

Central Massachusetts Collaborative

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Dr. Susan Farrell, Executive Director
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Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, January 27, 2022 at 9:00 A.M.
14 New Bond St., Worcester, MA 01606

Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Maureen Binienda, Chair, Superintendent of Schools, Worcester Public Schools
Dr. Ruthann Goguen, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools, Webster Public Schools
Michael Lucas, Superintendent of Schools, Oxford Public Schools

Also Present: Dr. Susan Farrell, Executive Director, CMC
Beverly Tefft, Director of Finance and Operations, CMC
Joseph Meichelbeck, Treasurer, CMC

1. Superintendent Binienda called the Meeting to Order at 9:04 a.m.

2. Approval of the November 18, 2021 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes (voting item)

Superintendent Lucas made a MOTION to approve the November 18, 2021 Board of Directors meeting minutes.

Superintendent Binienda seconds the MOTION.

3. Director of Finance & Operations Report

a. Warrants:

- i. Warrants for the months of November and December 2021 were presented for signature.

b. Financial Statements @ 12.31.21

- i. Mrs. Tefft reviewed the FY22 year-to-date profit and loss statement for the period ending December 31, 2021.
- ii. Revenue is reflective of billing through December 31, 2021. Non-member districts were invoiced for 62 students (budget = 62 students). The Recovery High School billed for 4 students of non-member districts. In early December, the Collaborative received \$139k in ESSER funds for reimbursement of COVID-19 expenses incurred in FY20 and FY21.
- iii. Expenses have remained steady for the first half of the fiscal year. Staffing shortages continue to impact total expenses and is the sole reason wages and salaries and corresponding employee benefits are significantly under budget. Retroactive pay for members of Unit C (Instructional Assistants) in the amount of \$36k is reflected in this report. Retroactive pay for members of Unit A will be forthcoming once the contract is ratified by all parties.

- iv. The Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2021 was also presented. Cash balances and accounts receivable remain steady.
- c. Treasurer's Report
 - i. No report presented.

4. Executive Director Report

- a. Acceptance of Donations (voting item)

Dr. Farrell presented the board with a Donors Choose donation to Mr. Weiss' classroom to support "A Safe and Welcoming Classroom" project.

Superintendent Goguen made a MOTION to approve the donation.

Superintendent Lucas seconds the MOTION.

- b. Presentation of MOEC Annual report

Dr. Farrell presented the board with the MOEC FY21 annual report. The report includes background information about Collaboratives and about MOEC, highlights of Collaboratives' responses to the challenges of COVID-19, and a discussion of work toward MOEC goals which include the following:

1. MOEC as a resource to Collaboratives,
2. Advocacy with DESE and with state and local legislators, and
3. Advocacy for greater recognition and use of Educational Collaboratives.

Dr. Farrell reported that MOEC continues to be a valuable resource for CMC.

- c. Student Enrollment Report

Dr. Farrell introduced the student census for January 2022 which is four hundred and fifty four (454) students. Woodward Day School enrollment continues to increase at a rapid pace. Due to the unusually high number of referrals to WDS, there have been challenges with enrolling students in a timely manner. Efforts are being made to increase staffing to support the increased demand.

Dr. Farrell highlighted the increase in enrollment at the Recovery High School. The board inquired as to the reason for the increase. Dr. Farrell reported that marketing efforts which increased over the summer and fall showed that many agencies were not aware that RHS was still open. A second factor was that the mission of RHS was not clear. Finally, RHS has created direct marketing materials for parents to help them better understand what RHS can provide. Marketing efforts with a clear mission statement along with increased marketing to parents appear to be effective practices and will continue throughout the winter and spring..

- d. Staffing Report

Dr. Farrell presented the January 2022 staffing updates. There are currently thirty-nine (39) open positions at CMC. Dr. Farrell presented new hires to the board. CMC has hired fourteen (14) new employees since the last board meeting in November. Among the new hires is an HR associate scheduled to begin in mid February. CMC continues to recruit for all open positions and is hopeful that the addition of a full time HR associate will assist the collaborative with finding qualified candidates for our remaining positions.
- e. Program Updates

Dr. Farrell reported that throughout the end of November and December, CMC saw an increase in

positive COVID cases. Upon returning to school in January, we have seen a steady decline in COVID.

CMC has had several building issues including issues with phones, internet connectivity and water clarity. CMC had two days with reduced phone and internet services. Our technology infrastructure is being assessed to determine if improvements are needed. Over the past few weeks, our water appeared to be discolored. CMC's water filtration system will be assessed to determine if improvements are needed.

Busing routines have been under review as a new business has moved in next to us. CMC has a large number of buses and vans. Dismissal can take up to one hour and can result in traffic jams in the parking lot. CMC staff is looking to improve the flow and efficiency of our dismissal routines to eliminate the issues identified/

Lunch has been an area of concern for CMC. CMC is still receiving cold meals for all students. CMC meals are provided by the WPS Nutrition Department. Superintendent Binienda will consult with this department regarding staffing for the CMC kitchen.

Dr. Farrell reported that a group of CMC leaders met with representatives from the Worcester Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber works with local businesses to find qualified employees and has several programs designed to support students with developing job skills. CMC will be partnering with the local Chamber of Commerce to access programs for students and to network with area businesses.

Staff and student safety continues to be a focus area at CMC. With the return of all students, we have seen an increase in staff injuries. CMC is considering moving from CPI to Crisis Prevention for all de-escalation and restraint training and improving camera coverage in all buildings.

Dr. Farrell reported that the leadership team has resumed their work with the Center for Leadership and Educational Equity (CLEE) with a focus on reflective practices.

5. Member Requests/New Business

No new business

6. Executive Session regarding Union Negotiations

Superintendent Goguen made a MOTION to enter Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining (Unit A) with return to open meeting if a vote is needed.

Superintendent Lucas seconds the MOTION.

7. Re-enter Open Session

- a. Re-entered open session at 10:07 a.m.
- b. No decision made in Executive Session on Unit A contract

8. Adjournment

Superintendent Goguen made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting.

Superintendent Binienda seconds the MOTION.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:08 a.m.