

**Collaborative for Educational Services
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
March 28, 2018
97 Hawley Street, Northampton, MA 01060**

Present from the Board: Daniel Hayes, Catherine Englehardt, Don Sluter, Robert Decker, Maureen Nichols, Caral Schlerman, Sarah Hall, Chrissa Young, Susan Eckstrom, Patricia Smith, Humera Fasihuddin, Jonathan Schmidt, Ed Sturtevant, Suzanne Crawford, Howard Moore, Hussain Hamdan, Michael Simpson, Craig Cohen, Jennifer Eichorn, Amber Smith-Harder

Present from CES: William Diehl, Barbara Siegel, Terry Senio, Allison Garriss, Desiree Lalbeharie-Josias, Woody Clift, Heidi Cahoon-McEwen, Sarah Molloy, Kathy Levesque

Call to Order and Introduce New Members

Dan Hayes called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

The Board and CES staff did introductions.

Public Comment

Ed Sturtevant brought up the amount of printing on paper that gets done for board meetings and the environmental impact. He was glad that the board was asked if they wanted printed copies ahead of time. He still feels there was too much paper being printed and distributed but was glad we are working on reducing it.

Bill Diehl noted we worked with the caterer to reduce paper products they provide in an effort to be more environmentally conscious. This also allowed us to reduce the cost of dinner.

Robert Decker pointed out that the entire meeting is considered “public” and what we refer to as “public session” in the agenda should be referred to as “public comment”. Everyone agreed and we will make this correction to the agenda going forward.

Dan Hayes acknowledged the letter co authored by Bill and Superintendents acknowledging the recent events around school safety and supporting all students that was published in the Daily Hampshire Gazette recently. Dan thanked Bill for his initiation of this.

Dan Hayes attended several events recently that he wanted to discuss:

Transforming Social Justice Conference sponsored by CES – Dan was glad he attended. Felt it was amazing and student led. He observed “all hands on deck” and thought the CES staff involved did an excellent job. Well orchestrated. Publicly thanked Safire. Complimented Bill on his closing remarks. Felt very inspired by conference

Rural Schools Initiative Forum in Shelburne Falls. Districts are often requested to cut budgets and was glad to see people there (legislatures, elected officials, finance committees) coming together to look at other options and aid for Rural districts. Bill and Craig were there.

Northern Berkshire Academy ribbon cutting: Dan was glad to see a student at the academy participating. A student knew who Terry was and made sure she was recognized publically. Noted that the ceremony was amazing and attended by Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. In 11 months, in collaboration with North Adams and with a grant from the Governor's Office. CES created the program, got DESE approval hired staff, and recruited students. All in a cost effective way. Dan thanked Bill for being instrumental in making this happen.

Approve Minutes of January 31, 2018 Board Meeting (vote required)

Don Sluter moved that the Board approve the minutes of the January 31, 2018 Board of Directors meeting. Suzanne Crawford seconded. All board members were in favor of the vote and the motion passed.

Cathy observed that we are capturing too much at meetings based on her recent conversations with a lawyer in a different capacity. Hussain noted that he appreciated the minutes being more detailed.

Dan asked Allison to do what she is most comfortable doing.

Approve Minutes of March 20, 2018 Finance Committee (vote required)

Dan explained the process of approving minutes and he reminded the Board that they do not have to abstain if they were not part of the meeting.

Hussain Hamdan moved that the Board approve the Finance Committee meeting minutes of March 20, 2018 and Don Sluter seconded. Jonathan Schmidt, Pat Smith and Suzanne Crawford abstained. All others were in favor and the motion passed.

Approve minutes of February 15, 2018 Property Committee meeting (vote required)

Don Sluter moved that the board approve the February 15, 2018 Property Committee meeting minutes and Robert Decker seconded. Jonathan Schmidt, Pat Smith and Suzanne Crawford abstained. All others were in favor and the motion passed.

