

SOUTH COAST EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE (SCEC)

Board of Directors' Meeting January 12, 2023 Minutes

Present: J. Schoonover, T. Anderson, J. Cabral, R. Drolet, B. Runey, M. Pontes, J. Robidoux, M. Ryan, D. Heimbecker, J. Prendergast, M. Canner, L. Thibault

1.00 - Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair J. Schoonover at 1:02 PM.

2.00 - Minutes of December 15, 2022

The minutes of December 15, 2022 were presented for review and approved.

Motion, J. Cabral: To approve the minutes of December 15, 2022
Second, B. Runey

Vote, Unanimous

3.00 - Financial Information

3.10 - Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust

At the end of December 2022, the account had \$58,000, with \$100,000 excess revenue added for a total of \$158,000 as of 1/12/2023.

3.20 – Updating of the FY23 Business Plan/Budget

Director of Finance, Jennifer Prendergast along with John Ratcliffe, partner from Pavento, Ratcliffe, Renzi & Co. LLC are closing December 2022 today, a loss of \$168,000 is estimated.

SCEC finance committee includes Director of Finance, J. Prendergast, Executive Director D. Heimbecker, Partner at Pavento, Ratcliffe, Renzi & Co. LLC J. Ratcliff and Treasurer J. Delude. The committee meets monthly to discuss finances and expenditures. Superintendent Cabral asked if SCEC freezes spending at any specific times during the year. SCEC will freeze if/when necessary and only approves purchase orders that are necessary. He expressed concern about the monthly losses and the projected deficit at the end of the fiscal year.

SCEC is in the Southeastern Massachusetts Health Group (SMHG), that is holding rate holidays for two months of healthcare costs. This will save SCEC about \$330,000 in health insurance for two months.

The FCC's E-Rate Program makes information services more affordable for schools and libraries. With funding from the Universal Service Fund, E-Rate provides discounts for telecommunications, internet access and internal connections. SCEC has not participated in

the past, but consultants for E-Rate believe they can save SCEC a significant amount on internet access.

As of today 216, students are attending SCEC.

A new student referral process started this week in a continued effort to meet the needs of the districts while supporting SCEC programs. Leading this process are Director of Finance, Jennifer Prendergast, Associate Executive Director Lisa Martiesian and Associate Executive Director Jennifer Faria. These leaders will look at all aspects of student referrals, so they can assist districts and SCEC staff in the process.

Superintendent Ryan asked what a normal student referral process timeline looks like. Superintendent Robidoux explained that in his prior role as a Special Education Director, a few weeks is a reasonable timeframe. This allows for the necessary paperwork, walk throughs and other aspects of the entire process. Executive Director Heimbecker noted that he should be informed if the process appears to be taking too long. SCEC wants to make sure that districts get some type of answer and understand where they are in the process.

Superintendent Cabral commented that SCEC does a great job at meeting the needs of the students.

3.30 – FY24 Business Plan/Budget

With the many moving pieces this year the SCEC business plan/budget will continue to follow the April budget approval process. A draft business plan/budget will be presented at the February board meeting.

For planning purposes, 3-5% increases had been considered. However, Superintendent Robidoux stated that it is helpful to know if SCEC is leaning more toward the 5% increase. Executive Director Heimbecker informed members that SCEC has been telling districts to plan on at least 5% increases. In addition, negotiations are in effect on Union Contracts, and this will impact the budget.

SCEC has a FY23 business plan/budget for 235 students, and today we have 216 students. Director of Finance, Jennifer Prendergast will look at previous business plans/budgets and staff to student ratios, however Covid has made it difficult to look at past needs and students are more complex. She will be working with SCEC leaders to discuss staff to student ratios and what they think they needs to be successful. They will discuss current enrollments, projected enrollments and student needs. In addition, many students move programs in July, that will change student numbers.

Board members continued to discuss the budget process and if adjustments should be made based upon the number of students. Superintendent Robidoux stated that he would rather know the costs now to be able to budget appropriately. Superintendent Cabral suggested that a committee may be needed to continue this discussion more deeply.

Motion, J. Cabral: To form an Ad Hoc Tuition subcommittee to assist with the business plan.
Second, J. Robidoux

Vote, Unanimous

Superintendents Cabral and Robidoux agreed to serve on the Ad Hoc Tuition subcommittee, and Executive Director Heimbecker suggested that any other Board Member interested in serving on the Tuition subcommittee contact him.

3.40 – SCEC Financial and Control Policies

4.00 - Human Resources

4.10 - New Hires:

4.11 - Kelsey Bachand- From Paraprofessional at LIFE Academy to Teacher at LIFE Academy, 12 months.

