

### *Collaboratively Speaking*

It's hard to believe that another school year has drawn to a close. It seems to me that the time from Labor Day to the end of school is one big blur. I know that many successes have occurred, transitions achieved and challenges overcome as you worked so diligently and effectively over the past ten months. For me, at MOEC, the year has been marked by the need to scale a significant learning curve. On that journey which remains unfinished, I have developed a great appreciation and admiration for your many skills, talents and contributions. I look forward with great optimism for our ever-expanding role in the educational community. As I reflect on our workshops with Paul Harrington, I am pleased that our organizational message and brand as to who we are and what we offer now receives greater recognition and consideration. Our dialogues with policy makers Secretary Reville and Commissioner Chester and our ongoing work with DESE staff have enhanced our visibility and credibility as an organization. Soon our website will be up and running and serve as a resource to each of you and the many constituents whom we serve. I am pleased with our progress to date and have thoroughly enjoyed and value my work with each of you.

As we move forward next year, several initiatives require your participation and insight. The Board and I are most interested in involving each of you as we continue our effort to raise our visibility, and promote our own professional growth and learning. Let me share some of those opportunities with you.

**Legislative Initiatives-** Several legislative issues require our engagement, voice and ongoing attention. We are well served by Julie Cox, our lobbyist, and the members of our legislative committee. We need to expand its membership and continue to articulate our interests and utilize our influence to ensure that our legislative priorities are carefully considered and enacted.

**Program Development-** The success of any organization is in its ability to identify, respond to and meet the professional development needs of its members. As we plan our professional development programs for next year it is essential that your interests and needs be met and your voice heard.

**Agency Relations-** As an AESA affiliate, we will stay in step with its national agenda and also shape that agenda to meet our needs. We are fortunate to be represented on the national board and will continue to exert our influence on its direction.

#### **New Business Initiatives**

**Cooperative Purchasing-** A number of initiatives and opportunities exist that we may wish to expand and/or enter into. Legislation has been filed by TEC to greatly expand the geographic area in which we participate. As you may know, the existing statute in Massachusetts prohibits cross- state alliances. We may soon have the ability to partner with other external entities and organizations across the region and nation to provide greater leverage and economy of scale as we collectively procure the many products and services you provide to your member and non- member districts.

**Data Collection and Management-** Your interests and needs vary greatly in terms of data collection. We all recognize the importance of organizing our efforts in this regard so that the data collection process is

purposeful, efficient, comprehensive and timely. We need to identify those data needs, define them carefully and determine the most efficient way to collect, interpret and disseminate the results.

Website Development and Maintenance- We have made some progress in the design and development of our MOEC website. Your participation in identifying, defining and articulating its message and content will ensure its long-term value and viability.

As you know, we are an organization in transition and the opportunity is now upon us to include the voice and influence of each of you as we guide this effort. If you have an interest in and are willing to invest your energy and creativity in any of these tasks, please let me know at your earliest convenience. I will work with Anne over the next several weeks and designate interested members to assist us in these efforts.

In closing, I want to bid a fond farewell to Jean and Colleen as you leave your leadership positions. While I am confident that we will continue to work with and/or hear from each of you, please know that your contributions have been highly regarded, widely respected, and your presence will be greatly missed. Good luck to each of you and best wishes for a healthy and restful summer vacation to all!!!

*Best wishes, Steve*