

**Collaborative for Educational Services
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
MARCH 27, 2019
12 Olive Street, Greenfield, MA 01031**

Present from the Board: Daniel Hayes, Cathy Englehardt, Laura Fallon, Stephen Sullivan, Johanna Bartlett, Don Sluter, Robert Decker, Matt Wilhelm, Humera Fasihuddin, Jonathan Schmidt, Carl Schlerman, Anastasia Ordonez, Stephanie Conrod, Chrissa Young, Susan Eckstrom, Maureen Nichols, Craig Cohen, Michael Simpson

Present from CES: William Diehl, Barbara Siegel, Terry Senio, Allison Garriss, Barbara Cheney, Rebecca Mazur

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Daniel Hayes called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM. The Board did introductions.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Daniel Hayes reminded the group that the Executive Director's report is an excellent source of information.

APPROVE MINUTES OF:

Board Meeting 1/30/19

Don Sluter moved that the Board approve the minutes of the 01/30/2019 Board of Directors meeting. Jonathan Schmidt seconded the motion. Anastasia Ordonez and Robert Decker abstained from voting. All other Board Members were in favor and the motion passed.

Finance Committee Meeting 3/21/19

Maureen Nichols moved that the Board approve the minutes of the 03/21/2019 Finance Committee meeting. Susan Eckstrom seconded the motion. Anastasia Ordonez, Steve Sullivan and Laura Fallon abstained from voting. All other Board Members were in favor and the motion passed.

CES PRESENTATION - MT TOM ACADEMY

Barbara Cheney and several students gave an overview about the Mt. Tom Academy. Students shared personal stories highlighting their journey to the program. Board members noted that the students -- and the program -- were very impressive.

Mt Tom Academy is designed for high school students and located on the Holyoke Community College campus. It is not a Special Education program for students on IEPs; rather, it is for students who, for a variety of reasons, have not been successful in a traditional setting. The curriculum is self-directed and focuses on project based learning.

LEGISLATORS/SUPERINTENDENTS MEETING

CES held a joint meeting with district Superintendents and various elected officials on 2/15/19. All 20 superintendents from our member districts participated. Bill reviewed highlights of the meeting and a document was provided to all Board Members in their packets.

Presentations by Superintendents focused on local/town spending, issues facing rural schools, and fully funding mandates and budgets. Legislators agreed to take the information back to Boston and will work on setting up meetings with Chairs of education related committees. Senator Jo Commerford has accepted an invitation to be the guest speaker at HEC graduation in June.

NEW SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN FRANKLIN COUNTY

Terry Senio reviewed the document in the Board Member packet which provides descriptions about the two new programs that have been created with CES support with the Pioneer Valley Regional School District. The district has the financial responsible for the programs (they manage and charge tuitions) and CES charges the programs/districts for our services. Both programs are slated to begin enrollment later this year.

APPLICATION FROM GATEWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT FOR CES MEMBERSHIP (vote required)

Bill noted that Gateway Regional School District was a founding member and was a member for a long time. After receiving a request to join again, Dan Hayes and Bill met with the school committee and were able to evaluate that the district will save money by becoming a member due to the large amount they spend with CES on Professional Development. The school committee voted all in favor to join. In order for their request to be accepted, it must be approved by 2/3 of the CES Board. If approved, it then goes to all the member School Committees, also for a 2 /3 vote; then it goes to the Board of Education for their approval.

Robert Decker moved that the Board approve the request from Gateway Regional School District to join the CES membership. Don Sluter seconded the motion. A roll call was conducted and all Board Members were in favor and the motion passed.

NORTH BERKSHIRE ACADEMY (vote required)

Our current contract for the North Berkshire Academy ends on 6/30/19. When the contract ends the North Berkshire Academy will become part of the North Adams school district. The schools will have a shared service agreement amongst themselves which will provide the oversight for this program.

Robert Decker moved that the Board approve that CES discontinue its operation of the North Berkshire Academy effective 6/30/19. Jonathan Schmidt seconded the motion. All Board Members were in favor and the motion passed.

REVISED POLICY - INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSINGS (vote required)

The current policy does not take into account delayed openings and early dismissals – all new parts of the policy are related to that. A copy of the updated policy was provided to Board members in their packets and Bill reviewed that document.

