focus of the Academy reopening plan. The re-opening plans call for an initial hybrid approach, and then a staged approach to bringing students into the building. In-person learning is especially important, our students have special needs, and are in DESE's high-priority category. In addition, we have students who are homeless or in group homes who especially benefit from personal contact with teachers. The work of arranging the HEC Academy building has begun with a focus of 6 ft distancing creating the ability to accommodate a maximum of 25 students. Asheley, school nurse, Dr. Johanson, school physician, and HEC Academy staff provided input on the proposed reopening plan.

After the presentation, the Board had questions and comments which included:

- Clarification that 6 feet was recommended over 3 feet by Dr. Johanson due to the nature of the population of the HEC Academy students.
- It was asked if a staff survey had been conducted. HR Director Cheryl Rogers contributed that HR conducted private, engaging, multi-faceted, confidential conversations with the staff that included support options. The overall themes spoken included safety concerns for students and staff, personal child care concerns due to individual district plans, and their personal health and safety.
- DPH recently distributed matrix tools with towns noted by color, based on the percentage of COVID-19 cases, and hence, the risk of infection. For example, a district being green was one indication that in-person learning was recommended. Other districts being yellow would be a hybrid/remote recommendation zone. Since HEC Academy has students from a number of districts, the question was raised about how the Academy would make decisions based on the matrix and other data. Bill stated that DESE would be advising and providing directives on how collaboratives, as well as regional school districts and vocational-technical schools should proceed

- Appreciation was provided for the logical and cautious plans provided.
- Concerns for students with special needs falling behind was expressed. It is important to think about the needs of the staff but can't ignore the needs of the students. This plan has a healthy balance and it is important to have the flexibility to change, if needed.
- Being tech-savvy, there is data that suggests that some students thrive better in virtual learning environments. This was the case for some HEC Academy students.
- The 6 identified students to attend in-person learning for Phase 1 are those with highest need and were disengaged or struggled to engage with previous virtual learning.
- Some students that attend HEC Academy struggle with social interactions. If proceeding with remote learning, these students may not effectively advance their social skills.
- It was explained that the HVAC system is being serviced and will confirm it meets the guidelines. In addition, duct cleaning services are planned.
- Some spaces in the building are small and lack intake and outtake vents, therefore, are being categorized as inadacuit and will not be used as instructional space.
- Dr. Johanson will be reviewing the finalized plans and protocols prior to opening.

John Cotton motioned to approve the Fall Reopening Plan as presented, with the understanding that the situation is fluid and changes to the plan are likely. Donald Sluter seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Maryann Reynolds abstained. Gene Stamell opposed and the motion was passed.

Review Mt Tom Academy Reopening plan

The following documents were included in the Board packet:

- Mount Tom Academy Reopening Plan: Fall 2020

Deputy Director Karen Reuter shared that Mt Tom Academy does not require a DESE submission for reopening but that CES has created a plan that parallels HEC Academy. Since HCC, the regular site for Mt. Tom, is closed, there was consideration for use of the Picknelly Adult & Family Education Center in Holyoke; this did not come to fruition. Therefore, we will start the year at CES, in the two large conference rooms.

Last spring, we found that some of the MT students were very successful with remote learning while others were disengaged. We know that the relationships and support that is provided by the MT staff is vital in the students' success. Therefore the plan is to be hybrid, with in-person to the degree possible.

Conversation ensued that includes:

- Concern was expressed on what percentage of teachers and staff wants to return to in-person instruction. Karen advised there are 3 teachers and 1 has requested to possibly be virtual. This proposed hybrid model can accommodate this staffing request.
- A question was asked if there was extra care and consideration for cleaning the space between the cohorts' in-person learning sessions. Karen was able to contribute that CES has increased the cleaning protocols and these will be available for the MT space. The days in the facility may change with the fluid needs of the students.

- With the potential of transportation being an issue due to virtual only districts, is there a specific enrollment minimum to transition to one cohort? Karen clarified the maximum in the space available includes the adults and the hope is to enroll 16 students. There is no established number that would be a guide to transition to 1 cohort.
- Concern was raised how this plan could impact the operations at 97 Hawley. At this time, operations do not anticipate being fully staffed until potentially January. For the time being, this is a good use of the space.
- There was a suggestion that what was presented may not be a phased reopen rather a 10 day lag to hybrid reopening. There are no issues or concerns with the plan but it feels that the Board is voting on a hybrid plan that starts 10 days later.

Jonathan Schmidt moved to accept the hybrid Fall Reopening Plan as presented, with the understanding that the situation is fluid and changes to the plan are likely. John Cotton seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Maryann Reynolds abstained. None opposed and the motion was passed.

Review and approve changed Academy calendars

The following documents were included in the Board packet:

- HEC Academy Academic Calendar for 2020-2021
- Mt Tom Academy Academic Calendar for 2020-2021

Sherry advised the HEC and MT Academies Academic calendars have been adjusted to reflect the modified 170 day academic year found in the Board packet.

John Cotton motioned to approve the changes to the Academy calendars as presented. Jonathan Schmidt seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Maryann Reynolds abstained. None opposed and the motion was passed.

Review and approve new policy for student handbook regarding wearing facemasks

The following documents were included in the Board packet:

- HEC Academy: Language for handbook on face coverings

Bill shared that this policy has been obtained from MASC and adjusted for the Academy setting. Karen added that the policy has also been reviewed by CES's attorney.

Conversation took place to include:

- Curiosity if there has been a discussion or thoughts on the specifications of the type of mask that should be worn. The response was that this has not been included, but more guidelines can be considered after the policy has been accepted.
- There will be extra masks on hand if they are needed.

Gene Stamell moved to approve the new policy for the student handbook regarding wearing facemasks as presented. Don Sluter seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Maryann Reynolds abstained. None opposed and the motion was passed.

Executive Director Search-Change in timeline

Bill shared that the Board, at the June meeting, approved the search for a new Executive Director. At the time, the plan was to aggressively post the position, and screen and interview candidates with the goal of a start date of January 1st, 2021. However, as things have continued to change, it was proposed to move the new Executive Director's start to July 1, 2021. This change would take the added pressure of a short time-line off of the HR Director and department; they are already overextended due to the demands on them regarding COVID 19, accommodation requests, new positions and on-boarding. This change will also be more in tune with the typical hiring timeline for potential candidates availability along with more time for broadcasting the position, obtaining input, and lessening the financial impact. The recommendation is for Karen Reuter to become the interim Executive Director as of January 1, 2021 until a candidate is hired and starts. This will be a lot of added responsibilities for Karen but she is willing to accept this position upon the Board's approval. The Cabinet and other leadership will provide Karen with support in this new role.

Cheryl proposed completing the ED survey data over the next 2 weeks and finalizing this with October as the official start of the search process. We would begin the screening process with the screening committee in December and January. Interviews would be held in February. By March, the hope is to have the Interview Committee making decisions and recommendations on the finalists who will move forward with virtual-remote or onsite CES site visits along with candidate worksite visits. The goal would be to bring the final candidate to a special Board meeting in April or to the regular meeting in May. Then the plan would be to extend the offer in May or June to our final candidate who would ideally accept and join CES on July 1st. The goal is to build in enough time to have full opportunity to have thorough visits at CES and at the candidate's workplace.