CES PRESENTATIONS

Strong Foundations for Young Children - Desiree Lalbeharie-Josias & Kathy Levesque

- Funded under a United Way program initially - only provided services in Easthampton and Ware. Under new framework CES is providing services in all towns in Hampshire County due to identified unmet needs
- Our Early Childhood Dept. receives some funding from the state (EEC) through Early Childhood Mental Health. But that funding is limited in who can be served; SFYC is designed to help any family not enrolled in an EEC setting. SFYC is aligned closely with the state funded programs:
- Long term donor from the Levine family (Susan Clopton) has helped keep project going. Now that we have expanded we have increased needs and will work on more fundraising efforts. CES

is planning a series of events in the upcoming months to create awareness around the program and increase funding opportunities

- May 7 - Valley Gives Day. We are dedicating our efforts to Strong Foundations.
- May 11 – Teddy Bear Tea – fundraising event to support Strong Foundations. Going to be fun and kid friendly. Ticketed event. All the information provided in flier distributed to board. If you can't come we would appreciate people getting the word out. Anything you can share with your contacts. Grandparents, guardians - all are welcome (NOTE: Post-Board Meeting, this was rescheduled to Sunday, June 3)
- Desiree is working on creating a plan to include Franklin County in the future as a service area. Several Board members agreed the service is needed in Franklin County as well.

DYS and SEIS - Woody Clift & Heidi Cahoon-McEwen

SEIS Contract Administrator - Heid Cahoon-McEwen

SEIS is a statewide program run by DESE to provide special education and access to general curriculum to children and youth with disabilities residing in state facilities that are operated by:

- Department of Youth Services (DYS): 52 Sites
- Department of Mental Health (DMH): 19 sites
- County Houses of Correction: 13 sites
- Department of Public Health (DPH): 1 site

Three year contract 2014-2017 with Three extension years from 2017-2020

- Contract Amount: \$8.9 Million per year
- Vendor Services: Educational Staffing in 85 sites; Technology, Data Management, Professional Development and Curriculum
- In 2017, SEIS served monthly average of approximately 200 students in 85 program sites statewide

SEIS GOALS

- Strengthen curriculum, instruction and assessment in academic, social emotional and workplace readiness domains
- Improve educator effectiveness in the provision of special education services
- Use data and technology to improve student performance and program effectiveness
- Collaborate with host agencies, school districts and families to coordinate services for students to transition from the programs to the community

SEIS Priorities

- Operational and Administrative Oversight
- High Quality Education Services Consistent with Federal and State Education Laws
- Educator Recruitment, Training and Evaluation
- Technology Plan and IT Infrastructure
- Data System and Processes
- Student Transition Services

Director of DYS Education Initiative: Woody Clift

- Contract with DYS began in 2003
- 50 Residential education programs
- 4 types of programs: Detention; Assessment; Short & Long Term Treatment; Revocation
- Age range: 7 years old to 18 years old. New pending law may raise the ages.
- Teacher turnover rate is lower than urban settings but higher than state average. 15 teachers a year roughly.
- Most youths are over age for their grade (at least 2 years behind). History of being chronically absent from school.
- Last year, 63 youths earned a diploma or GED in our settings.
- More than 60% enrolled in postsecondary courses with our collaborations with community colleges we partner with.

Heidi shared a video: Pappas Rehab Hospital for Children. Showed first 5 minutes. Just to give everyone an idea of the services offered.

Dan motioned to go into Executive Session (M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3)): “To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares”. He also invited Woody Clift, Heidi Cahoon-McEwen, Allison Garriss, Barbar Siegel, Sarah Molloy and Terry Senio to participate in executive session. Dan also stated that the motion would include returning to open session at the end of the executive session

Robert Decker seconded the motion. A roll call was done and all members were in favor of moving into Executive Session and re-entering public session at the end of the executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES IN SEPARATE DOCUMENT

Dan Hayes motioned to go back into open session. Cathy Englehardt moved and it was seconded by Don Sluter. Roll call was performed. All in favor.

Back in open session at 7:57PM

CES FINANCIAL REPORT (votes required)

Barbara requested that the finance committee recommend if she needed to distribute the documents which detail the Grants/.Contracts financial report. Dan Hayes recommended that we can verbally review and pass out the notes later if necessary

We had a goal of generating \$50,000 of additional indirect income from grants and contracts throughout the fiscal year. To Date we have brought in new indirect totalling \$73,725.00 – we have exceeded our plan.

