

SOUTH COAST EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE (SCEC)

Board of Directors' Meeting December 14, 2023 Minutes

Present: J. Cabral, B. Runey, J. Robidoux, M. Pontes, J. Schoonover, T. Aubin, M. Ryan, A. O'Leary, J Saba-Maguire, R. Kidwell, D. Heimbecker, J. Prendergast, L. Thibault

1.00 - Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Superintendent J. Schoonover at 1:51 PM.

2.00 - Minutes of October 26, 2023

The minutes of October 26, 2023 were presented for review and approved.

Motion, J. Cabral: To approve the minutes of October 26, 2023
Second, J. Robidoux

Abstained, R. Kidwell
Vote, Approved

3.00 - Financial Information

3.10 - Updating of the FY 24 Business Plan

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.

Director of Finance, Jennifer Prendergast mentioned that SCEC liability is \$8.9 million, and SCEC has \$193,000 in the account currently.

3.20 – Presentation of the 2022 – 2023 Financial Audit of SCEC from Powers & Sullivan, LLC.

SCEC's 2023 audit was completed by Powers and Sullivan and was reviewed at the December 14, 2023 Board Meeting. Michael Nelligan and Laura Stone presented to the Board. Michael stated that the audit was clean and clear with the help of the Director of Finance Jennifer Prendergast and her team. There were no concerns.

3.30 - Annual Financial Audit and Cumulative Surplus as of June 30, 2023 approval, and vote:

Motion: J. Cabral: “Approve the 2022-2023 Annual Financial Audit of South Coast Educational Collaborative as presented and submitted by Michael Nelligan from Powers & Sullivan, LLC and instruct the Board Chair and Executive Director to certify that this action was taken by signing a document that memorializes the action taken.”

Second, J. Robidoux

Vote, All in Favor

Motion: J. Cabral: “To designate \$5,516,406 as South Coast Educational Collaborative’s cumulative surplus for FY2023 and retain for the Collaborative’s use.”

Second, T. Aubin

Vote, All in Favor

3.40 – Updating of the FY 24 Business Plan/Budget

Director of Finance, Jennifer Prendergast reported that SCEC currently has a slight loss year to date. SCEC is at the FY24 business plan level for students and down 2 staff. SCEC will continue to advertise for open positions to hopefully fill the employee gap. And the student count is up by almost 15 students from last year at this time.

On December 7, 2023, SCEC finalized the purchase of the LIFE Academy building in Swansea, MA. SCEC purchased the property for \$1.4 million. To finance this purchase, the Collaborative used \$1 million from the capital reserve fund approved by the board and the remaining funds came from the general fund.

Superintendent Cabral noted this is an outstanding place to be considering last year’s deficit and Superintendent Robidoux agreed.

3.50 – FY25 Business Plan/Budget

Post-pandemic-driven uncertainty is complicating an already difficult budget construction at SCEC. Currently, the Business Plan/Budget model being considered reflects 5% increases in tuition and other fees for services. All possible avenues are being considered and explored to reduce the potential increases, but as indicated major challenges exist. As always predicting student enrollment, the level of student challenges, and acquiring suitable public-school classrooms are the most significant factors. Unfortunately, recruiting and retaining high quality staff and space issues are becoming increasingly difficult, and these issues are limiting program development efforts. However, since the LIFE Academy building and property were purchased by SCEC from the YMCA there may be space made available for additional programming.

3.60 – 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 - Margaret Maxwell - Paraprofessional, 12 Months, LIFE Academy

4.12 – Kaitlyn Gregoire – Paraprofessional, 12 Months, Berkley Elementary

4.20 - Transfer(s):

4.21 – Victoria Mello – Per Diem Nurse to Nurse, 4 days a week, 12 Months

4.22 – Jill Romano – Paraprofessional to Teacher, 12 Months North School

4.23 – Erin Jarvis – Paraprofessional to Teacher, 12 Months North School

4.24 – John Machado – Paraprofessional at Gallishaw to Paraprofessional, 12 Months BCHS

Motion: B. Runey: To approve the New Hires and Transfers as presented.

Second, M. Ryan

Vote, All in Favor

Executive Director David Heimbecker mentioned how many transfers SCEC has, and noted this doesn't change our staffing numbers, but shows staffing growth.

Superintendent Kidwell mentioned that Seekonk's shelter consolidation will not keep the Students that were sent there, they are being moved, so Seekonk can't keep the staff they hired to support these students, Superintendent Kidwell said she may have people interested in applying at SCEC.