Barbara reminded the Board that if an April meeting is held for the purpose of interviewing finalists for the ED position, it would be an additional meeting to the approved scheduled Board meetings.

Dan expressed appreciation of working with Cheryl who has been efficient, organized, collaborative, and doing what she can for all stakeholders to have input. He thanked Karen and provided appreciation for her taking the interim role and knows CES will be in good hands. He articulated his support to move forward with this proposed timeline.

Jonathan Schmidt motioned to approve the change in the Executive Director's search timeline as presented. Laura Fallon seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Maryann Reynolds and Maureen Nichols abstained. None opposed and the motion was passed.

New Hires and Separations for 6/16/20 - 8/5/20

The following documents were included in the Board packet:

- New hires and Separations for 6/16/2020-8/5/2020

Donald Sluter moved to accept the new hires and separations for 6/16/2020-8/5/2020 as presented. Jonathan Schmidt seconded the motion. Maryann Reynolds and Maureen Nichols abstained. A roll call vote was taken. None opposed and the motion was passed.

Adjournment

Dan Hayes adjourned the meeting at 9:28 PM.

Collaborative for Education Services

Board of Directors Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

September 21, 2020

Virtual Zoom Meeting

The Finance Committee Meeting was called to order at 8:05 am by Dan Hayes

In attendance were:

- Finance Committee members (a quorum was achieved)
 - From the Board: Dan Hayes and Jennifer Mallette
 - From Superintendent: There is currently only one superintendent on the committee, and she was unable to join.
- From CES: Barbara Siegel, Bill Diehl, Karen Reuter, Kelly Hernandez

FY20 Financial Update:

- The final figure is falling within the expected deficit of \$425-\$450K
- It seems to be closer to the \$450K figure due to expenditures from COVID-19 expenses
- This figure is the NET cash position
- Does not factor in potential loan forgiveness from the Payroll Protection Plan (PPP)

PPP Loan Forgiveness Status:

- Barbara has submitted her initial documents for review by our audit firm and is working on the requested edits.
- It was recommended that CES submit an 8-week window
 - The July payroll numbers were significantly reduced due to typical decrease in summer programs and services
 - This will provide forgiveness on all funds but 70K
- Timeline:
 - Application will be submitted to People's Bank
 - People's Bank has 60 days to provide a response (expected to have a quick turnaround)
 - Application is then forwarded to SBA
 - SBA has 90 days to provide a response (expected to potentially take longer)
 - Response should be received in February/March
- In the meantime:

- The expectation is unknown and is in limbo until the spring.
- Pending info from the auditor on how the funds could be recognized over a period of time.
- Currently, on the books as a liability/loan.
- If forgiveness is granted, it will be for 5.82M
- If deemed ineligible, we will need to pay it back or turn it into a loan with 1% interest.

FEMA Program Opportunity:

- FEMA is offering a program to cover some of the costs of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment).
- CES (and other collaboratives) plan to apply as a regional district that is independent from municipalities.
- Barbara is initiating the work on preparing this application.
- Suggestion was made to ensure documentation is clear when something is COVID-19 related. FEMA will not accept vague documentation.
- It was also suggested to document the exact time that is allocated towards FEMA related expenses as this may be back-paid if approved.
- Request that additional details about the FEMA program be obtained.

FY21 Financial Update:

- A better idea of the status can be provided in the late fall regarding if we are on track with programs.
- Currently, there is a need to continue to be cautious with expenditures.
- Increase in indirect funds of just under 10K has been applied to the goal of 25K
 - Hope was expressed that CES will exceed the 25K goal for indirect funds.
 - New grant of \$130K for SSOS has been received and applied to this adjustment.
 - Remaining adjustments are from actual awards obtained.
- Positive trends with enrollments in PD and Licensure
 - PD is offering a wide variety of dates and attendance signups can be the last minute.
 - PD programs that have started are doing well
 - PD is no longer geographically bound and are working to expand services area
 - Licensure has a normal trajectory with its regular semester timeframes
 - More firm numbers will be provided at the board meeting
- After school programs
 - West Springfield has signed up for services 5 days a week on a fee-for-service basis.
 - Northampton has provided interest in a similar program.
 - These services are also being offered to other districts
 - This fee-for-service has an 11.2% indirect rate

- HEC Academy
 - Had a lower summer school enrollment than in past years.
 - Did better than expected reducing expenses
- Overall, financials for the start of this FY are not finalized. Current figures reflect
 - Many operational expenses are front-loaded
 - Expenses are lower than in years past
 - Currently, the cash flow has more going out than in
 - This is an ordinary expectation and is common for this time of year

A reminder was provided that there is not typically a fiscal report in September due to a lack of available reporting numbers. The goal is to provide a verbal communication to the Board to provide transparency, but not a written report.

TAdditional Discussions/Comments

- The Finance Committee discussed the need for cross-training in key fiscal responsibilities, as well as articulation of who can take over positions if needed. The intention is that Rebecca Lincoln could be this person, but additional focus will be made to ensure the proper backup is available.
- The suggestion was also made to begin the transition of interim Executive Director leadership, including having Karen provide more of a role during Board meetings. Bill shared some of the transition work already in place.
- These topics will be discussed at the September Board meeting.

Dan Hayes adjourned the Finance Committee meeting at 8:36 AM.

HIRES AND SEPARATIONS AUGUST 16th 2020 - SEPTEMBER 15th 2020

HIRES

Last Name	First Name	Date Hired	Program	Position	Part Time or Full Time
Grigsby	Harrison	9/1/2020	PD	Instructor	Part Time

SEPARATIONS

Last Name	First Name	Date of Separation	Program	Position	Part Time or Full Time
Cole	Asheley	9/8/2020	HEC Academy	School Nurse	Full Time
Pradhan	Sahara	8/24/2020	Research and Evaluation	Research Associate	Part Time

HIRES AND SEPARATIONS AUGUST 16th 2020 - SEPTEMBER 15th 2020

HIRES

Last Name	First Name	Date Hired	Program	Position	Part Time or Full Time
Boulanger	Bethany	8/10/2020	DYS	Teacher	Full Time
Campanella Wadsworth	Ryan	8/10/2020	DYS	Teacher	Full Time
Cheatham	Jennifer	9/1/2020	SEIS	Teacher	Full Time
Egan	Victoria	9/1/2020	SEIS	Teacher	Full Time
Fagnoli	James	9/1/2020	SEIS	Teacher	Full Time
Frederickson	Michael	9/1/2020	SEIS	Teacher	Full Time
Gerlach	Richard	9/1/2020	SEIS	Teacher	Full Time
Lombard	Alexander	8/31/2020	DYS	Teacher	Full Time
Meyer	Morgan	9/8/2020	SEIS	Teacher	Full Time
Nikitas	Samantha	9/1/2020	SEIS	Teacher	Full Time
Phanor	Casey	8/10/2020	DYS	Teacher	Full Time
Roth	Allysha	9/1/2020	SEIS	Teacher	Full Time
Shackelford	Jason	8/31/2020	DYS	Teacher	Full Time
Tebbetts	Carolann	8/31/2020	DYS	Teacher	Full Time