Additionally, we had a few grants for which we exceeded our original projections for indirect: Title I, BHN, Grant for Northern Berkshire Academy and DYS. We also had some grants that were less than we originally projected. DESE went through some restructuring last summer that resulted in the elimination of indirect being available on certain grants such as the Continuation grants. It created a \$23k reduction in indirect from After School grants.

The net result of the indirect activity throughout the year is an \$11,880.00 increase to budget after reaching the \$50k goal.

Hussain moved that the board vote to amend the FY18 Budget to include the additional \$1,295,591 value of the new Grants/Contracts (less than \$50,000 already budgeted) and to include the additional \$11,880 of Grants/Contracts overhead (indirect revenue). Cathy Englehardt seconded the motion. All board members were in favor and the motion passed.

Barbara directed the members to note the financial reports pages 1 and 2 in their packets. Shows additional grant revenue and expense.

Barbara noted that we have improved our picture – deficits have decreased across the board. Seeing results from end of last calendar year efforts. Barbara summarized numbers in financial documents . We still have some concerns that are being monitored. We are keeping close tabs on spending and being careful. It will lead us to a better picture come June 30th.

The Occupational Therapy Center (OTC) and Center for Assistive Technology and Training (CCATT) continue to be a concern for this fiscal year. We are implementing changes and expect to see some improvements next fiscal year. HEC Academy enrollment was low but is improving. It's now up to 30 students from a low of 26.

Dan noted that he and the Finance Committee have asked a lot of tough questions and are keeping an eye on the new way of billing and how that effects are reporting and when it shows up in revenue.

Hussain Hamdan moved that the Board vote to accept the Financial Report for the period ending 1-31-18. Jonathan Schmidt seconded. All Board members were in favor and the motion passed.

Barbara explained to the board that the new Northern Berkshire Academy (NBA) does not have their own bank account to manage their token program. She is requested that the board consider a vote to obtain a bank account for the program to do such. The head of academy will be able to access the funds this way.

Token money is completely funded by tuition. Students earn money based on certain criteria determined by the staff as an incentive program for behavior. NBA current has 5 students enrolled and it is less than \$1,000 per month that needs to be moved into this new account for management by the NBA director.

Terry Senio added that the students either spend it internally at a school store or have the opportunity to spend it externally during outings or school events. Part of the Academy's curriculum includes the students managing their own financial statements for the funds they earn.

Barbara noted that for any funds not earned by the students, it is not returned to the districts but is added to a fund that benefits all students during group events. For example, the students recently participated in a community mural project and funds were used to purchase the paints.

Patricia Smith moved that the board vote on the request for an additional bank account for Northern Berkshires Academy Token Program: To approve the opening of a bank account for the sole purpose of managing the NBA token program. Robert Decker seconded the vote. All board members were in favor and the motion passed.

Barbara requested the board review a proposal to change the way CES distributes health benefits to employees. Currently we have tiered system:

At hire and through the 1st year of employment: 50% CES contribution towards premium

2nd year of employment: 60% CES contribution

3rd, 4th & 5th year of employment: 65% CES contribution

6+ years of employment: 75% CES contribution

Our broker said they have never seen anything like this. No other districts or collaboratives do this. Majority of districts have one rate. Collaboratives and districts surveyed are mostly about 70% contribution.. CES has encountered challenges with filling teaching and other positions because of this tiered system. Recently had a potential HR employee declined because the insurance was “unacceptable”. We have also heard this from potential teachers.

Barbara proposed we abandon current system and we pay 70% towards health benefits for all benefit eligible employees who enroll in health benefits starting July 1, 2018 and grandfather those employees who are already at 75% contribution or will be on July 1, 2018.

Robert Decker questioned if this covers DYS employees and what the projected cost to CES would be.

Barbara noted that this plan is for all CES employees eligible to participate in the health insurance benefit. In addition, we are experiencing a unique year in that our premiums are not increasing thanks to the negotiations our broker conducted on our behalf in addition to a year with lower experience. Last year, we had a 2% increase which is typical and this year we have a 0% increase. We had anticipated and budgeted for an increase that will not occur. Overall, the cost would be \$150,000. We had already budgeted for a \$75,000 increase. If we do not vote to approve this, we will still have a \$75k increase because of employees that are moving up in the tiered system. The large contracts, as well as all the grants, cover the cost of insurance for the staff who are paid with those funds.

