

SOUTHERN WORCESTER COUNTY EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE

Friday
April 8, 2016

Oxford H.S.
Oxford, Massachusetts

The Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative Executive Board met on Friday, April 8, 2016 in the Oxford High School Community Room in Oxford, Massachusetts. Mr. Friend called the meeting to order at 8:50 a.m.

Voting Members in Attendance:

Mr. Theodore Friend, Chair
Dr. Maryellen Brunelle, Vice Chair
Mr. Kevin Carney
Mr. Gregg Desto
Dr. Mark Garceau
Dr. Brett Kustigian
Dr. Barbara Malkas
Dr. Erin Nosek

Sutton Public Schools
Auburn Public Schools
Uxbridge Public Schools
Dudley-Charlton Regional School District
Oxford Public Schools
Quaboag Regional School District
Webster Public Schools
Tantasqua Regional/Union 61

Absent:

Mr. Timothy Connors, Senior Administrative Official
Dr. N. Tracy Crowe
Dr. James Cummings
Mr. Gregory Myers
Dr. Judith Paolucci
Dr. Catherine Stickney
Dr. Marilyn Tencza

Southbridge Public Schools
Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District
Grafton Public Schools
Millbury Public Schools
Leicester Public Schools
Northbridge Public Schools
North Brookfield Public Schools

Also in Attendance:

Ms. Elizabeth Fitzmaurice
Mr. John Love

SWCEC Executive Director
SWCEC Business Administrator

B. Approval of Minutes

March 4, 2016 - Regular Session

Mr. Friend asked for a motion to approve the Minutes of March 4, 2016 meeting Regular Session.

VOTE: Dr. Nosek made a motion to approve the Minutes of March 4, 2016 meeting Regular Session.

Seconded by Dr. Brunelle.

Affirmative 7

Negative 0

Abstained 1 Dr. Garceau

C. Executive Director's Report

1. Personnel Report

Ms. Fitzmaurice presented the personnel recommendations to the Board for approval. Ms. Fitzmaurice stated that attempts were made to fill the vocational coordinator position without success. In the interim, one of our career specialists is now also serving as career specialist leader. He will fulfill the essential duties left vacated by the vocational coordinator. A stipend will be provided for these services. Discussion was held regarding the operations manager's position with the advance retirement notification given at this time.

VOTE: Dr. Brunelle made a motion to approve the personnel list as presented.

Seconded by Dr. Malkas.

Affirmative 8

Negative 0

Abstained 0

2. Job Descriptions

Discussion was held regarding the new job descriptions which include the Assistant to the Executive Director, Technology Coordinator and The Grow Elementary School Principal and The Grow Middle/High School Principal as well as the Special Education Assistant (Specialized Programs). Dr. Malkas questioned the role of the Technology Coordinator and if the Coordinator would be licensed in instructional technology and have a technical background. Ms. Fitzmaurice stated that, if need be, she would work with the candidate to obtain licensure. Ms. Fitzmaurice stated that the Grow Principal positions reflect efforts to move to a year round position to ensure continuity of service.

Dr. Kustigian stated that he is feeling a bit uncomfortable with all the changes being made which he sees as an increase in FY 2017 and administrative positions being added. He stated that he is also unclear about the Operations Manager's role. He emphasized that due to past experiences, he is skeptical. Dr. Kustigian requested that the organizational chart with administrative salaries be provided at the next meeting so he will have a better understanding of what he is being asked to approve.

Ms. Fitzmaurice explained that there is actually a reduction in administrative positions with the combination of current Transportation Coordinator and Administrative Assistant for the Executive Director into one Assistant to the Executive Director position.

VOTE: Dr. Malkas made a motion to approve the job descriptions as presented.

Seconded by Dr. Nosek.

Affirmative 7

Negative 1 Dr. Kustigian

Abstained 0

3. FY 2017 School Calendar

Ms. Fitzmaurice presented the Collaborative's school calendar for the 2016-2017 school year for informational purposes.

4. Announcements

Ms. Fitzmaurice stated that all students have passed the Biology MCAS. Ms. Fitzmaurice stated that she would like to introduce the graduates of the Class of 2016 to the Board at the May meeting. Mr. Friend suggested that the May Board meeting be held at the Collaborative to better accommodate the graduates.

