

MINUTES
MOEC Executive Board Meeting
December 15, 2008

In attendance: Robin Ahigian, Anne Booth, Larry Carroll, Bob Gass, Susan Cuoco Hassan, David Heimbecker, Richard Murphy, Susan Rees, Mike Savage, Joan Schuman, Joanne Haley Sullivan, Steve Theall

The meeting began at 10:00 a.m.

JD LaRock, Policy Director, Massachusetts Executive Office of Education

Mr. LaRock presented three Readiness Project recommendations relevant to collaboratives.

- 1) **Readiness Schools.** Innovative, in-district schools, operating inside parameters of traditional schools, like the Boston pilot schools. Any group, including educational collaboratives, can submit proposals to start a new Readiness School or convert a traditional school. There are no parameters on what the school should be. The Executive Office of Education is hoping to pass legislation this session and is looking for foundations to provide small planning grants.
- 2) **Readiness Centers.** A Readiness Center will provide regional professional development and technical assistance center and tie together the three levels of education. A collaborative could be a Readiness Center.
- 3) **Regionalization.** Secretary Reville's interest in regionalization comes from his interest in increasing the capacity of central school administrations to focus on instruction and expand program choice by relieving the superintendent of back office duties. 2008 DESE data suggests that larger districts had higher performance in math and ELA, higher qualified teachers, more teachers licensed in their subject, higher attendance, and more money spent on direct instruction. The data suggests that regionalization will have costs before it produces savings, so cost savings is third on his priority list. The Executive Office of Education is beginning work on legislation in December and hoping to file in early spring. Collaboratives can be part of increasing capacity, but Secretary Reville is skeptical that collaboratives can do enough.

Several executive directors offered their reasons for believing that collaboratives are the best at bringing districts together and helping them fill gaps.

Mr. LaRock asked the collaboratives to provide Secretary Reville with evidence of their success and their plans for creating more instructionally focused central offices in the near term.

Mr. LaRock's contact information: 671-979-8344, jd.larock@state.ma.us, jd.larock@massmail.state.ma.us

Robin Ahigian announced that DESE is hiring Jesse Dixon to replace Robin. Mr. Dixon was the chief of staff for Alice Wolf.

Executive Director Report

- Steve proposed a future discussion how collaboratives consolidate. What are the rules of engagement and fair play? How do you have conversations with your board about consolidating? Bob Gass suggested that Barbara Talcoff from The Children's League could offer guidance.
- Obama Public Works funding will give money for energy efficiency. Collaboratives will be good vehicles to do that energy efficiency work. Steve proposed discussing it at the January general meeting.
- Breakfast Meeting: Joan Schuman and Jim Caradonio. Joan presented Jim with the idea of granting seed money so that regions can hire someone to run regional planning study groups.
- MASC/MASS Annual Conference Presentation. Steve asked the directors to share the presentation with their boards.
- AESA National Conference
- Special Education Transportation Network: Susan Cuoco Hassan and Richard Murphy asked to hear from the regional coordinators or be invited to attend a meeting.
- "Surviving and Thriving in Challenging Times"
- State Leaders Meeting: December 16
- Richard Murphy asked if collaboratives should send audits to the state, to dispel Secretary Reville's fear that the collaboratives are not transparent. Steve suggested discussing this issue in January and asked the executive directors present to give Steve a copy of their audits.
- Legislative Proposal: Chapter 40, Section 4E. Joan will check on the language. Julie Cox will try to get Representative Donato as a sponsor.

White Paper Discussion and Suggestions for Next Steps

A motion was made and seconded to approve the white paper "Educational Service Agencies in Massachusetts: Building Capacity in Small School Districts." The motion passed unanimously: 6-0-0.

MOEC Policy/Practice for Vendor Presentations

This discussion was postponed to a future Executive Board meeting.

FY09 Financial Report and FY10 budget planning: Richard Murphy, Treasurer

- MOEC lost \$16,000 in FY09 because MOEC hadn't budgeted for some items (for example: Steve's salary increase, Caroline's computer)
- The SpEd Transportation grant is doing fine and helps the FY09 budget because that budget was set before the grant money was awarded.
- Richard plans to have a draft of the FY10 budget for the February 9 board meeting. The FY10 budget will not include the grant money. Richard does not anticipate a dues increase. Gen membership votes in May.

The Educator

This discussion was postponed to a future Executive Board meeting.

Member Comments

Franklin County is considering forming its own collaborative or joining another collaborative in the region.

At the December 10, 2008 DESE curriculum meeting, collaboratives were discussed as professional development Readiness Centers.

November 3, 2008 Executive Board Meeting minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the November 3, 2008 Executive Board Meeting, with a correction of the spelling of Glenn Koocher's name. The motion passed unanimously: 5-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00.

Submitted by Caroline Sabin