

July 2007

Collaboratively Speaking

Given the geographic realities that stretch us across the Commonwealth, it will be my practice to occasionally communicate electronically with you about "all things collaborative." With this first issue, I want to acknowledge the contributions and legacy Dr. Joseph Keefe has lent to this organization. He has worked steadfastly and tirelessly on our behalf. In following in his footsteps, I am mindful of the energy and wisdom of all of those individuals who have preceded each of us. Without their contributions, we, as individual collaborative directors and /or for us collectively at MOEC, would not be as accomplished as we are today. Thank you, Joe.

As I begin my work as your executive director, I am energized by the opportunities that exist and the role that MOEC and each collaborative can play in their fruition. After 40 years of experience as teacher, project manager, central office administrator and superintendent of schools I am prepared to aggressively pursue our collective agenda both internally within the organization and externally with the statewide stakeholders with whom we interact. Experience has taught me many lessons and at least two of them will guide my work. "People matter" and "You can do anything if you don't care who gets the credit." With those beliefs, I look forward to our work together.

Internally, I intend to get to know each of you, develop an understanding of your programs and your challenges. It is important that you envision MOEC and its members as allies and a support system. To that end, I would like to visit with you at your site and look for an invitation from you in that regard.

Our professional development will be one of my priorities. Discussions are underway with Northeastern University to design a series of professional development programs intended to promote our individual growth as well as strengthen the bond between each of us and this organization. As details become available, I will share them with you including a projected initial program offering in the late Fall.

I also wish to welcome the new collaborative directors who are joining us this year. For you, the year will be filled with great excitement and challenge. To facilitate your entry into your new positions, I will schedule, beginning in late September, several opportunities throughout the year for us to come together as a mentor group. These sessions will provide a forum in which we can share successes, describe our challenges, and identify problems and strategize their resolution.

Externally, the Board and I have agreed to focus my energy in an effort to raise the visibility and stature of MOEC among elected officials and policy makers. With the assistance of our lobbyist, I am planning to meet with key legislators and governmental agency officials to articulate to them whom we are and what possibilities and opportunities we present in our common effort to provide cost effective, high-quality programming across the Commonwealth. I look forward to this role as your advocate and welcome your suggestions in this regard.

As a collaborative, we are less restrained in our thinking and continually have the opportunity to “think outside the box” as we design new programs, services and access new markets. Robert Frost wrote in his beautiful poem “The Road Not Taken” of the choices with which we are often faced. For each of us and MOEC from time to time we will need to “take the one less traveled by” for that will “make all the difference.”

Have a wonderful 4th of July !!!

Best wishes, Steve