Ms. Fitzmaurice stated that the Collaborative's graduation will be held on Tuesday, June 7, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. at the Sturbridge Host Hotel with 16 students graduating.

Ms. Fitzmaurice informed the Board that the Collaborative has once again applied for the Janet Malser Humanities Grant which, in the past, has provided students the opportunity to participate in a paid community based work experience during the extended school year program.

D. Finance Operations Report

1. FY2016 Balance Sheet and Operating Statements

Mr. Love stated that a current year profit of \$661,251 has been reached as of March 31, 2016. Final statements were not provided as billing had not been finalized.

2. FY2017 Budget Proposal

Ms. Fitzmaurice stated that the original budget proposal provided for a modest increase to all programs with a cost balancing initiative for The Grow School and RISE Academy. Discussion was held in length regarding the proposed amount of overage achieved in the FY2017 budget proposals which will assist in rebuilding the Board's recommended reserve.

Original Budget Proposal:

Grow 6%; Grow Elementary 3%; RISE 12%

This represents a \$235,745 anticipated overage.

Ms. Fitzmaurice stated that at the request of the Board at the March meeting, two alternative versions have been drafted for presentation.

Alternate Proposal #1: (reduces the tuition increase to RISE academy students from the original proposed budget of 12% to 3%)

Grow 6%; Grow Elementary 3%; RISE 3%

This represents a \$226,846 anticipated overage.

Alternate Proposal #2: Grow 5%; Grow Elementary 2%; RISE 3%

This represents a \$194,794 anticipated overage.

Of note is that admission to RISE academy would close and any general education students accepted in FY 2017 would be for RISE Academy II, priced equitable to The Grow School.

Discussion was held regarding the tuition increase with Board members suggesting a 0% to the Alternate Proposal #2 of a 5/2/3% increase. Ms. Fitzmaurice stated that Alternate Proposal #2 is the lowest tuition increase the Collaborative can realize without laying off other staff. If a 0% were voted, SWCEC would operate FY2017 at a deficit and use accumulated reserves from FY 2016 to offset.

Mr. Carney stated that he believes in the vision and future of the Collaborative and the services they provide to their students.

Ms. Fitzmaurice stated that special education is an uncomfortable and expensive mandate which the Collaborative is making as cost effective as possible. She stated that she is willing to go to any district to further elaborate on the budget. Ms. Fitzmaurice encouraged Board members to sit with their special education administrators and use comparable cost lists to determine their cost to district if SWCEC was not an option and their districts had to place their students elsewhere.

Mr. Friend stated that he supports the original budget but understands the Board members being uncomfortable, as it is convoluted with all of the changes being made. Mr. Friend advised Ms. Fitzmaurice to contact the districts that were not present at this meeting and arrange to meet with them to bring them up to par on the budget proposals.

Discussion was held regarding the Southbridge district being in receivership and how this will impact the Collaborative. Dr. Nosek suggested that Ms. Fitzmaurice contact other Collaboratives to get a sense of their impact with receivership.

Mr. Friend stated that regardless of a quorum of eight present at the meeting, this was a nonrepresentation of the Board. Therefore, he was not comfortable in making a decision for members who were not present. A vote on the budget will be taken at the next meeting scheduled for May 8th in hopes that all members will be attendance.

E. Adjournment

Mr. Friend requested a motion to adjourn.

VOTE: Dr. Kustigian made a motion to adjourn at 10:30 a.m.

Seconded by Dr. Garceau.

Affirmative 8

Negative 0

Abstained 0

Documents Used at this Meeting

- ❖ Board Agenda
- ❖ Regular Session Minutes – March 4, 2016
- ❖ Personnel Report
- ❖ Job Descriptions (Assistant to the Executive Director; Special Education Assistant (Specialized Programs); Technology Coordinator; The Grow School Principal/Director)
- ❖ FY 2017 School Calendar
- ❖ Worcester Telegram & Gazette Article
- ❖ Balance Sheet and Operating Statement as of March 31, 2016
- ❖ FY 2017 Budget Proposal
- ❖ Alternate Proposal #1
- ❖ Alternate Proposal #2
- ❖ Revisions to FY 2017 Budget Proposal

Respectfully submitted by,

Deborah Bell
Administrative Assistant