

# SOUTH COAST EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE (SCEC)

## Board of Directors' Meeting April 11, 2024 Minutes

Present: J. Schoonover, M. Ryan, B. Runey, M. Pontes, R. Kidwell, J. Robidoux, J. Cabral, J. Saba-Maguire, A. Strauss, D. Heimbecker, J. Prendergast, L. Thibault

### 1.00 - Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Superintendent J. Cabral at 1:02 PM.

### 2.00 - Minutes of February 8, 2024

The minutes of February 8, 2024 were presented for review and approved.

Motion, M. Pontes: To approve the minutes of February 8, 2024

Second, B. Runey

Vote, All in Favor

### 3.00 - Financial Information

#### 3.10 - Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust

Director of Finance, Jennifer Prendergast noted the current account balance is just over \$200,000 and SCEC's OPEB liability is \$8.9M.

The OPEB Trustees will be meeting on June 13, 2024, at 11:00 AM to consider future initiatives, policies structural considerations, and retiree benefits. The results will be shared with the Board of Directors during the board meeting immediately following at 1:00 PM.

#### 3.20 – Updating of the FY 24 Business plan/Budget

Director of Finance, Jennifer Prendergast mentioned the end of March 2024 student count is at 226 with a profit of \$197K for the month. SCEC's year to date profit is \$521,734. SCEC is anticipating a small profit for FY2024. The FY24 Business Plan has 223 students included. SCEC is still in the process of hiring additional staff and will continue to monitor the student/staff ratio.

#### 3.30 - FY 25 Business/Plan

SCEC is actively working on the FY 2025 Business Plan. Members can expect a 5% averaging increase in tuition rates.

SCEC is still in union negotiations currently. Part of negotiations is discussing salaries comparable to our districts. The Union mentioned a discussion about working on 11-month contracts, Executive Director David Heimbecker stated it would be very difficult to provide

quality care to every student with each individual need, and that job sharing would need to fit the student needs. There will be further discussions.

Health insurance for SCEC employees will have a 5.7% increase.

Executive Director, David Heimbecker thanked the Board for allowing SCEC to make necessary changes to keep growing, and of course for continually sending students to our programs.

### 3.40 – SCEC Financial and Control Policies

As existing policies are honed and new ones emerge, Board member participation and oversight will be encouraged and solicited.

## 4.00 - Human Resources:

### 4.10 - New Hire(s):

4.11 – Dorian Grant – Paraprofessional, 12 Months GRAIS

### 4.20 - Transfer(s):

4.21 – Samantha Walkden – Paraprofessional, 12 Months from GRAIS to FES

### 4.30 - Resignation(s):

4.31 – Deon Perry, Paraprofessional 12 Months SK North

4.32 – Victoria Scanlon, Paraprofessional, 12 Months, Gallishaw HS

Motion: M. Pontes: To approve the New Hires, Transfers and Resignations as presented.

Second, B. Runey

Vote, All in Favor

### 4.40 - Retirement(s): None

### 4.50 – Leave of Absence(s): None

### 4.60 – Termination(s): None

## 5.00 - Executive Session: None

## 6.00 - Building Program Update:

6.10 – Executive Director, Heimbecker noted the septic system at LIFE Academy in Swansea is completed.

6.11 – SCEC will be completing minor updates at D/R High School. Beckwith Middle School needs a new sink and SCEC will be buying and installing lockers as well.

## 7.00 - Policy and Procedures

7.10 – Lisa Martiesian and Cathy Vieira-Baker are updating the SCEC policy and procedures. SCEC leadership team is asking for workshops on SCEC’s policy and procedures. Director of Finance, Jennifer Prendergast attended at workshop at MASBO on policy and procedures and it worked well.

As current administrative policies and procedures are always being refined new ones emerge, Board participation and oversight is always encouraged and solicited.

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

8.10 - Internal Professional Development – Prepared by Frank Gallishaw Jr.

