

SOUTH COAST EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE (SCEC)

Board of Directors
January 15, 2026

AGENDA

- 1.0 - Call to Order
- 2.0 - Minutes of December 12, 2025
- 3.0 - Financial Information
- 4.0 - Human Resources
- 5.0 - Executive Session
- 6.0 - Building Program Update
- 7.0 - Policies and Procedures
- 8.0 - Internal/External Professional Development
- 9.0 - Superintendent Issues
- 10.0 - Other Superintendent Issue(s)
- 11.0 - Warrants
- 12.0 - Other Item(s)
- 13.0 - Adjournment

SOUTH COAST EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE (SCEC)

Board of Directors

January 15, 2026 at 1:00 PM

BACKUP

1.00 - Call to Order:

2.00 - Minutes of December 12, 2025:

The minutes of the Board of Directors' Meeting held on December 12, 2025, are being presented for review and approval.

3.00 - Financial Information:

3.10 - Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust

The OPEB Trustees will be meeting on June 11, 2026, at 12:00 PM to consider future funding initiatives, policies, structural considerations, and retiree benefits. The results of this meeting will be shared with the Board of Directors during the Board meeting scheduled to begin at 1:00 PM on June 11, 2026.

Currently, members of the Trust are Jeffrey Schoonover, John Cabral, Andrew O'Leary, Jennifer Bouchard, and David Heimbecker.

3.20 - Updating of the FY 26 Business Plan/Budget

Motion needed:

To designate \$6,030,104 as cumulative surplus for FY2025 and retain for the use of the Collaborative.

John Ratcliffe, partner from Pavento, Ratcliffe, Renzi & Co. LLC recently closed the SCEC's financial books for December 2026. At the end of December, the Collaborative's year-to-date net operating results are a \$83,406 deficit. Currently, enrollment is below budget by 9 students, which consists of less member students budgeted by 13 students and more non-member students by 4. Staffing is 3 staff above the budgeted amount.

Cash reserves cover 2.40 months of SCEC's monthly expenses and exclude reserves for OPEB and Capital. The Leadership Team is cautiously moving ahead, being guided by the information that follows.

Balancing the FY26 business plan/budget has been difficult. Managing the budgetary complications of student enrollment trends has been challenging for all members of the SCEC educational community, and Leadership Team members have been relentlessly creative and courageous in addressing the challenges. In this vein, SCEC's Senior

Leadership Team and Finance Committee will be continuing to take the following steps, which seem to be producing positive results:

- Encouraging all Board Members to support efforts to increase student enrollment and use of other SCEC services
- Exceeding expectations by providing the highest quality programming for all students and their families and staff members in the SCEC catchment area
- Assisting all SCEC leaders in outreach efforts
- Restructuring programs and repurposing staff and other resources
- Pursuing grants and other non-tuition generated funding
- Limiting spending to essential items and activities
- Through attrition, consolidation, and repurposing existing SCEC continuing reduction in the amount of time being paid to outside consultants
- Collaborating with other educational collaboratives and service entities
- Considering mid-course adjustments in fee structures

3.50 – FY27 Business Plan/Budget

Currently, the Business Plan/Budget model being considered reflects a 5% increase 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 is becoming increasingly difficult, and these issues are limiting program development efforts.

Obtaining suitable space to house current and new programming continues to be a significant challenge. Although repair and replacement pressures exist in freestanding buildings, maintaining long term leases for the North and Gallishaw schools in Seekonk is an ongoing process. Additionally, it appears that Case Junior High School in Swansea may be available in a few years.

Fortunately, since the LIFE Academy building and property has been purchased by SCEC from the YMCA in Swansea in December of 2023, programming for 18- to 22-year-old students has a permanent home. In fact, there may be space made available for additional programming at LIFE Academy.

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.

Note: Monthly Report (MR – 6) for December 2025 is included with this Board of Backup for the January 9, 2025 meeting.

4.00 - Human Resources – Prepared by Michelle Dargon and with assistance from other SCEC Business Office Team Members:

4.10 - New Hires: None

4.20 – Transfer(s):

4.21 - Belanger, Christan – 12 Month Paraprofessional from Berkley Middle School to 12-month Teacher at Gallishaw High School with licensure pending – December 17, 2025

4.30 - Resignation(s):

4.31 – Soucy, Nicholas - 12 Month Paraprofessional – Gallishaw High School – January 9, 2026

4.40 - Retirement(s):

4.41 – Bigelow, Brian – 12 Month Teacher – Gallishaw High School – June 30, 2026

4.42 – Mongeon, Laura – 12 Month Reading Teacher – Related Services – July 31, 2026

4.50 – Leave(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., Electrical upgrade project and bathroom upgrade at the Main Office are complete attempting to keep up with the roof leaks and HVAC issues at North and Gallishaw Schools are ongoing.