Jonathan Schmidt moved that the Board approve the revised Inclement Weather Policy as presented. Don Sluter seconded the motion. All Board Members were in favor and the motion passed.

Cathy Englehardt questioned the existence of CES policies, where they live and who reviews them? Cathy recommended that the policies be reviewed annually and that the Board Membership potentially participate in that process. Bill noted that the Board approves all policies and most are documented in the CES handbook. Bill agreed that it should be considered how to involve the Board in reviewing them. Barbara Slegel noted that policies are reviewed annually by auditors and our insurance brokers

CES FINANCIAL REPORT (vote required)

Barbara reviewed the financial documents provided to Board Members in their packets.

CES FINANCIAL REPORT

Jonathan Schmidt moved that the Board approve the financial reports as presented. Cathy Englehardt seconded the motion. All Board Members were in favor and the motion passed.

RETROACTIVE COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT

Barbara reminded everyone that the CES budget for FY19 did not include a cost of living adjustment (COLA) for non bargaining staff. Barbara reviewed the documents provided to each Board Member in their packet which showed the financial impact of a 1% COLA and a 2% COLA. A new document was distributed which also showed the impact of a 1.5% COLA. Barbara noted that due to the positive financial health in the current year and exceeding original expectations, that the agency will have the funds to cover a retroactive 2% COLA. This information was presented at the Finance Committee meeting on 3/21/19. The committee was not able to make a recommendation on which percentage to recommend to the Board and asked that the full Board make the recommendation. This COLA will affect approximately 130 employees.

Bill Diehl recommended and endorsed a 2% retroactive COLA.

Robert Decker suggested that the lump sum COLA for FY19 should have a maximum payout of \$1000.00. He noted that employees in the highest salary bracket should not get the same benefit of those in a lower bracket.

Daniel Hayes, Cathy Englehardt, and Anastasia Ordonez endorsed a 2% retroactive COLA

Jonathan Schmidt noted that If the goal is to break even at the end of the year, and we know we are going to have a surplus, that he supports the 2% COLA.

Robert Decker requested that we vote to modify the budget first, then the membership should vote on the retroactive COLA. Barbara noted that there are no current changes to the budget and the Board only has to vote on this and the financial reports at this time. If the retroactive COLA is approved, and once it is in the financial system, it will be reflected in a change in budget in May and will subsequently be voted on then.

Susan Eckstrom recommended waiting until the end of the year and do a "bonus" based on what is actually available. Barbara noted that If we call it a bonus it is reportedly differently to the state retirement and has a potentially negative impact on people.

Craig Cohen agreed with Robert Decker's statement and recommended that in future years we consider having a maximum payout.

Don Sluter moved that the Board approve a retroactive 2% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for FY19. Cathy Englehardt seconded the motion. Robert Decker abstained from voting. All other board members were in favor and the motion passed.

HIRES & SEPARATIONS (vote required)

Bill reviewed the Hires & Separations report provided to each Board Member in their packet.

Jonathan Schmidt moved that the Board approve the Hires & Separations from 1/1/19 through 12/28/19. Don Sluter seconded the motion. Robert Decker abstained from voting. All other Board Members were in favor and the motion passed.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EVALUATION

Rebecca Mazur, a member of CES Evaluation team, summarized a detailed report of staff feedback given to Board Members in their packet. More surveys will be distributed to staff and stakeholders in April and those results will be presented at a future meeting.

Bill reviewed the reports, artifacts and evidence in regards to the five annual goals of the Executive Director which were provided in documents distributed to Board Members. Board members asked clarifying questions.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND TREASURER EVALUATIONS (vote required)

Daniel Hayes noted that the Evaluation Committee has reviewed tools and questions that will be part of the performance evaluation for the Director of Finance and the Treasurer.

Jonathan Schmidt moved that the Board approve the recommendations of the Evaluation Committee's plan to conduct the evaluation of the Director of Finance and Treasurer. Don Sluter seconded the motion. All other Board Members were in favor and the motion passed.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A copy of the Executive Director's report was provided to all Board Members in their packets. The document will be emailed to Board Members so that they may share with their districts. Due to time constraints, the report was not reviewed during the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Robert Decker moved that the Board approve the motion to adjourn the meeting. Michael Simpson seconded the motion. All other board members were in favor and the motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05PM