4.30 - Resignation(s):

4.31 – Maggie Arruda – Health Service Administrator, 12 Months

4.32 – Riley Oliver – Clinician, 12 Months

Motion: J. Cabral: To approve the Resignations, as presented.

Second, B. Runey

Vote, All in Favor

Motion: J. Cabral: To send a letter from the Board of Directors to Maggie Arruda for her 19 years of service with SCEC.

Second, J. Robidoux

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 – Repairs and replacements at most SCEC sites are being completed on an as needed basis. E.g., A new septic system will be installed under the parking lot at LIFE Academy.

7.00 - Policy and Procedures

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

7.20 – Copies of the 2022-2023 Annual Report were handed out during this meeting.

7.21 – DRAFT copies of the Financial Statement year end June 30,2023 were handed out.

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

8.10 – Internal Professional Development

8.11 - SCEC Deep Learning Leadership Team held its meeting on December 5, 2023. The team discussed merging the DL Planning Team with the Leadership Team. The primary objective of the merger was to identify the future roles of team members and to define and assess the future work for the 23/24 school year. Additionally, the team discussed the SCEC data systems relevant to DL, managing the SCEC DL Hub, and supporting our SCEC sites in their DL work.

8.12 - SCEC Health Services and SCEC internal PD have coordinated to provide a SCEC Medical Mandated training course (Medication Administration and Delegation with EPI-Pen and Universal Precautions) for the month of December. The professional development will be provided using a hybrid model with support provided by the SCEC health services staff. Staff will be required to view a video and PowerPoint presentation and sign an acknowledgement upon completion of training.

8.13 - This month, three SCEC staff will attend the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center, Train the Trainer program in Taunton. The three individuals will provide our bullying prevention training to all SCEC staff in February 2024.

8.14 - To continue to support SCEC in their well-being and the well-being of our students, SCEC has renewed its CALM application subscription. Some valuable resources associated with this app include Aloneness, Real Connection, and social media and Screen Addiction Masterclass

8.20 - External Professional Development

8.21 - The SCEC/BSU master's in special education cohort – January 2024 will be the start of this SCEC's cohort's 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.

Dartmouth Superintendent June Saba-Maguire would like more information and mentioned she'd like to work with Dr. McKearney regarding the cohorts. Executive Director Heimbecker will reach out to Dr. McKearney and have her send the information.

8.22 - 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.

9.00 - Superintendent Issues

9.10 – The South Coast Educational Collaborative Annual Report 2022-2023 was submitted to the Board of Directors, and a motion to approve was voted on.

Motion: J. Schoonover: “Approve the 2022-2023 Annual Report of South Coast Educational Collaborative and instruct the Board Chair and the Executive Director to certify that this action was taken by signing a document that memorializes the action taken.”

Second, J. Robidoux

Vote, All in Favor

9.20 – The Executive Director’s Book Club:

Executive Director Heimbecker wanted to mention that the large purpose of book club is that it has become part of the Board of Directors professional development.

Superintendent Aubin appreciates the enrichments provided by the book club.

10.00 - Other Superintendent Issues

10.10 – Opportunities for continuous professional learning:

Executive Director Heimbecker would like each board member to continue to share their experiences when attending conferences. Executive Director Heimbecker thanked Superintendent Ryan for partnering with SCEC’s Maggie Arruda and himself at the MASC/Joint Conference.

The AASA and ASCD Conferences are coming up, interested parties should contact Leah Thibault at (508) 379-1180 x 129 or lthibault@scecoll.org for more information.

10.20 – The 2023-2024 Board meeting dates have been scheduled.

September 14, 2023

October 26, 2023

December 14, 2023 (Award Ceremony)

January 11, 2024

February 8, 2024

April 11, 2024 (Admin Luncheon)

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

Space to operate SCEC programs continues to be a concern for the SCEC Leadership Team. Finding adequate space for inclusion programs continues to be a problem.

12.11 – Leases have been extended at the Berkley Community and Middle Schools in Berkley, Palmer River Elementary School in Rehoboth, the 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.

12.12 – Although Bishop Connolly High School (BCHS) closed at the end of June 2023, a one-year lease that allows SCEC’s BCHS program to remain in the building has been executed between SCEC and the Dioceses of Fall River. Due to the generosity of the Fall River School Department, inclusion opportunities for the SCEC BCHS students are unfolding at Durfee High School.

12.14 – The purchase of sales for the LIFE Academy has finalized. The grand opening ceremony date is TBD. Executive Director Heimbecker suggests the Board of Directors visit LIFE Academy and take a tour.

13.00 - Adjournment

Motion, J. Schoonover: Motion to adjourn at 3:02 PM
Second, B. Runey

Vote, Unanimous