SEPARATIONS

Last Name	First Name	Date of Separation	Program	Position	Part Time or Full Time
Fagnoli	James	9/6/2020	SEIS	Teacher	Full Time
Smokler	David	8/27/2020	DYS	Services	Full Time
Grazette	Pernell	8/31/2020	DYS	Teaching Coordinator	Full Time



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Collaborative for Educational Services

GOALS for the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION 2020-2021 PRESENTED TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, September, 2020

#1 - Instructional Leadership / Student Learning

During 2020-2021, the ED will provide leadership that will impact instruction and student learning in our **direct-service** programs through:

1. Ensuring supervision, coaching and support for CES managers of direct service programs in order to maintain or expand high-quality and responsive education for the children, youth, and families we serve. This area is especially critical as we navigate the many challenges posed by a pandemic.
2. As possible, under the current circumstances, ensuring the use of student progress and achievement data to inform instruction and monitor individual progress within our direct service programs (HEC Academy, Mt. Tom, Afterschool Programs, Migrant Education program, DYS, SEIS, and any new programs).
3. Expanding, as possible, the professional development, consulting, and other assistance to our member districts, especially in areas including remote learning; trauma-informed practices; inclusive practices; improving teaching practices in content areas; social justice and equity; social-emotional learning; use of technology; working with vulnerable youth; transition planning and other topics as identified by member districts or partners

#2 - Meet Member District Needs/ Promote CES programs and services

During 2020-2021, the ED will institute processes to ensure better communication with member districts and increased responsiveness to district needs. This will include:

1. Being a liaison to member districts in order to ensure greater coordination of services within CES and greater knowledge of and responsiveness to school district needs. This includes regular meetings with superintendents as well as job-alike meetings and PLCs and developing a process to collect and share across CES information about district needs gleaned at these meetings.
2. Developing / supporting processes at CES to move forward on opportunities for new programs and services for our member districts;
3. Continuing to focus on clear, consistent communication about CES services and how they can assist districts in meeting current challenges and preparing for emerging trends.

3 - Ensure the stability and growth of CES during uncertain times.

During 2020-2021, the ED will lead CES in putting into place policies, procedures, and key enhancements to ensure that CES will maintain and even expand programs and services.

1. Work with the Cabinet and the Operational Continuity Team to regularly assess and monitor CES's fiscal position in order to make informed and strategic decisions for actions needed for the immediate and long-term viability of CES.
2. Lead the agency's efforts to increase programs and revenue, decrease expenses, and increase efficiencies to ensure the agency ends the year with as small a deficit as possible.
3. Continuing, evaluating, and improving the infrastructure of CES in order to support greater collaboration and synergy of efforts and minimize duplication of functions. Goals include making CES more effective, responsive, collaborative, inclusive, innovative and with a diverse and empowered staff.

#4 Development of New, Multi-Year Strategic Plan

During 2020-2021, the ED will lead CES through a strategic planning process with the consultant group, Strategy Matters and will:

1. Complete the process of evaluating the impacts and results of the 2016 - 2020 5-Year Strategic Plan, in preparation for developing the new plan.
2. Lead the strategic planning process to be certain that it aligns with the CES vision, mission and SJE values, and that the process is inclusive and seeks input from a diverse range of stakeholders.
3. Participate in and coordinate efforts of the Strategic Planning Committee made up of CES employees.
4. To lead the process to successful closure by Spring 2021, by holding ourselves and Strategy Matters accountable for the intended outcome; a 5 year strategic plan that is built on CES' vision and mission, with an accompanying mission & values driven budget, and with implementation targets and benchmarks.



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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS September 30, 2020

Welcome to the first CES Board of Directors meeting for 2020-2021. In front of us is perhaps the most challenging and potentially transformational year for American education since Horace Mann founded the Common School in Massachusetts in the 1840s.

No sector of society or region of our country has been insulated from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. **Children and youth, however, are expected to bear the biggest brunt of the burden.** From their academic success to their social and emotional health, the pandemic may follow today's children for the rest of their lives. At CES, we serve some of the highest need students (to use DESE's nomenclature) in the state and we know those students and their families are disproportionately impacted by interrupted schooling, learning loss, sparsity of social-emotional supports, reduction in special education and EL services, food insecurity, trauma, and even basic access to the curriculum. This disproportionality is also reflected in other issues we are facing, including the impacts of racism and colonialism on student access, opportunities, and achievements.

We are committed, as educators and staff and as an educational organization, to continually rise to the challenges of providing quality education to the children, youth, and families we serve and of supporting our member districts to do the same. Even though CES has also been impacted, programmatically and fiscally, by COVID-19, we are undaunted in these commitments.

So over the last weeks, as this report highlights, we continuously rose to the occasion with innovation, adaptation, and incredibly hard work. CES started the new school year at many of our programs, usually remotely, including: Special Education programs (HEC Academy); Alternative education (Mt. Tom Academy); Early Childhood/parent centers and programs, as well as several professional development initiatives; Afterschool programs; Youth pathways (Connecting Activities, Perkins Career-Technical, and STEM internships); and more. We also were able to expand our work in Research and Evaluation and in Healthy Families and Communities.

Across the state, we also opened the school year with hybrid or in-person models at Department of Youth Services education programs and at Special Education in Institutional Settings sites. As a critical part of launching the school year, CES provided orientation and extensive professional development, at the end of August and early September, to our many educators in these settings.

We also launched Professional Development opportunities, mostly through sophisticated use of online tools and platforms. These include: open enrollment workshops; site-specific professional development or coaching; Educator Licensure courses; Professional Learning Communities; on-line self-paced courses; Reading Recovery training and support; SEI Endorsement courses + Title III workshops and support; and institutes sponsored by state or federal grants

We also continued and grew our **Cooperative Purchasing** program. Almost all of our member districts, and a number of others, are now participating. **I included a list on the next pages.**

I am truly honored to work with so many people who, in the best and the most challenging of times, are undauntedly determined to make positive impacts on all the lives they touch. CES can look forward to a productive year ahead!

