

Central Massachusetts Collaborative

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Dr. Susan Farrell, Executive Director
Beverly Tefft, Finance Director
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Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, October 22, 2020, at 8:30 a.m.
14 New Bond Street, Worcester, MA 01606

Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Maureen Binienda, Chair, Superintendent of Schools, Worcester Public Schools
Dr. Ruthann Goguen, Superintendent of Schools, Webster Public Schools
Dr. Kristine Nash, Interim 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
Kay Seale, Manager of Special Education & Intervention Services, Worcester Public Schools
Kathleen Baris, Director of Student Support Services, Webster Public Schools
Monique Pierangeli, Business Manager, Webster Public Schools
Mike Kelly, Director, Robert Goddard Academy, CMC
Evelyn Marrone, Director, Woodward Day School, CMC
Ann Ortiz, Director, Central MA Academy, CMC
Elizabeth Pinzino, Director, Hartwell and THRIVE, CMC
MaryEllen McGorry, Principal, Rockdale Recovery High School, CMC
Rich Cameron, Assistant Director, Woodward Day School, CMC
Kris Collins, Assistant Director, Woodward Day School, CMC
Elizabeth Driscoll, Assistant Director, Robert Goddard Academy, CMC
Maureen Rose, Assistant Director, Robert Goddard Academy, CMC
Michelle Caron, Nurse, CMC

1. Superintendent Binienda called the Meeting to Order at 8:32 a.m.

2. Approval of the September 24, 2020 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes (voting item)

Dr. Goguen made a MOTION to approve the September 24, 2020 Board of Directors meeting minutes.

Superintendent Binienda seconds the MOTION.

3. Director of Finance & Operations Report

a. Warrants

Mrs. Tefft introduced four (4) warrants for August and September which will be sent to the Board for signature.

b. FY21 P&L @ 9.30.2020 (DRAFT)

Mrs. Tefft presented the draft profit and loss report which is pending bank reconciliations. She was happy to report the Business Office now has a full complement of staff who are working feverishly to finalize the audit information. She expects the audit presentation to be ready for the November Board meeting.

Mrs. Tefft explained that the Business Office is tracking COVID expenses separately so the Board can view what has been spent. The Central Office has developed a system to store and track PPE supplies. The Collaborative has been fortunate that most students arrive to school with proper PPE and we are not using large volumes of product.

4. Executive Director Report

a. Acceptance of Donations (voting item)

Superintendent Goguen made a MOTION for the Board to accept the following donations:

- The Original Sensory Path, \$1,500, donated by Dave and Kim McLaren
- 250 Bottles of Hand Sanitizer, \$2,400, donated by Councilor Sean Rose

Superintendent Binienda seconds the MOTION.

b. Student Enrollment Updates

Dr. Farrell introduced the student census for October 2020 which is four-hundred thirty-six (436), an increase of eight (8) from the previous month. Of the current students, one-hundred seventy-one (171) are remote, one-hundred ten (110) are hybrid A/B, and one-hundred fifty-five (155) are hybrid C.

Dr Farrell was pleased to inform the Board that all students now have individual chromebooks. Both in-person and remote students are engaging in meaningful ways with each individual program structured to meet their particular needs.

CMC has implemented strict protocols regarding health and safety for students and staff. The goal is to maintain in-person learning and minimize the risk of exposure for all staff and students. Dr. Farrell explained that in spite of best efforts, three (3) students have tested positive for COVID-19. Two (2) of these students were remote learners and the other student was onsite which resulted in one (1) cohort of teachers and students being placed on remote learning for a period of two (2) weeks. CMC has been fortunate that no one placed on quarantine has tested positive, and there has been no community spread.

CMC continues to follow the DESE guidelines “Protocols for responding to COVID-19 scenarios in school, on the bus, or in community settings”. Staff and families are kept apprised of cases and when appropriate close contacts are advised to seek advice from their personal physician. The Collaborative has also maintained regular contact with the local Department of Health. Dr. Farrell commended all staff for a wonderful job adhering to protocols and keeping our community safe.

Dr. Nash inquired about travel policies during the upcoming holiday period. Dr. Farrell confirmed she has met with leadership and the expectation is that staff will follow state guidelines and laws. The Collaborative has worked hard to open safely however Dr. Farrell would like to acknowledge there is fear within the community.

Dr. Goguen recommends the Collaborative continue to be proactive and prepare families and teachers for all scenarios. This will help to maintain a safe learning environment while reducing anxiety and focusing on the social and emotional needs of the community.

Dr. Farrell thanked the Board for their recommendations. The Collaborative will remain at the current step in the reopening plan and continue to closely monitor metrics to determine if closure is necessary.

c. Staffing Updates

Dr. Farrell presented the October 2020 staffing updates. CMC is working hard to maintain staffing levels however it has been difficult to recruit for open teaching and instructional assistant positions.

Dr. Farrell requested the Boards permission to realign the instructional assistant salaries and will update the Board on this work at the next Board meeting. Superintendent Binienda and Dr. Goguen expressed similar recruiting issues due to COVID and agreed to review realigned salaries at the next meeting.

Dr. Goguen inquired about the open teaching positions at the Collaborative. Dr. Farrell explained that the Collaborative has used a combination of long term subs and creative staffing within programs to maintain staffing levels.

d. Program Updates and Reports

Dr. Farrell presented brief highlights on each of the CMC programs. After the first two (2) weeks of school, THRIVE and HLC transitioned from the three (3) cohort model to two (2) cohorts, C cohort or remote. Currently there are forty-two (42) THRIVE students and thirty-six (36) Hartwell students enrolled full time in-person daily. Although students have not been able to participate in the annual fall field trips, teachers have arranged virtual field trips on the remote Fridays. This has enhanced learning objectives from the week and include such virtual field trips as the San Diego Zoo and Outer Space.

At the high school level, technology has allowed students to remain engaged with peers in the classroom regardless of in-person or remote learning status. In-person students are able to collaborate with remote peers by joining the virtual meetings to discuss class content. To aid in this new technology, staff held open house sessions for parents and guardians to enable them to become familiar with the specifics of utilizing remote instruction on Fridays.

Additionally, Dr. Farrell was pleased to announce that the SEL committee created and implemented a multi-tiered system of support for parents, staff and students in order to address mental health needs.

e. Executive Director's Proposed Goals

Dr. Farrell presented the Executive Director's Proposed Goals for the 2020-2021 school year. By June 2021 Dr. Farrell will have worked collaboratively with program leaders to build a strong,

cohesive instructional leadership team that will monitor and assess all programs with a focus on consistent collaborative wide structures and practices regarding teaching and learning.

She will additionally ensure that all principals and administrators facilitate practices that promote the use of a variety of formal and informal methods and assessments to measure student learning, growth, and make necessary adjustments to their practice when students are not learning.

Throughout the 2020-2021 school year, Dr. Farrell will work collaboratively with the leadership team to develop and implement proactive and effective communication structures within the CMC community that foster a sense of belonging and engagement in the Collaborative for all stakeholders.

Additionally, by June 2021, Dr. Farrell will continue to develop skills in strategy development, data analysis and instructional leadership by actively participating in the New Superintendent Induction Program Year Two (2).

Dr. Goguen made a MOTION to approve the Executive Director's Proposed Goals, as presented.

Dr. Nash seconds the MOTION.

5. Member Requests/New Business

No new business.

6. Executive Session

No Executive Session held.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynn NeJaime