

**MOEC Special Board Meeting Minutes**  
**March 23, 2020**  
**ZOOM Video Conference**

In response to the coronavirus crisis, a special Board meeting was held via Zoom video conferencing. This meeting didn't follow our typical meeting format, but was a rather free-flowing conversation.

Attendees: Joanne Haley-Sullivan, Catherine Cooper, Jackie Clark, Theresa Craig, Cathy Lawson, Bill Diehl, Liz McGonagle, Steve Donovan, Cindy Landanno, Fran Rosenberg  
Special Guest: Nina Marchese (DESE), Sean Connolly, Vani

Overall, parents seem to be calm and doing well. Teachers are communicating with families and students regularly. Some collaboratives have instructed their staff to record in a log a general idea of what they're doing daily - this could become valuable should paying staff members become an issue.

Joanne spoke with Matt Irish about payroll and making sure there is reimbursement for district services as there is a range of services provided. Joanne followed up via email and also reached out to Jay Sullivan with the same list of services so that he could be working with the Dept of Revenue around this as well.

Roundtable Discussion

Cathy Lawson: Looking at Deeper Learner of Content Previously taught - focusing on deeper thinking rather than introducing new material. Opportunities to reinforce deeper thinking skills w/no grading and no new material. There was no resolution. But there is a common belief that we need a uniform response.

Liz McGonagle: Group hired a scientist that specializes in pandemics; learned that this takes 3-4 months for this to stop needing to close the schools. Says the schools will probably be closed until July. Deep cleaning of high traffic areas is effective and needs to be done repeatedly. Custodial staff needs to be well protected to ensure they are not exposed. Best guess is that we will be closed long term.

- Trying to understand the guidelines for Unemployment as well. Paying for 3 weeks.
- Data privacy for students using Zoom or Google Hangouts. Zoom does have a privacy agreement; as does Google Hangouts. If teachers are teaching, they need to be careful of what's in the background etc.

Theresa Craig: Considering a virtual Board Meeting to discuss payment of payroll - currently plans to pay for two weeks. Agrees that we should all be on the same page.

Joanne: Call with Jay on Wednesday in which he is going to provide some answers; it will be helpful to hear what he has to say.

- a. Theresa: There is a sense of urgency b/c we are on week 2. We need some type of guidance and assurance about this.
- b. Fran: I feel like for the first 20 days we'll be billing for services and proceed with normal payroll.
- c. Liz: Brad (chair of exec board) says it's in the budget and we're paying people.
- d. Catherine: Emailed Business Manager/Special Ed/Superintendent (where appropriate) and explained what the collaborative had done for the students so far; based on Jay Sullivan's call we will be billing for this period of closure. If anyone has questions, please let me know now. There was no negative response.

11:00 am Welcome Department of Education - Nina, Sean, Vani

Nina: This is a big change and shift from what we were working on. Russell has reached out to all stakeholder groups; our main takeaway is we want to understand the range of services and how are the collaboratives able to provide services based on the guidance from DOE. We'd love for MOEC to send an email about the different how's and why's before the end of day today. Please include at the bottom the challenges that are currently taking place, too. How do you interpret this updated guidance and how do you plan to provide services?

DOE guidance implies that this is an extended closure.

Some collaboratives are providing packets of work and been in close contact with families. Some families are saying "don't give me more" and other families are saying "please give me more help and keep checking in."

There are a variety of challenges presented in this situation, such as delivering wheelchairs to those who need it, access to online resources, hands on learning, etc. Many of these children need hands-on learning and that type of media will truly benefit the students with significant disabilities. For the students with significant health issues and intellectual impairments - this will be most challenging for them. It is impossible to provide "hands on" services remotely.

There are students that are essentially homeless; families with multiple children who are trying to survive the day. Family capacity to implement online learning varies.

Additional concern for the acute distress/lack of coping skills/domestic abuse. What happens if we start seeing these things? What skills do our staff need to be able to assess these situations?

With non-essential services ordered to close, what does this look like operationally for us?

There was discussion concerning the March 12 guidance versus the guidance rec'd yesterday. Is part of the issue is that some of the member districts have concerns that collaboratives are too robust and would make them look like they were lagging in terms of compensatory?

This challenge is to prepare for a longer term closure.

What more can we do to provide FAPE? It may not match IEPs. General Education is different than it has been. There's concern about Unions - staff has differential capacity, but not all. Some are well versed in media and technology, while others aren't. What the classrooms/students are receiving is varied by teacher based on the teacher's abilities.

What can we ask people to do that are union members? If this extends through the end of June, will we need a two tier approach. Now - April is social distancing. If we get through the peak of the crisis by May, is there a way to open certain programs for certain kids who are at the highest risk?

We are providing service to kids in our programs, but should also think about providing service to kids in the district too.

There is concern that the providers are not licensed to provide teletherapy. Possible waiver, Nina confirming that.