On this and the following pages are highlights of CES's recent work. **The highlights are arranged according to our strategic goals.**

Districts Involved in CES' Cooperative Purchasing Contracts September 30, 2020

Member Districts

Amherst Public Schools
Amherst-Pelham Regional School District
Belchertown Schools
Conway School
Easthampton Public Schools
Erving School Union 28
Franklin County Technical School
Frontier Regional & Union 38 Schools
Gateway Regional School District
Gill Montague Regional School District
Greenfield Public Schools
Hadley Public Schools
Hampshire Regional School District
Hatfield Public Schools
Hawlemont Regional School District
Leverett Elementary School
Mohawk Trail Regional School District
New Hingham Regional Elementary School
Northampton Public Schools
Orange Elementary School District
Petersham Center School
Pioneer Valley Regional School District
Ralph C Mahar Regional School District
Rowe Elementary
Shutesbury School
Smith Vocational and Agricultural School
South Hadley School District
Sunderland Elementary School
Swift River School
Ware School District
Whately Elementary School
William E. Norris School

Non-Member Districts

Adams Cheshire
Agawam
Athol Royalston Regional School District
Berkshire Hills Regional School District
Central Berkshire
East Longmeadow Public Schools
Hampden Wilbraham
Hilltown Co-op Charter School
Lee Public Schools
Lenox Public Schools
Longmeadow Schools

Ludlow Public Schools
McCann Tech School (Northern Berkshire Vocational Regional School District)
Monson Public Schools
Mt Greylock Reg School
North Adams Public Schools
Palmer Schools
Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School District
Pioneer Valley Christian Academy
Pittsfield Schools
Quaboag Regional School District
Southwick/Tolland
The Academy at Charlemont
West Springfield School District
Westfield Public Schools
Wilbraham Regional School
Williamstown-Lanesborough Public Schools

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: MEETING MEMBER DISTRICT NEEDS by collaborating to build needed strength and capacity based upon recognition of current and upcoming demands and trends in education

SELECTED / REPRESENTATIVE ACTIVITIES

Regional

- The **Franklin and Hampshire County Superintendent Steering Committees** began their monthly convenings, organized and facilitated by CES in September. In addition, the **Connecticut Valley Superintendents Roundtable (CVSR)**, also organized by CES, held its first meeting with Commissioner Riley as guest speaker. CVSR includes all the superintendents in Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden Counties.
- CES has played important new convening and information-sharing roles for our member districts during this time of change and uncertainty. As reported at the previous Board meeting, CES has hosted one-hour Zoom meetings of superintendents every Wednesday since March 25. These meetings covered a range of issues, selected by the superintendents, related to COVID-19 and school closings and re-openings. At the last meeting, the superintendents agreed to continue these weekly meetings for the time being. On average, 17 of 21 superintendents are on a given call.
- CES has set up and facilitated biweekly Zoom meetings of secondary level principals as well as our regular meetings of Special Ed Directors, Curriculum Directors / Associate Superintendents, and Technology Directors for our member districts.

Professional Services:

- Professional Development had a very busy Summer, we ran **13 Fully Online Open Enrollment Courses** with 291 participants. From mid-June to mid-September we hosted over **80 District Based courses which provided instruction to over 2000 educators** on topics such as Remote Learning, Zoom, Google Classroom, Google Drive, Implicit Bias, SJE topics, Social Emotional Learning, Co-Teaching and more.

- The Professional Services Department is continuing **Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)** which are held virtually by CES. More information will be provided at this Board meeting (September, 2020).
- Kathy Levesque completed facilitation for three executive committee retreat sessions for the **Easthampton** Healthy Youth Coalition to work on mission and branding for the organization.
- CES planned and delivered with Gini Tate the August Mandatory Training for Title IX Coordinators. The training took place via Zoom and 107 people participated.
- The agency's FY 21 Title III consortium (supporting English Learners) now includes **23 districts in the Pioneer Valley and Berkshires** whose individual enrollments of fewer than 100 ELs would make them otherwise ineligible for Title III funds. This ESSA sub-grant provides funds to support direct services to students, family engagement and professional development for teachers and administrators. Member districts involved in this consortium are:

Franklin County:

- Frontier Regional and Union #38 School District
- Ralph C. Mahar Regional School District
- Orange Elementary Schools
- Gill-Montague Regional School District
- Greenfield Public Schools

Hampshire County:

- Amherst-Pelham Regional School District
- Belchertown Public Schools
- Easthampton Public Schools
- Granby Public Schools
- Hadley Public Schools
- Hampshire Regional School District
- Northampton Public Schools
- South Hadley Public Schools
- Ware Public Schools

Alternative Youth Programs

- The **STEM@Work internship program for Franklin and Hampshire Counties** achieved its target of 6 placements this summer. Four are paid placements with DESCO Medical in Hadley, Massachusetts. Students are assisting the company in data analysis and in researching and setting up a community Maker Space at the DESCO facility. Each student will do 80 hours with supervision, and work both independently and in teams. Most students are paid through DESCO and one is paid through the Ware Youth Employment Fund. Two other interns worked, respectively, at a Smith College mathematics lab and at FTL Labs (a technology lab) in Amherst.
- **Perkins V (for vocational-technical education programs)** begins this year, and the grant and accompanying team work to complete the grant with four school teams has been a detailed and sometimes arduous process. The grant was just submitted. Perkins V is different from Perkins IV in emphasizing linkages between Perkins funding and school-wide strategic priorities, and in looking at a slightly different set of performance

indicators. **Amherst, South Hadley, Easthampton, and Gateway** are the schools comprising the Perkins consortium.

- **Connecting Activities** (connecting students with careers) is expected to be level-funded for this year, which is great news. The altered school circumstances will require an innovative approach to provide students with meaningful career development opportunities, including virtual career fairs, career speaker events, and workshops in resume and cover letter writing. Virtual opportunities do exist; one example is a cybersecurity externship completed by three Hampshire county students over the summer. This was a scholarship-supported opportunity valued at \$400 per seat. The externship required 25 hours of attendance at an online cybersecurity summit featuring project-based learning and content provided by experts in cybersecurity from the FBI, US Army Intelligence, Facebook, Delta Airlines, and others. More information can be found at: <https://www.experienceamerica.com/cybersecurity-virtual-externship/>

Healthy Families / SPIFFY

Our Healthy Families / Strategic Planning Initiative for Families and Youth (SPIFFY) Department has had many initiatives in our member districts since the last report of their activities. These include:

- **COVID-19 Parent and Caregiver Forum Series**—SPIFFY hosted 3 live webinars to over 550 parents and providers in Hampshire and Franklin Counties over the last months to address an identified need for resources and connection on youth anxiety and emotional well-being during COVID. Presenters included experts from the national group, Minding Your Mind, along with local experts in the field. The webinars were: Teens, Tweens and Quarantines: A Virtual Forum for Parents and Caregivers; School's Out. Now What? Parenting Teens and Tweens Amid Pandemic and Protests; Little Treatments, Big Effects: Brief interventions for depression and anxiety in youth.
- **Youth Leadership Initiative**—SPIFFY continued to co-sponsor the Youth Leadership Initiative with Community Action Youth Programs and CTC serving Hampshire and Franklin Counties. One initiative was the **Youth Leadership Academy** with over 20 participants. Lydia Davis coordinated a host of workshops including a presentation by Pa'Lante on Restorative and Transformative Social Justice in schools for which SPIFFY contributed funding. Other workshops included substance use prevention, Peer-to-Peer communication skills, Fatalism in Activism and How to Fight It, and writing compelling editorials.
- **New Grant Funding**—SPIFFY was awarded a \$1.5M SAMHSA Grant called **Partnerships for Success** (PFS) which will allow us to work with schools and municipal leaders on policy development aimed at reducing youth substance use with a focus on racial equity. SPIFFY and our sister coalition in Quaboag Hills were the only two recipients of this grant in Massachusetts. This and other funding will support SPIFFY in hiring 3 new staff for the Coalition.
- **Trauma Informed Hampshire County**—continues to meet regularly as an unfunded group to plan strategies, discuss sustainability and invite featured guests. The group created a 90-minute training for community groups and organizations on "**Trauma Informed Care and Communities.**" The training will be offered twice this fall on October 7th from 9:30-11 and on November 20th from 12-1:30 pm.