8.11 - Members of the SCEC Deep Learning Leadership Team (DLLT) met with the SCEC Leadership Team (LT) on April 9th. DLLT is attempting to gather information from the SCEC leaders as it prepares a year-end summary of the Deep Learning work throughout the 2023-2024 school year. The questions asked of the LT included: What was your experience with Deep Learning this year? Do you believe it made a difference in classroom instruction? And what suggestions do you have for the 2024-2025 school year?

8.12 - On April 10, 2024, all SCEC employees participated in an additional online training for the new Massachusetts DESE IEP. The primary focus of the training was Accommodations and Modifications in the New Massachusetts IEP. Members of the training team included Associate Executive Directors Dr. Jennifer Faria and Lisa Martiesian, Life Academy Leader Lisa Fournier, GHS Clinical Coordinator Cristen Henderson, Related Services Leaders Linda Cullen and Dr. Bethany DeNardo, and Facilitator Amanda Jones.

8.13 – Additional IEP Improvement Project training sessions are scheduled for May 3, 2024, during SCEC site staff meetings, and during our summer session.

## 8.20 - External Professional Development – Prepared by Dr. Carolyn McKearney

8.21 - The SCEC/BSU master’s in special education cohort – January 2024 started this SCEC’s cohorts fifth semester. The anticipated graduation date is Fall 2024. Cohort enrollments consists of 5 SCEC, 2 Somerset/Berkley staff members, and 1 Seekonk Public Schools part-time member.

8.22 - In collaboration with BSU, SCEC recruited 23 candidates for the bachelor’s degree in special education program. This program is not like the traditional cohort model because candidates enter with different programming needs and course requirements. Candidates are eligible for the Para Grant and Student loans. There is a rolling admissions process. Potential candidates should contact Dr. McKearney if interested.

8.23 In partnership with other collaboratives and BSU, SCEC has applied for an Emergency License Educator Preparation grant. This grant opportunity will provide \$260,000 per year to support coursework as well as 50 MTEL preparation vouchers.

8.24- Dr. Carolyn McKearney is assessing potential interest in the following programs at BSU: Master's in educational leadership, Master's in special education, Bachelor's in Special Education, Social Emotional Learning Credential, ASD Credential, and Transition Credential. Memos were sent via email to the SCEC Board Members in January 2024. Please consider distributing them throughout your district.

8.25 - Dr. Carolyn McKearney is providing consultation to Dartmouth, Fall River, Seekonk, Mansfield and Norwood in the 2023-2024 school year.

8.26 – Dr. Lisa Fournier and Dr. McKearney completed a program evaluation of the Transition Program for Avon Public Schools in January 2024.

8.27- Both Initial and Refresher CPI courses are available from SCEC's CPI team. If interested, please contact Dr. Carolyn McKearney at (508) 922-6213 or [cmckearney@scecoll.org](mailto:cmckearney@scecoll.org).

8.28 - SCEC's ESL teacher, who is also a certified special education teacher, is available to assist SCEC member districts in supporting their English Learners in the 2023-2024 school year. Examples of available supports include:

- Support WIDA testing for students
- Support/train staff on WIDA testing
- Consult with classroom teacher to support EL students in the acquisition of the English language.
- Collaborating with teachers to plan lessons that include language goals in listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- Determining appropriate teaching methods for students based on their English proficiency.
- Assessing student progress
- Consult on EL students who also require special education services
- Communicating with and supporting families

Contact Dr. Bethany DeNardo if interested in this service at [bdenardo@scecoll.org](mailto:bdenardo@scecoll.org) or call/text at (508) 962-6521.

Executive Director, Heimbecker stated he is very proud of the work that the SCEC leadership has and is accomplishing and mentioned that Dr. Carolyn McKearney will maintain her work after retirement.

## 9.00 - Superintendent Issues

9.10 – Reviewing Board Member Suggested Books with the theme of sustainability through effective communication:

9.11 – SCEC Board Vice-Chair J. Cabral spoke about, *Smart brevity: The power of saying more with less* written by Jim VandeHei, Mike Allen, and Roy Schwartz.

Board Vice-Chair Cabral shares a weekly newsletter with his school committee, which helps him to communicate and build relationships with them. John covers one chapter a month in a book club discussion with his school committee.