4.12 - Kelly Hunton- Nurse, 12 months at Berkley

4.20 – Transfers:

4.21 – Eric Peolquin- From Paraprofessional at Gallishaw High School to Paraprofessional at Berkley Community School.

Motion: J. Schoonover: To approve new hires and transfers as presented
Second, M. Pontes

Vote, Unanimous

4.30 – Resignations: None

4.40 – Retirements: None

4.50 – Terminations: None

4.60 – Leave of Absence: None

4.70 – Educational Leave: None

5.00 - Executive Session: None

6.00 - Building Program Update: None

7.00 - Policy and Procedures

Executive Director Heimbecker informed the board that SCEC is where it should be with strategic planning. He suggested that Board members review the SCEC Core Values in 9.30.

8.00 - Internal & External Professional Development – Prepared by Dr. Carolyn McKearney & Frank Gallishaw

8.10 - Internal Professional Development

SCEC has provided the “Calm” app to all staff, which is a user-friendly mindfulness and meditation app. The Calm app features meditations on a range of topics, has excellent content for kids and offers all levels of meditation. SCEC has found this app to be successful with many employees already signed up and using the app.

8.20 – External Professional Development

DESE and Bridgewater State University (BSU) have agreed to work with SCEC to do online licensure programs. The Southeastern Massachusetts Educational Collaborative (SMEC) will work with SCEC to send people to these programs. These programs will be available throughout the Commonwealth since they are online.

Superintendent Robidoux spoke about the excellent and very professional work that Dr. Carolyn McKearney did when providing CPI Training in his district. Executive Director Heimbecker noted that Dr. McKearney heads up CPI Training and can send other trained staff to districts to provide CPI Training as well. Superintendent Schoonover commented that he has had very positive feedback from staff in his district when Dr. McKearney provided training. Board members can contact Dr. McKearney if interested in either initial or refresher CPI Trainings.

Board members should contact Dr. Carolyn McKearney by January 17, 2023 with a list of names of those who wish to participate in the Alternatives to Suspension presentation by Kelvin Oliver on the 19th or 20th. At this time, Dr. McKearney has roughly 40 people interested in the training with plenty of room for more people to join in on either day. Superintendent Cabral will be sending additional people. As of 1/12/2023, Taunton principals were made aware and will be signing up. Executive Director Heimbecker will be taking Kelvin Oliver out to dinner on the 19th and interested board members are invited to join in.

9.00 - Superintendent Issues

9.10 -After reviewing and approving the SCEC Annual Report 2021-2022, Superintendent Schoonover suggested SCEC include the Pie Chart of percentages of member and non-member districts. Both the pie chart and graph were distributed to each board member.

10.00 - Other Superintendent Issues

10.10 –Opportunities for Continuous Professional Learning

The AASA National Conference on Education is being held in San Antonio Texas on February 16-18, 2023. There will be five Board of Directors attending this conference. All five Board members have been registered, and flights booked and reimbursed.

The Paul J. Andrews MASS Executive Institute is scheduled at Sea Crest Resort/Mashpee High School for July 10-13, 2023. Leah Thibault has heard from a few Board members and will continue to reach out and register our Board members. Leah is actively working on the details with Sea Crest.

11.00 - Warrants: None

12.00 - Other Item(s)

12.10 -Updating and Discussing Leasing Property for Instructional Purposes

Executive Director Heimbecker updated board members on space to operate SCEC programs and the concerns for space that the SCEC leadership Team has.

SCEC is expanding the footprint at Bishop Connolly High School with the addition of two more classrooms.

Executive Director Heimbecker met with a team of people this morning including Superintendent Schoonover to purchase the LIFE Academy for SCEC, and it didn't go as expected. The purchase of the LIFE Academy is still a possibility.

Superintendent Drolet and Executive Director Heimbecker are planning a meeting this month with Shawn Cadime, Seekonk Town Administrator to discuss the two buildings that SCEC currently leases. The town administrator also wants to discuss the future of SCEC in Seekonk MA buildings. If the town administrator will not do tuition credit, then the board may have to make an exception to pay in cash.

Both Superintendent Aubin and Superintendent Anderson have spaces for Executive Director Heimbecker to look at and consider.

Executive Director Heimbecker noted that SCEC is excited about the possibilities of having leases with our districts. The SCEC collaborative agreement states leases with districts will offer tuition credits. SCEC needs long-term leases for the stability of students and the business plan/budget.

SCEC developed an Early Education Program in Berkley Community and is starting an Early Education Classroom in Seekonk at the North School.

13.00 - Adjournment

Motion, B. Runey: To adjourn meeting at 2:00 PM
Second, J. Cabral

Vote, Unanimous