- **Franklin-Hampshire Tobacco-Free Partnership**—[No Menthol Know Why](#) is a campaign to educate people about the new menthol tobacco laws in MA that are intended to improve health in the communities that have been historically and unjustly targeted by the tobacco and vaping industries. Menthol users who contact the helpline can earn up to \$50 in gift card rewards. The Hampshire Franklin Tobacco-Free Partnership is restructuring its work plan to lead with race and racial equity and this means prioritizing racial justice and community health over tobacco industry profits.
- **Healthy Hampshire** - Working with Many Hands Farm Corps as the operator, we launched the **Amherst Mobile Market** with four sites in Amherst after an inclusive process that led to the hiring of many of the residents the market was aiming to serve. The market had over 100 people signed up for weekly farm shares and sold over 5,000 additional produce items over the course of the pilot season. The market was recently approved to reimburse customers through the Healthy Incentives Program for any purchase made with Food Stamps.
- After a successful pilot season, Healthy Hampshire supported the launch of the **Hilltown Mobile Market's** first implementation season with sites in four Hilltown communities. Demand for weekly farm shares far outpaced supply and the market enjoys about \$500 in additional sales each week.
- Thanks to a grant from the MA Health Policy Commission, Healthy Hampshire is in the planning phase of launching MassUp - a **Hampshire County-wide food policy council** in partnership with Cooley Dickinson Health Care, the Hilltown Community Health Center, and the Hilltown CDC. The ongoing step in this process is bringing together a group of underrepresented community members to develop the governance structure for the food policy council.
- For the third year in a row, Health Hampshire has been given the sole contract to be a "**Mass in Motion Mentor**" for all Mass in Motion communities throughout the state.
- With many lessons learned from the construction of a community garden at a public housing site in Northampton, Healthy Hampshire is working with the Northampton Housing Authority and Town of Amherst to build community gardens at two new affordable housing adjacent sites this fall. Partnerships with School Sprouts and Grow Food Northampton will also facilitate educational opportunities for kids at the existing garden site.
- Launched "**Redesigning Power Structures**" (to promote equitable civic engagement with governance structures).
- Created walking maps for the Towns of **Chesterfield and Blandford**

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: FOSTERING THE SUCCESS OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES, WITH A FOCUS ON THOSE PLACED AT RISK – by providing educational programs, policies and practices that foster the success of families, youth and children.

SELECTED/REPRESENTATIVE ACTIVITIES – Special Education

ENROLLMENT DATA for HEC Academy:

HEC Academy 2020-2021 Enrollment (as of 9/21/2020)

District	Enrollment
Agawam	1
Amherst	1
Chicopee	1
Easthampton	1
Frontier Regional	1
Greenfield	3
Hadley	2
Longmeadow	1
Northampton	4
Pioneer Valley Regional	1
Ralph C. Mahar	2
South Hadley	1
Springfield	1
Ware	1
Worcester	1
Total Enrollment = 22	

UPDATES:

- Remote learning for all students began on 9/15. While things went well overall, there are huge lags in our tech bandwidth (old Chromebooks, cannot handle the multiple tabs, load times are extremely slow, etc.), and this has been very frustrating for students & staff (but everyone was able to roll with it!). Our new Chromebooks will not be arriving until the end of October or early November due to supply chain issues (as experienced by many other schools)
- In-person learning for our first cohort of six students was planned for Monday, September 28th but, unfortunately, we had to delay the date due to the lack of a school nurse. Preparations are underway to prepare for students' arrival, including bringing staff members back to the building who are able to do so.
- Staff members are working diligently to keep students engaged in remote learning
- Work arrangements and accommodations for staff have been made to the extent feasible. We will encounter more challenges for staff coverage as we begin to bring more students into the building. Our challenges include that three of our seven content or Special Education teachers have accommodations for full remote learning and another one of our teachers and two assistant teachers have accommodations for things like shifting child-care needs.

- As of 9/28, we were without a school nurse. Our previous nurse was offered a position at a private school close to where she lives. We have to have a school nurse in order to provide in-person instruction. While we hope to fill this position soon, school nurses and RNs are in especially high demand right now.

SELECTED/REPRESENTATIVE ACTIVITIES – Mt Tom

Mount Tom Academy

Mt Tom Academy, an alternative high school program that was housed in the past at Holyoke Community College, opened remotely on September 15th with a virtual student orientation. In person learning was planned to begin on September 28th; the date was delayed as we work to fill CES’s nurse position.

Enrollment to date:

School District	# of students	# of students remote learning	# of students hybrid learning
Belchertown	1	0	1
East Longmeadow	2	2	0
Greenfield	1	0	1
Hampshire Reg.	2	0	2
Mohawk Trail	1	0	1
Northampton	1	0	1
Ware	1	0	1
West Springfield	3	3	0
Total	12	5	7

Based on available space in CES conference rooms A&B, we have divided the students into two cohorts. The cohorts will be designed based on student academic needs/grade levels. Staff have met with all of the families to gather updates and information on a student’s well-being and to design an individual plan for this school year. Individual plans will be shared with school districts with planned check in meetings throughout the year.

All staff returned to Mt Tom this year and look forward to getting started with in person support.

SELECTED/REPRESENTATIVE ACTIVITIES – Early Childhood

Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE)

- CFCE offers weekly virtual, interactive playgroups. These have been offered on ZOOM in all our CFCE communities. Plans are being developed for limited outdoor engagement activities with families, following the local Board of Health, EEC, and CES health and safety protocols. Playgroups are:

- Amherst Family Center
 - Amherst Spanish-Speaking Playgroups
 - Belchertown Family Center
 - Bridge Family Resource Center Playgroup
 - Chesterfield Playgroup
 - Easthampton Family Center
 - Goshen Playgroup
 - Granby Playgroup
 - Hatfield Playgroup
 - Palmer/Monson Family Network
 - Pelham Playgroup
 - South Hadley Playgroup
 - Southampton Playgroup
 - Ware Family Center
 - Warren Playgroup
 - Westhampton Playgroup
 - Williamsburg Playgroup
- Parent education workshops have been developed that are relevant and responsive to the current needs of families, and they are being provided virtually. New topics have been developed such as Parent/Child Yoga, Helping Children Manage Anxieties, and Managing Screen time with very young children. Other topics include Early Reading Skills, Baby Sign Language, and a Spanish Language Parent/Child workshop, Hola Amigos y Amigas, and Positive Solutions will be offered to families both in English and in Spanish. Chinese language parenting workshops have also resumed.
 - Each CFCE site maintains a Facebook page. This is a space to update the community and families about resources available (such as Early Intervention and WIC), early education and school re-opening schedules, and enrichment and literacy activities for young children. Also, most CFCE sites offer a weekly virtual “Parent Cafe”, which provides opportunities for relationship building and networking.
 - Offering support to early education programs has been identified by the MA Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) as a new area of focus for CFCE. CFCE staff are connecting with schools regularly and maintaining a database of available programs, and those that have not yet reopened, or have closed – in order to determine areas of need in their communities.
 - Community Council meetings in each community will continue virtually this fall, and will provide a networking hub in the early childhood community for our community partners, early educators, and families. These meetings will happen more frequently (bi-monthly instead of quarterly) in order to maintain connections and provide regular community support.

Early Childhood Professional Development (EC PD):

- New PD has been developed to be responsive to the needs of the Early Childhood Community during the pandemic and the current social climate. Our fall training calendar lists courses on topics such as SJE in Early Childhood, challenging behaviors and understanding temperament, safe sensory experiences, and supporting families.

- The introductory course to our workshops: *Resilience Starts with Us*, currently has 45 people registered and will be offered 9/23.
- A new course on supporting children with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorders) will be offered, as well as course offering practical strategies for developing STEAM activities and providing opportunities for dramatic play.

Pyramid Model

- With DESE and EEC funding, we provide coaching with school districts in the Pyramid Model which addresses the social emotional learning and skill level of children/students, and their challenging behaviors.
- DESE services include 6 different school districts. Despite the pandemic, work is expected to continue with the Leadership Teams in all the districts. Some of the support has focused around sharing Pyramid model components to families to support social emotional development at home, and how to incorporate social emotional learning through remote learning.
- EEC services include 6 childcare sites. Traditionally with the EEC sites, funding and services do not begin until the middle of October. It appears that this will be the case this year. Once funding is approved, external coaches will begin work with the directors and educators of the childcare programs. It is anticipated that all 6 sites will continue with the program.

Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH)

- Currently 15 individual child cases are open. Although the grant is designed to focus on supporting educators to support children, given the current situation, increased support has been offered to families in addition to educators. It is expected that most childcare programs that will be re-opening, will be open by the end of September. Outreach about service to directors will be done in the next two weeks and then again in October. At this time, we will only be able to offer virtual services, as clinicians are not considered essential workers.
- A monthly ECMH newsletter is being sent out to directors and families, as the weekly newsletter was very well received. The newsletter will include topics such as supporting young children in the face of a pandemic, grief, trauma, social emotional skill building etc.

Strong Foundations for Young Children (SFYC)

- We currently are serving 5 children and families. It is expected that we will see an increase in numbers due to 1) the severe reduction in childcare capacity 2) families that have chosen to keep their children at home.

Afterschool Programs

- The twelve 21st CCLC after school program sites that are managed by CES continued to engage learners in remote and offline activities starting in early-July and for the summer. Students met with activity leaders via Google Meets around an hour a day to engage in lesson plans and receive instructions for their offline activities. The sites equipped all students with the necessary supplies to perform their offline learning activities (art supplies; journals; fitness equipment like yoga mats; etc.)

- The after-school network is continuing to run remote/offline programming this fall, or, in some cases, a face to face or hybrid model. We hope, when it's safe, that we will be 100% back in school. Each site is following the lead of their host school and is in close communication with school administrations. Each site adheres to CDC, DESE, and each school district's guidelines and protocols around social distancing, cleaning protocols, class size, and anything else that is needed to keep all safe.
- Recently, CES was awarded \$246,713 by MA DESE through the Exemplary Program Grant for the after school programs at **Amherst Regional High School** and at West Springfield High School. In addition, we very recently submitted the FY21 Continuation Grant reapplication for our After School Program. The sites included are: **Easthampton High School, Greenfield High School, Memorial Elementary, Maple Elementary, Neil A. Pepin Elementary, Palmer Middle School, Philip G. Coburn Elementary, Sheffield Elementary, Stanley M. Koziol Elementary, and Ware Middle School.**
- In a new development, **West Springfield** contracted with CES, using CARES funding, to provide virtual afterschool homework help and enrichment activities in all their schools. This has just been launched. **One of our member districts** is discussing doing the same thing.

Department of Youth Services Contract to Provide Education

- From July 6-Aug. 14th, CES educators working under the DYS contract provided summer educational programming in a hybrid fashion for 3 hours per day. One of the highlights from summer programming included our first ever Associates Degree earned while in residential treatment. This accomplishment was the result of a lot of hard work and persistence by the scholar as well as robust teamwork by educators who believed in the possible and brought their skills to bear to make it so across multiple settings and regions. Additionally, 9 students in residence enrolled in postsecondary coursework during the summer. Between them, they enrolled in 16 courses.
- Another noteworthy highlight included our participation in a contest sponsored by the National Center on Improving Literacy Adventures entitled the Clash of the Heroes. This contest centered around the creation of a special edition of a comic book. Students had the opportunity to demonstrate their creative talents in an exercise involving core aspects of literacy, including reading and writing. In Stage 1, contestants designed a (superhero) character for the comic book, taking into consideration the character's name, aesthetic, origin, what makes them a hero, etc. 4 students entered submissions at this stage, with a character named Lady Justice winning the popular vote (caring adults in the DYS network and beyond voted).

In Stage 2, contestants centered on creative writing, with youth writing origin stories and conflict and resolution for the winning character of Lady Justice, including appropriate historical and developmental information about her. 4 students—three from the Northeast, one from the Southeast—submitted stories at this stage. Ultimately, the same student whose character won Stage 1 also won Stage 2, with a deeply compelling, detailed story of her origins, motivations, talents, and challenges. If you'd like to take a look at the entries, they may be found [here](#) and enclosed is the winning artwork.



Lady Justice (Seer)

- Beginning with our first ever virtual new teacher training on Aug. 31 and the all staff professional development launch day on Sept. 1, we officially began our 2020-2021 academic year. With COVID-19 front and center in our planning and preparation efforts, we built our plan based on the success of summer school and by leveraging the lessons learned in the spring to plan for and deliver an engaging and robust hybrid educational model across 40 programs throughout the state.
- We are optimistic that despite the challenges COVID-19 has on our educational program, we will continue to create access to opportunities for learning across multiple concentrations of study, that result in positive outcomes for the youth we serve. Central to this optimism is our commitment to social justice and equity in our educational offerings. This year, we've adopted the professional development theme of "Liberatory Education: Healing from the Hidden Wounds of Racial Trauma in the Classroom." Our keynote speaker, Dr. Kenneth Hardy, spoke eloquently and inspiringly to our educators on the topic of "Voicelessness: Dilemmas of Silence, Dilemmas of Speaking." In addition to the PD series that will support teacher growth relative to this theme, we are launching a multi-year effort to decolonize our curriculum and pedagogy. This year, we will be piloting a project entitled the "Rethinking History Project." This project aims to present new ways of teaching and learning history by decentering settler narratives and centering classroom instruction on the histories, cultural identities, and experiences of historically marginalized groups. As part of this project, teachers will be trained on the DESE expectations for civic education. Course content will be organized and presented in the syllabus from a decolonized point of view. We are excited about the work ahead and in fulfilling our role in a more just and equitable society.