7.00 - Policy and Procedures:

7.10 - As current administrative policies and procedures are refined and new ones emerge, Board participation and oversight will be 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 –The SCEC Deeper Learning Leadership Team (DLLT) conducted a meeting on January 6th. The team has continued to maintain our four subcommittee groups that include Information & Professional Development, Data & Information, Teachers, and Clinical. The team has developed a Deeper Learning and Outcome goal form which each SCEC has completed. DLLT facilitator Dave Marr outlined the team’s vision, which focuses on critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity among SCEC educators. The team plans to gather feedback on their proposed support, including observations and training before disseminating information widely.

8.12 – A discussion on student GRIT data also took place at the DLLT meeting. Summaries have been provided to each SCEC site for Q1 and soon to be for Q2. The team highlighted the importance of evaluating the GRIT measure’s usefulness and

encouraged SCEC programs to schedule meetings with our Data subcommittee members. Some future considerations include:

- Ongoing support and resources available for programs to implement changes based on GRIT data.
- Evaluation of the effectiveness and usefulness of the GRIT measure.
- Discussion of GRIT data summaries and their implications for program evaluations.
- Strategies for enhancing GRIT among students based on data insights.

8.20- External Professional Development Prepared by Dr. Carolyn McKearney

8.21 - SCEC Senior Fellow, Dr. Carolyn McKearney and Donna Cranshaw-Gabriel, have contracted with Dighton/Rehoboth Regional School district to complete three special education program evaluations in the 2025-2026 school year.

8.22 - In January 2026, the SCEC CPI will be working with 29 staff members from Bristol County Agricultural High School to obtain their Initial CPI certification.

8.23 - Dr. McKearney met with the Freetown/Lakeville administrative team to discuss DESE's upcoming changes to the Restraint & Seclusion regulations that take effect in August 2026.

8.24- 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.

8.25 - Dr. Carolyn McKearney is currently working with Berkely, Dartmouth, Dighton/Rehoboth, and Seekonk for consultation, professional development presentations, and program evaluation in the 2025-2026 school year.

8.26 - 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 2025-2026 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
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Contact Dr. Bethany DeNardo if interested in this service at bdenardo@scecoll.org or call/text at (508) 922-6213 or cmckearney@scecoll.org.

9.00 - Superintendent Issues:

9.10 – The South Coast Educational Collaborative Annual Report 2023-2024, which was approved by SCEC’s Board of Directors, has been submitted to appropriate DESE officials. Linda Cullen, Co-Leader for Related Services will be presenting an abstract of the document at the January 15, 2026 Board meeting. The abstract may prove useful for Board members as they report on the Annual Report to their School Committees.

9.20 – The South Coast Educational Collaborative 2023-2024 Annual Audit, which was approved by SCEC’s Board of Directors, has been submitted to appropriate DESE and MA officials. Director of Finance, Jennifer Bouchard will be commenting on the Audit at the January 15, 2026, Board meeting.

9.30 – The Executive Director’s Book Club - Sustainability through rethinking from: Adam Grant (2023). *Think Again: The power of knowing what you don’t know*. Published by Penguin Books Harmony Books in New York City.

Although *Think again* was originally published during the COVID-19 Pandemic in 2021, it was republished in 2023 because the author and his colleagues believed that the strategies contained in the book were important to revisit as the problems of the world continued to multiply after the Pandemic. It appears that not knowing what we don’t know can be dangerous to us and to our friends and colleagues. Fortunately, Adam Grant believes that we can discover what we don’t know and learn what we don’t know by thought partnering together. (p. 8)

In his Action for Impact section at the end of *Think again* (pp. 253-259) Grant admonishes:

- 1 – Think like a scientist
- 2 – Define your identity in terms of values, not opinions
- 3 – Seek out information that goes against your views
- 4 – Beware of getting stranded at the summit of Mount Stupid
- 5 – Harness the benefits of doubt
- 6 – Embrace the joy of being wrong
- 7 – Learn something new from each person you meet
- 8 – Build a challenge network, not just a support network
- 9 – Don’t shy away from constructive conflict
- 10 – Practice the art of persuasive listening
- 11 - Question how, rather than why
- 12 – Ask, “What evidence would change your mind?”
- 13 - Ask how people originally formed an opinion
- 14 – Acknowledge common ground
- 15 – Remember that less is often more
- 16 – Reinforce freedom of choice
- 17 – Have a conversation about the conversation
- 18 – Complexify contentious topics
- 19 – Don’t shy away from caveats and contingencies
- 20 – Expand your emotional range