9.12 - SCEC Board Chair J. Schoonover spoke about, *Writing for busy readers: Communicate more effectively in the real world* written by Todd Rogers and Jessica Lasky-Fink.

Based on behavioral sciences, the book distills six principles that will transform the power of your writing:

- Less is more
- Make reading easy
- Design for easy navigation
- Use enough formatting but no more
- Tell readers why they should care
- Make responding easy

Board Chair Schoonover found the book to be very interesting and suggests this book simplifies the message and helps the reader using writing principles.

Executive Director David Heimbecker added both books share great strategies to have and to share.

9.20 - As a result of SCEC's Senior Leadership Team efforts, SCEC will be receiving DESE funds for use in addressing student absences.

9.30 - Senior Leaders have aggressively pursued DESE resources resulting in new ELA and Mathematics curriculum being purchased with accompanying technical assistance to support adaptation efforts throughout SCEC.

9.40 - Updating the Status of SCEC's 2023 Annual Report:

9.41 – Executive Director David Heimbecker confirmed that DESE approved SCEC's audit and annual report. Executive Director Heimbecker also mentioned Director of Finance Jennifer Prendergast was on point working with SCEC's new firm.

9.50 – SCEC's IT Director Raymond Steele spoke a little about a new committee that was started this year, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging (DEIB) with the motto "*Small Steps Make Big Strides*". This committee encourages people to embrace and celebrate the rich diversity of cultures, backgrounds, perspectives, and identities that exist in our communities and society.

9.51 - Jackie Gallishaw has created a newsletter with upcoming events, Notable Advocates, and reading suggestions for the SCEC Community.

10.00 - Other Superintendent Issues

10.10 – National Conference Opportunities:

As is the SCEC tradition, Board Members who attend national conferences are invited to share their learning experiences with other Board members at each Board mtg.

Executive Director Heimbecker stated all the rooms for the Summer Institute at Sea Crest have been booked, there is still time to register. If you'd like to participate contact Leah Thibault [lthibault@scecoll.org](mailto:lthibault@scecoll.org), who will get you registered.

Superintendent June Saba-Maguire attended the AASA conference in February, she mentioned it was very overwhelming, and wondered if there was a better way to get more out of it? Executive Director Heimbecker suggested searching the AASA database beforehand, to see who will be attending and to support the Massachusetts attendees.

10.20 – The remaining 2023-2024 Board meeting scheduled.

June 13, 2024

11.00 - Warrants:

Presented to Board Members through DocuSign approval.

12.00 - Other Item(s)

12.10 – Updating and Discussing Leasing Property for Instructional Purposes

12.11 – Leases have been extended at the Berkley Community and Middle Schools, Palmer River Elementary School in Rehoboth, Freetown Elementary, George R. Austin Intermediate School in Lakeville, the North Grades 1-8 School in Seekonk, the Gallishaw High School in Seekonk, and SCEC's inclusion classroom at Seekonk High School.

Superintendent, Melissa Eakins-Ryan is providing inclusive space at the Berkley Middle School (BMS) to accommodate a portion of SCEC middle school students. This is being accomplished through restructuring the SCEC program currently at BMS and creating an additional classroom.

Superintendent, Bill Runey has space in Dighton-Rehoboth. They will consist of 2 SCEC inclusion classrooms at Beckwith Middle School and 5 SCEC inclusion classrooms at D/R Regional High School.

Given the Berkley, Dighton-Rehoboth, and Seekonk schools departments' partnerships, SCEC's Leadership Team is pleased to be able to maintain inclusion programs serving the entire K-12 grade span. LT members are grateful to the SCEC Board members who have made grade inclusion programming available in the past and future.

Executive Director Heimbecker shared thanks with Superintendent Maria Pontes for her help focusing on inclusion with Durfee High School and Bishop Connolly High School. Executive Director Heimbecker also wanted to thank Superintendent Runey for his hard work and help executing the space in Dighton-Rehoboth.

12.12 - SCEC is meeting with the Diocese to see if our program can stay part of the summer while the new space is being updated.

13.00 - Adjournment

Motion, B. Runey: Motion to adjourn at 1:58PM  
Second, J. Robidoux  
Vote, Unanimous