Special Education in Institutional Settings Contract

- Special Education in Institutional Settings (SEIS) kicked off the school year with SEIS Launch day on September 1st. During this orientation, SEIS reviewed annual policies, set expectations for the 2020-2021 school year and reviewed COVID related policies and procedures.
- All SEIS teachers started the school year facilitating in person learning. Due to the nature of COVID 19, SEIS has developed procedures for hybrid and remote instruction, should those modalities become necessary.
- SEIS is currently working on finalizing the 2020-2021 SEIS Workplan with our DESE colleagues. The SEIS Administrative team has outlined the first year of work for the new SEIS contract.
- SEIS has launched the chromebook initiative for all teachers in students in SEIS settings.
- On September 16th, Kira Jewett, SEIS Professional Development Coordinator, launched the SEIS Mentoring Program.
- On September 17th, Jill Goyette and Melanie Kornacki, SEIS Instructional Coaches, kicked off the SEIS New teacher induction program for the year

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: DEVELOPING EXEMPLARY EDUCATORS - through the delivery of high-quality and distinctive professional development.

SELECTED / REPRESENTATIVE ACTIVITIES (PLEASE ALSO SEE GOAL 1)

- We have been selected by DESE to continue (for the fifth year!) carrying out an intensive program -- the Special Education Teacher Leaders' Institute (SETLI). SETLI is designed to develop Educational Team Leaders, IEP Chairs and other non-administrative leaders across the Commonwealth. The year long MA SETLI and the CT Team Leader (PPTLI) Institutes began in August.
- DESE renewed our Special Education and English Language Learner Contract for FY21. We will be providing support services statewide for these services.
- Emerging America initiative has been very active, thanks to Rich Cairn and Alison Noyes.
 - After a spring pilot with 60 teachers, we launched the groundbreaking K-5 free curriculum, [History's Mysteries](#) in July. The program works well either taught in-person or virtually. Supported by the Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources program, History's Mysteries helps fill a harmful gap in elementary level social studies curriculum. Curriculum authors, Easthampton teacher, Kelley Brown, and Westfield State University faculty member, Laurie Risler have so far led 120 additional teachers through professional development for fall on teaching inquiry and use of the curriculum.
 - We also launched contracted fully online inservice professional development for school districts on civics, inquiry, investigations, and the 2018 Massachusetts History & Social Science Framework.

- Our fully online summer program also included packed graduate courses on Accessing Inquiry for Students with Disabilities, the First Amendment, and America and World Fascism. The fall sees new courses on African American civil rights struggles and on Disability History.

Licensure/Credentialing and Endorsement Centers

- **Licensure:** Course enrollments for Summer semester were on pace with last year and Fall Semester enrollments have increased.
- **Reading Recovery** - We are waiting for the funding decision from the state on this program. Our Reading Recovery Leader is currently spending .75 FTE teaching in West Springfield and .25 for CES providing support for our reading recovery cohort.
- **SEI Endorsement Center** - DESE re-authorized our SEI endorsement center. This Fall we will be offering a fully online course for Teachers. In the Spring we will offer the Teacher Course and the Administrator Course.
- **ISTE** - We hosted our first fully on-line ISTE Certified Educator Course in July. We are offering additional online courses in September, October and November. (ISTE = The International Society for Technology in Education)

ADDITIONAL SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS

Research and Evaluation

- Because of the pandemic and uncertainty about how instruction would be provided this fall, we've worked closely with our Smith College and STCC partners over the summer in adapting an innovative STEM curriculum (based in Imaginative Education, funded by NSF) and revising our evaluation plan to facilitate implementation in the Springfield Public schools this fall. As part of this project, we have developed observation and curriculum review protocols to assess active student engagement in STEM instruction.
- In partnership with our colleagues in Social Justice and Equity, we conducted a study this summer on the community drivers of chronic absenteeism in the greater Hartford area. We will be presenting the findings in the coming weeks.
- We completed the first year report from a developmental evaluation of Hartford Foundation innovative Greater Together Community Funds project, which has a bold vision for giving local community groups decision-making power regarding how local funding is dispersed.
- We continue working with the DESE to support the Department's' Safe and Supportive Schools work, and help them determine how they can better support school districts. Over the summer we developed a rubric for future use by DESE and districts, and utilized this rubric to analyze action plans districts have developed to enhance their capacity to support students. The analysis looked at the completeness of these plans and identified areas where they could be strengthened to increase role clarity, alignment of strategies and goals, and clarity around implementation and progress monitoring.
- Working with Easthampton High School and District staff, we completed an audit of disciplinary data at the high school, looking for indicators of disparities tied to race and ethnicity.

Development Activities

- Awarded \$1,500,000 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for the Strategic Planning Initiative for Families and Youth (SPIFFY) Coalition/Healthy Families and Communities under the **Strategic Prevention Framework Partnerships for Success** grant program for FY21-FY25. With the grant, SPIFFY will work to prevent and reduce alcohol use among youth by creating a **Hampshire county-wide** infrastructure of municipal prevention teams to implement strategies locally and county-wide that decrease availability of alcohol, enforce laws, and educate communities about best practices to prevent underage drinking. Partner organizations include: Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hampshire County, Cooley Dickinson Health Care, **Easthampton** Healthy Youth Coalition/City of Easthampton, **Hadley** Public Schools, Hampshire HOPE, Massachusetts Package Store Association, Northwestern District Attorney's Office, **Northampton** Board of Health, Northampton Police Department, **South Hadley** Drug and Alcohol Prevention Coalition, South Hadley Police Department, UMass Campus Community Coalition to Reduce High Risk Drinking, and **several other school districts** will be joining as well.
- Approved by MA DESE for the Licensure Program of our Professional Services Department to pre-qualify as a Provider of For-Cost **SEI Endorsement Courses for Educators** for FY21-FY25. (Pre-qualification for rates-based work on future contracts).
- Awarded \$246,713 by MA DESE for the FY21 21st Century Community Learning Centers Learning Exemplary Program Grant for the **After School** Program for programs at **Amherst Regional High School** and at West Springfield High School.
- Awarded \$3,639,999 for FY21-FY24 by MA DESE for the **Massachusetts Migrant Education Program, a statewide program that is a federally funded program (Title I, C) to offer educational support services for migratory children and youth.** Migrant staff provide supplemental instruction, support services and referrals, based on the needs of migrant children and their families and partnerships working with schools where migratory students are enrolled. Migrant staff utilize a wrap-around approach in services, developing pathways from advocacy to self-advocacy, all grounded in the trusting migrant staff-student-parent / guardian relationship. A migratory student is someone who is: Between the age of 3-21; Has not yet received a high school degree or its equivalent; Has moved into their school district within the past 36 months; Whose parent/guardian/spouse/self is a migratory agricultural worker or a migratory fisher. **Western Mass school districts currently participating are: Hadley Public Schools, Gill-Montague Regional Public Schools, Springfield Public Schools, Frontier Regional Public Schools, and Southwick Public Schools,** in addition to 15 school districts across other regions of the state.
- Awarded \$272,000 for FY21-FY24 by MA DESE for the **Instructional Services for Out-of-school and Secondary-aged Youth (iSOSY)** under the Migrant Education Program. The iSOSY provides additional funds to participate in a consortium that improves educational outcomes and alternative pathways to graduation for migratory out of school youth (OSY) and secondary youth at risk of dropping out.
- Awarded \$1,446 by MA DESE for the DYS Program for a HiSet - High School Equivalency Testing Center for FY21.