- 21 – Have a weekly myth-busting discussion at dinner
- 22 – Invite kids to do multiple drafts and seek feedback from others
- 23 – Stop asking kids what they want to be when they grow up
- 24 – Abandon best practices ... adopt better practices
- 25 – Establish psychological safety
- 26 – Keep a rethinking scorecard
- 27 – Throw out the ten-year plan
- 28 – Rethink your actions, not just your surroundings
- 29 – Schedule a life checkup
- 30 – Make time to think again

The SCEC Executive Director believes that rethinking has the potential to guide educational leaders through the increasingly challenging times that continue to emerge. Being willing to assist each other in learning what we don't know can be exciting and gratifying. On page 7 Adam Grant warns that “rethinking may require admitting failure and shedding part of your identity. You must rethink your goal in your job—and your role in life.” But he also maintains that creating a safe environment in which you model and encourage rethinking as a technique for reassessment, reinvention, and creation might lead to transformative sustainability. (pp. 254, 256, & 258)

10.00 - Other Superintendent Issue(s):

10.10 - Schedule of Remaining SCEC Board of Board Directors Meetings for 2024-2025*:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Meeting Description</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
January 15, 2026	Board Luncheon	12:30 – 1:00 PM	GLC – 2
	Board of Directors’ Meeting	1:00 – 2:30 PM	GLC – 2
February 12, 2026	Board Luncheon	12:30 1:00 PM	GLC – 2
	Board of Directors’ Meeting	1:00 – 2:30 PM	GLC – 2
April 16, 2026	Adm Assistant Luncheon	11:30 – 1:00 PM	Rookery
	Board of Directors’ Meeting	1:00 – 2:30 PM	Rookery
June 11, 2026	Board Luncheon	12:30 – 1:00 PM	GLC – 2
	Board of Directors’ Meeting	1:00 – 2:30 PM	GLC – 2

*Please remember that all members of SCEC’s Board of Directors are strongly encouraged to attend Board of Directors’ meetings. Since Massachusetts State (MA) laws governing Educational Collaboratives require attendance, officials from the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MADESE) are monitoring attendance. DESE officials are required to audit Educational Collaboratives once in a six-year cycle.

10.20 - Continuous Professional Learning Experiences Supported by SCEC for FY26 and beyond*:

10.21 - AASA – February 12-14, 2026, in Nashville, TN

10.22 - ASCD – June 28 – July 1, 2026 in San Antonio

10.23 - MASS Summer Institute – July 13 – 16, 2026 in North Falmouth

*Please remember the long SCEC history of Board Members conferring at PD activities and sharing their professional learning experiences at subsequent Board of Directors' meetings. Board Members have frequently reported that doing so has proven to be useful in their professional growth and development.

Board Members who are interested in participating in any of these PD experiences should contact Leah Thibault who will assist in obtaining registration and accommodation for all Board Members. She can be reached at (508) 379-1180, extension 129 or lthibault@scecoll.org.

11.00 - Warrants: To be signed via DocuSign

12.00 - Other Item(s):

12.10 - Updating and Discussing Leasing Property for Instructional Purposes

Space to operate SCEC programs continues to be a serious concern for the SCEC Leadership team. Both lease extensions and acquiring new ones are being pursued.

12.11 – Leases for venues providing inclusive programs have been extended at the Berkley Community* and Middle Schools in Berkley, Palmer River Elementary School in Rehoboth, the Beckwith Middle School in Rehoboth, the Dighton Rehoboth Regional High School in Dighton, the Freetown Elementary, George R. Austin Intermediate School in Lakeville, and a classroom in Seekonk High School.

*It should be noted that SCEC staff members are currently teaming with colleagues of the Berkley School Department as they plan for a new elementary school in which 2 classrooms will be dedicated for use by SCEC. Everyone involved seems to be excited by the prospects.

12.12 - Leases for school buildings to house substantially separate programs have been executed at the North Grades 1-8 School in Seekonk and the Gallishaw High School in Seekonk and serious discussions regarding extensions of the leases are ongoing.

12.13 – Future arrangements for the use of Case Junior High School in Swansea are currently being explored.

12.14 – LIFE Academy is now owned by SCEC and home to a program serving 18–22-year-old adults. It also serves as a potential training site for transitional programming.

13.00 - Adjournment: