

**MINUTES**  
**January 12, 2009**  
**General Membership Meeting**

In attendance: Patric Barbieri, Anne Booth, Maureen Canner, Larry Carroll, Catherine Cooper, Julie Cox, Cathy Cummins, Jesse Dickson, Bill Erickson, John Farrington, Linda Foisy, John Fletcher, George Flynn, Bob Gass, Beth Gonyea, Donna Goodell, Marty Hanley, Susan Cuoco Hassan, David Heimbecker, Cathy Lawson, John Mara, Ed McCaul, Anne McKenzie, Richard Murphy, Mike Palladino, Susan Rees, Judy Riggs, Marco Rodrigues, Mike Savage, Joanne Haley Sullivan, Steve Theall, Dorsey Yearley, Teresa Watts, Anita Woods.

The meeting was called to order at 9:50 a.m.

**Legislative Update:** Julie Cox Nutter, McClennen & Fish

In this legislative session, the piece of H449 bill that allows collaborative executive directors to hire or fire will be filed. Gives exec dir comparable hire/fire power as supt. Representative Donato will sponsor the bill. Julie Cox is looking for co-sponsors. Representative Harkins has said she will sign it. Representative Harkins will probably refile the bill to give collaborative teachers professional status. MOEC hopes that the two bills will not be joined again. TEC may refile its bill allowing cooperative purchasing to cross state lines. Steve would like MOEC to refile the bill if TEC is not going to refile it.

**Executive Director's Report**

- MOEC is working with Representative Harkins on the Educator Excellence bill, but the bill is not likely to proceed because it is very expensive.
- Four executive directors are completing a beta version of the Donahue Institute survey. The survey will go out to all executive directors in a week or two
- Steve asked each executive director to check the website and make sure the collaborative's information is correct.
- Steve would like to hear everyone's reactions to the 2008 MOEC Annual Survey: was it easier or more difficult to complete than past surveys?
- The MOEC profile sheet will become an annual report, since both AESA and DESE request a MOEC annual report.

**Regionalization/Consolidation White Paper: "Educational Service Agencies in Massachusetts: Building Capacity in Small School Districts"**

The MOEC Executive Board has already voted to support the white paper. The paper proposes a governance system, but the system is a model, not a requirement. Collaboratives need to have some accountability to the state, but the accountability system can be determined later. Collaboratives' relationship with DESE has been informal, but that may need to change. Regionalization causes anxiety even among MOEC members: Are there too many collaboratives? If you want to merge, how do you do that respectfully? Steve thinks the white paper allows regionalization without some of these problems. South Region has written a paper on how they will regionalize; Peter Kopcha has written a paper on how his collaborative can serve Berkshire County.

Bob Gass suggested adding two functions collaboratives can serve, showing how nimble collaboratives can be: collaboratives can start pilot programs for districts, and collaboratives can assess programs.

Richard Murphy stated that MOEC needs to provide data to back up claims of savings and high quality.

Mike Palladino stated that MOEC needs to have statewide formulas for determining savings. (For example, does SpEd tuition include transportation and therapies?)

Teresa Watts stated that the paper needs to claim savings appropriate for a region. MOEC doesn't want to set itself up for apparent failure by defining a level of success that collaboratives can't meet.

Marty Hanley stated that collaboratives don't always save districts money but can provide them with stability by giving them the staff they can't hire themselves.

Joanne Haley Sullivan asked about the methodology for extrapolating savings across the state. She also offered that each collaborative can specialize in a service and thus avoid the problem of merging collaboratives.

John Fletcher stated that all collaboratives need to be strong, ready to respond to whatever the state asks them to do since MOEC has claimed that collaboratives can perform those tasks.

Mike Palladino stated that the South Region sees itself as an extension of MOEC and will follow the model established in HEC white paper.

Marty Hanley stated that the discussions among the South Region collaboratives have worked to bring the South Region collaboratives together and that small southern districts are listening and want help.

David Heimbecker stated that collaboratives will need to evaluate each other's programs to support claims of high quality. He also stated that JD LaRock said economies of scale are Secretary Reville's third priority but the white paper emphasizes collaboratives' economies of scale over collaboratives' other benefits.

George Flynn asked if the \$1 billion state deficit will force rapid consolidation and cut short MOEC's decision-making about consolidation.

Steve described his request to the Commissioner of Education. First, the Commissioner should define a full-capacity school district. Then, districts will compare themselves to that model and determine its gaps. Finally, each district will find a path that will allow it to fill those gaps, such as regionalizing, going to the collaborative, or going to a university.

John Mara stated that MOEC needs to be defined at beginning of the white paper, and kids need to be in the first sentence.

Anne Booth stated that Shore Collaborative is piloting a DESE School Improvement Assistance Center for the Northeast Region because many of Shore's districts have priority status. The Center will be a regional assistance center. Linda Foisy stated that DESE hopes to start two more School Improvement Assistance Centers and will consider collaboratives.

Steve Theall summarized the conversation:

1. There's urgency to the white paper. Representative Donato wants the final copy.
2. The statewide savings should be deleted because they will create unrealistic expectations.
3. The paper needs to mirror Secretary Reville's priorities.

4. The paper needs to allow each region to respond in its own way but make these common points:
  - Collaboratives are willing to be part of the regionalization/consolidation conversation
  - Collaboratives believe they have capacity
  - Collaboratives know that some of their member districts lack capacity
  - Collaboratives believe districts should be able to choose other paths than regionalization

A motion was made and seconded to accept the white paper “Educational Service Agencies in Massachusetts: Building Capacity in Small School Districts” as the MOEC position, once the changes Steve Theall summarized are made and once the 15% cost-savings requirement is deleted. The motion passes unanimously: 29-0-0.

### **Preferred Providers Presentation**

Steve Theall asked the executive directors to let him know if their regions were listed incorrectly because he used the regions listed in the 2008-2009 MOEC directory.

Anne McKenzie stated that she will show the data to her superintendents and boards and encourage them to answer two questions: What programs should I develop to avoid costs? What programs do I already have that would help you avoid costs?

Dorsey Yearley stated that more sped dollars would go to collaboratives if the circuit breaker funding gave districts an incentive to go use collaborative programs first.

Mike Palladino will investigate the multiple-placement-opportunity requirement to determine if it is a requirement.

Steve Theall stated that MOEC needs to be more proactive in rate-setting and rate increases for private school reconstruction.

Anne McKenzie suggested a regional approach to legal negotiations.

### **Energy Efficiency Management Proposal**

Bob Patterson has a good concept for how MOEC can get its hands on President Obama’s stimulus package, some of which will be about energy savings. Steve Theall won’t run a project, but he would work with a collaborative or group of collaboratives.

### **Executive Director Leadership Group Proposal**

Lyle Kirtman from Future Management Systems will form a leadership group for any interested new executive directors. The group will cost \$550, and will probably meet in locations convenient for the participants.

### **Video: North Shore Education Consortium**

The meeting adjourned at 1:37 p.m.