Bill further explained that every year costs rise for providing health insurance to employees and we budget for this and plan for this through contracts and budgeting. Because we don't have a premium increase this year, this request is already partially being funded by previous planning.

A Board member asked is this was part of the contract negotiations going on for SEIS and DYS teachers (with SEIU 509). Barbara confirmed this was not. They must have same as non union CES employees and this is not part of collective bargaining.

DYS and SEIS have plans to help absorb costs in their budgets. They are encouraged by this proposal and believe it will help in recruitment efforts which is a challenge for both programs.

This proposal does not include changes in the benefit structure for Part time employees. Those who work between 20 and 27 hours will stay at 50% CES contribution. They are outside of the tiered system already because of their FTE status.

CES has 2 retired employees that do receive a benefit at 50%. This will not affect them and the CES contribution on their behalf will remain unchanged.

Ed Sturtevant moved that we vote to approve changing the CES benefit structure for Health insurance to 70%/30% for all new hires effective 7-1-18, grandfathering all current insurees who have already achieved 75% coverage and those that would achieve 75% coverage on 7-1-18, upon notification to SEIU Local 509, as required in Article 29 of the CBA. Cathy Englehardt seconded the motion. Robert Decker and Hussain Hampdan Abstained. All others in favor and the motion passed.

Robert Decker questioned if we could have a full written summary of this and have another vote at our next meeting. It was reiterated that It has already been approved by majority vote but we can send our further details to the Board members, if requested. Human Resources will draft a new policy which will be included in a new edition of the CES employee handbook - we will distribute the policy to the Board once it has been implemented.

Hires and Separations (VOTE REQUIRED)

Dan Hayes explained for new members that the Board of Directors have to approve all new hires and separations as a board

Cathy Englehardt moved to approve the hires and separations. Don Sluter seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Bill reviewed the hires and separations as noted on the documents provided to board.

Executive Director Evaluation

Bill began his presentation by reminding everyone that the goals he was going to review were chosen and presented to the board in September. In concert with the usual timeline, he is presenting his evidence and artifacts towards those goals. At a future time, all board members will receive an evaluation tool electronically to complete for the Executive Director. All the information needed to complete the evaluation for are included in the report he is presenting. Members can also use the previous Executive Director reports provided at every board meeting if needed.

Goal 1 - Professional Practice: I will increase my knowledge and skills in my professional practice and successful management of the Collaborative

Goal 2 - Instructional Leadership/Student Learning #1: I will provide leadership that will impact instruction and student learning in our direct service programs

Goal 3 - Instructional Leadership/Student Learning #2: I will support instructional leadership and student learning in our member districts

Goal 4 - District Improvement #1: Meet Member District Needs (Strategic Goal#1/Promote CES programs and services

Goal 5 - District Improvement #2: Management and Operations/Improve the operations of the agency

Bill reviewed each goal, as well as the evidence and artifacts to his status on each goal. All information reviewed was provided to Board members in their packets (and is included in the online packet for this meeting).

Dan Hayes requested Volunteers to sit on the Executive Director Evaluation Subcommittee: Don Sluter, Cathy Englehardt and Pat Smith volunteered. Dan Hayes volunteered as well.

Bob Decker motioned to approve the Executive Director's evaluation subcommittee. Humera Fasihuddin seconded. All members were in favor and the motion passed.

In the interest of time, Dan Hayes recommended we move the next 2 items to the next agenda/meeting. The Executive Director report is in the materials provided and if all members review it can discuss at next meeting.

Bill did want to point out that noted in the Executive Director's report is the passing of Senate Bill 290 (redrafted as Senate 2330) – "An Act relative to education collaboratives." This is a bill that CES and other collaboratives have been advocating for over the last three years. The bill, if it finally gets passed by both Houses, will considerably strengthen the ability of collaboratives to serve their member districts.

Before adjourning, Dan Hayes wanted to publicly thank Sarah Molloy for her participation with the Board for the last several months while the Administrative Services Supervisor position was being created and hired for.

Action Item: Send Executive Directors report separately from packet to all board members so they might share with their superintendent.

Discussions

Executive Director's Report

Adjournment

Moved: Robert Decker

Seconded: Don Sluter

ALL IN FAVOR

Meeting adjourned at 9:25PM