- Submitted a **23-district, FY21 Title III Consortium application** spanning our four Western Massachusetts counties (supplementary services for English Language Learners). Requested \$140,937. Award decision pending.
- Submitted the FY21 Perkins Application for the for the Perkins Consortium (supporting specific career-vocational-technical programs) with **Easthampton High School, Amherst Regional High School, South Hadley High School, and Gateway Regional High School**. Requested \$75,.033. Award decision pending.
- Submitted a response under the **Building Equitable Supports for Children with Disabilities** MA EEC Request for Responses for the Early Childhood Department. Requested \$125,000 for FY21. Awarded.
- Submitted a proposal under *Alliance District Disparities Reduction Work and Monitoring Plan Project* to the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for the CES Research & Evaluation Department. Requested \$79,971. Award decision pending.
- Submitted the FY21 21st Century Community Learning Centers Learning Continuation Grant reapplication for our **After School** Program. The sites included are: **Easthampton High School, Greenfield High School, Memorial Elementary, Maple Elementary, Neil A. Pepin Elementary, Palmer Middle School, Philip G. Coburn Elementary, Sheffield Elementary, Stanley M. Koziol Elementary, and Ware Middle School**. Requested \$986,718. Award decision pending.
- Prepared the agendas and facilitated sustainability planning meetings with the Early Childhood Department Director and other EC staff members, Development staff, with the participation and support of the Director of Business Development. Meetings are on-going.
- Organized a meeting with the Dean of the College of Information and Computer Sciences of UMass Amherst, along with other faculty and staff members there, and the CES Directors of Alternative Education and of Professional Services, a Senior Research & Evaluation Specialist, and the Deputy Director to explore future collaborations in STEM education.

Business Development

- Attending Social Impact Exchange Conference Sept 23rd/24th. SIE focuses on creating and spreading cross-sector collaborative initiatives (nonprofits, philanthropy, business, and government) with a goal of achieving systemic change and population-level impact.
- Chaired Operational Continuity Team, a workgroup of the Cabinet meeting weekly to review, analyze, and make recommendations on CES budget and operational matters, especially those impacted by the pandemic.
- Began serving on Strategic Plan Committee
- Held a series of strategy sessions between New Business Development, Grants, and Early Childhood leadership.
- Served on Preparing for the Future CES Workgroup, which completed their work project in September.

Marketing and Communications

- Worked with HR to develop online content for the upcoming posting for the Executive Director search.

- Developed Intranet location and content to support greater communication of Cabinet and related workgroup work.
- Began work to gather data for the development of the FY20 annual report for presentation to the Board in November, and then submission to ESE.
- Developed proposed updated messaging for CES Early Childhood department, with special emphasis on new consulting services.
- Began work on planning and support for multiple article submissions from our consultants to the AESA journal, *Perspectives*
- Our Director of Graphic Design has been busy with multiple projects supporting direct services, including;
 - Development of design and layout for joint community e-newsletter created by our CES ECMH consultants and our partner, Behavioral Health Network. This e-newsletter was initially sent out to constituents weekly and is now being sent monthly.
 - Design and layout for reports to the funder created by our Research and Evaluation team for their work for the Hartford Foundation, and for their work on evaluating Recovery High Schools for DESE..
 - Several design projects supporting the DYS Education Initiative in preparation for the fall launch of school and teacher development.
 - Supported the launch of the Amherst mobile market with design work in several different languages: signage and flyers, etc. The visuals build on the same branding system developed for the Hilltown mobile markets.
 - Development of slide presentation template for presenting data from each state related to computer science, to support our Research and Evaluation group's work on the Facebook project.

Web Development

- Website redesign team completed draft of redesigned sitemap for new website, and made a decision to hold on the final build of the new site until strategic planning has completed. We will be developing a visual design and refining content in the intervening months.
- Web development team began working on a virtual (online) payment system for non-event orders, to support our ability to take credit card payments for fee for service after school programs. The online payment system will provide an ability to collect touchless electronic payments to support other program areas that had in the past been limited to taking payments by check.
- Web development completed several free “mini-accessibility audits” of organizational websites, including one of the Northampton Public Schools websites, which they presented to the Northampton team.
- Created additional customized functions in Salesforce to better support users of contract records in the system, including a new report design and automated reminder to project managers to review grants contracts for amendment needs on a recurring basis, and added HR to the approval queue in the SF system for contract approvals.

Events Management

- Supported the rapid deployment of a series of virtual zoom professional development offerings to our schedule for late August, early September, to support educators in preparing for reopening.
- Prepared, planned, and implemented launch for fall professional development open enrollment schedule including 19 Fall PD workshops.
- Launched rapid deployment of August Title IX Coordinator Training workshop. 107 participants attended.
- Began training for Administrative Services staff on contracts documentation and management in our CES information systems, including Salesforce and Infinite Visions.

Operations

Administration/Support Services

- Procurement of PPE for programmatic and administrative office use
- Worked as part of the team to plan and implement the "Reopening of 97 Hawley Street Offices"
- Assisted with the preparations for Mt Tom Academy to operate out of conference rooms A & B
- Supported HEC Academy in their preparations to reopen the school
- Sent the certified budget to the member district school committee chairs

Facilities

- Oversaw the installation of touchless faucets and touchless hand sanitizer dispensers
- Hired cleaning company for high touch area special cleaning

Finance

- Closed out FY20 activity
- Set up FY21 systems
- Began preparing for the annual audit

Grants Management

- Worked with project managers to close out their June ending grants
- Entered FY21 grant budgets into IV
- Began working on audit preparations

Special Projects

- Worked with HR to establish protocols for reopening the offices at 97 Hawley Street
- Managed documents and meetings with state auditors
- Began setting up the transition plan for the Executive Director's retirement
- Completed the commercial insurance package renewal

Technology (Internal)

- Negotiated a new 3 year Chromebook lease for HEC Academy
- Reviewed options and recommended a touchless security system
- Recommended transition to Google's GSuite for Education
- Meet with the IT Security Auditor from Whittlesey regarding the technology audit (part of the annual audit process)

Human Resources

- The HR team worked on the following reopening tasks:
- Managed educators' accommodation and childcare leave requests
- Developed COVID Infection Control Plans for HEC Academy and Mt Tom Academy
- Developed "Frequently Asked Questions" on COVID testing and Workplace Safety Standards
- Recruited, hired and oriented new staff
- Prepared training on Workplace Safety Standards
- Worked with SEIU Union on shared commitments to workplace safety
- Developed HR procedures and guidance on COVID exposure, testing and return to work
- In addition, HR continued to provide support in preparing and responding to three audits: CES annual fiscal year financial audit, State Auditors, and DYS PREA/CORI Audit.

I hope you find this selection of recent activities informative and helpful. Please feel free to call me if you have any questions or want further information about the activities outlined in this report.

Best regards,

Will Dull