

SOUTHEASTERN COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
(SECEP)
MINUTES OF MEETING
MARCH 29, 2017

The Southeastern Cooperative Educational Programs (SECEP) held its Joint Board Meeting on Wednesday, March 29, 2017, at the Smithfield Building in Norfolk, VA.

PRESENT: Board Members: Mr. Thomas Mercer, Mr. Robert Holt, Mrs. Jacqueline Carr, Ms. Angelia Allen, Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck, and Mrs. Carolyn Weems

ABSENT: Ms. Yvonne Wagner and Dr. Carolyn Modlin

PRESENT: Committee of Superintendents: Dr. James Roberts, Mrs. Teresa Howington-Vaughn, Special Education Coordinator representing Mr. Kelvin Edwards, Mrs. Heather Tuck, Assistant Superintendent representing Dr. Jim Thornton, Dr. Kipp Rogers, Chief Academic Officer representing Dr. Melinda Boone, Dr. Elie Bracy III, Dr. Deran Whitney, and Dr. Valeka Gatling, Director for the Office of Programs for Exceptional Children, representing Dr. Aaron Spence

ABSENT: Committee of Superintendents: Dr. Jim Thornton, Mr. Kelvin Edwards, Dr. Gwendolyn Shannon, and Dr. Aaron Spence

PRESENT: SECEP Staff: Mr. David Sadler, Mr. Harry Hunter, and Mrs. Brenda Estes

INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE OF SUPERINTENDENTS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck, Chairperson, asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the January 18, 2017, Joint Board Meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Robert Holt and seconded by Mr. Thomas Mercer. (Ayes 5, Nays 0). Motion carried. Mrs. Carolyn Weems was not present at the January meeting and therefore abstained from voting.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

None.

Dr. Jonna Bobzien and Dr. Stephen Tonelson from Old Dominion University were present to provide information and answer questions from the board in regards to a presentation on the SECEP ASP class at ODU.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

AUDIT – 2015-2016 SCHOOL YEAR

The auditors from KPMG were present at the Committee of Superintendent's Meeting on January 18, 2017, to go over the audit. Copies of the draft audit were also given to board members. The final copy of the 2015-2016 Audit was included in the board packets. Dr. Whitney, Chairman of the Committee of Superintendents, asked for a motion to approve the audit as presented. A motion was made by Mr. Thomas Mercer and seconded by Mr. Robert Holt. (Ayes 6, Nays 0). Motion carried.

DISBURSEMENT OF THE LONG-TERM CAPITAL FUNDS:

An approval was requested by Dr. Whitney to disburse the funds from the Long-Term Capital Fund to the participating school divisions. Mr. Sadler stated these funds are disbursed back to each of the participating school systems based on the percentage of revenue contributed by each division. These funds are available for use at the discretion of the superintendent and the approval of the board for anything related to SECEP classrooms, facilities that host SECEP classrooms, or tuition payment. A motion was made by Mrs. Carolyn Weems and seconded by Mr. Robert Holt. (Ayes 6, Nays 0). Motion carried.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SECEP:

PROGRAM UPDATES:

Program Update Reports were included in the board packets. Mr. Sadler asked that the Joint Board take time to read the updates and information provided in the reports.

SECEP – “Students Engaging in Career & Employment Possibilities” @ ODU

A video was presented to the board highlighting SECEP's ASP classroom at Old Dominion University.

Mr. Sadler thanked both Dr. Bobzien and Dr. Tonelson for being very helpful and collaborative in getting a space at ODU for the autism classroom for students 18 years of age and older. This has provided a unique opportunity for these students to successfully transition and have real work experiences on campus. Mr. Sadler introduced Mr. Greg Jacob, Assistant Director for the ASP/EBICS Programs. Mr. Jacob introduced Ms. Elise Grybos, Special Education Teacher, Ms. Candy Lawrence, Education Specialist, and Mrs. Karen Holloway, Principal. Mr. Jacob also introduced Albert, one the students from the classroom, who spoke to the board following the video. The SECEP students have become interns and are mentored by ODU staff. The students transition from the classroom to jobs such as office and computer work, custodial duties, and customer service responsibilities. The video showed interviews by ODU staff mentors who praised our student interns for the good work and dependability they have provided.

Mr. Sadler thanked Mr. Jacob, our student Albert, and SECEP staff for the informational video.

Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck, Chairperson, asked how were the students selected for the ODU Program? Mrs. Holloway stated that this was the first year for the class at ODU. One class was selected from BT Washington High School where the SECEP students were all 18 to 21 years of age to see how well they would do. Dr. Brooks-Buck also asked when the students finish the internship is there an opportunity for them at the university to have a real job? Dr. Tonelson stated that they are currently working with Human Resources and are hopeful that opportunities will open up. He stated that our SECEP interns will also compete with other qualified applicants for employment. Dr. Tonelson stated that from ODU's perspective, they are ecstatic about the collaboration and working with the SECEP @ODU classroom. Mr. Sadler stated that this is not a single year program, and SECEP students will stay in the program to gain more skills.

PROGRAM ENROLLMENT REPORTS:

Mr. Sadler reported on each program, reviewing updated ADM, enrollment, and referral information for each program.

"SEEDS OF CHANGE" PLANT SALE:

Mr. Sadler announced to the board members that the Seeds of Change Industries Spring Plant Sale will be held on Friday, April 21, 2017, at Virginia Beach Re-ED @Renaissance Academy, and at the SECEP Chesapeake Center @ Great Bridge on Friday, April 28, 2017. Promotional flyers were handed out.

PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET FOR FY 2017-2018:

Mr. Sadler stated that the Proposed Operating Budget for FY 2017-2018 was presented for review and discussion.

Mr. Sadler proceeded to highlight and discuss the proposed budget:

- The overall Proposed Budget for FY2018 is \$50,896,845
- This is a decline from the FY2017 Operating Budget (\$41,459,683) of 1.09%
- The proposed individual program rate increased in FY2018 from 3.00% to 4.00%
- There is an overall salary/wage increase of 2.5%
- The projected increase in health insurance of 6% is being absorbed by SECEP
- The projected increase in other insurance costs of 74% is due to Workers' Comp Insurance
- A 1.66% increase to the employer contribution to VRS
- A reduction in overall ADM for FY2017-18 of 57 students
- An overall reduction in personnel positions of 21 from attrition, retirement, and reassignment

The major influences on the 2017-18 budget are due to declining ADM, employee compensation increase, increase in Workers' Compensation costs, increase in health insurance, and an increase in employer VRS retirement benefit costs.

Mr. Sadler stated that the large decline in the Autism Spectrum Program (ASP) is due to an increased capacity in our larger school divisions within their internal special education programs and personnel to serve the unique and individualized needs of this student population. SECEP views this as a positive as it keeps students with autism served within an instructional environment that is less restrictive than SECEP.

Norfolk Public Schools, SECEP's fiscal agent, completed their 2016-17 Salary Compensation Study using Hampton Roads School Districts, Richmond-Petersburg Area School Districts, and local governments as comparison. The study indicated that NPS compensation is competitive. The recommendation of the Study was to begin aligning personnel on the existing salary schedules in comparison to their years of experience. Norfolk is planning to realign their staff on their current salary schedules. Norfolk is not proposing an overall salary increase to their salary schedules.

Mr. Sadler stated in looking at the NPS Salary Study in the development of the proposed budget, SECEP felt that the Study supported no longer utilizing an adjustment to teacher salaries to be competitive. The adjustment that was added to SECEP teacher salaries was based on FY2009 data, The SECEP Board approved utilizing 100% of the difference between the NPS salary and the average of the Virginia Beach and Chesapeake salaries at each step. For the 2017-2018 FY, SECEP will provide salary/wage compensation increases by moving staff one or more steps on the respective NPS Salary Schedule. Mr. Sadler stated that it will be an average of a 1.9% increase in salary for all of the teachers. In combining the teacher salary schedules with the classified and administrative salary schedules, the increase overall will be on an average 2.5%.

SECEP will continue the \$1000 bonus to teachers and instructional classified personnel in recognition of working with challenging and unique student populations.

Mr. Sadler explained the increase in Workers' Comp costs:

- SECEP is insured through VACORP
- SECEP is a unique entity for the VACORP Workers' Comp Pool
- VACORP recognizes that SECEP works with challenging students who exhibit behaviors that can lead to work place injury for our personnel
- SECEP's premiums have not matched the payout of claims and has caused concern with the continuation of SECEP in the VACORP Workers' Comp Pool

- VACORP has worked with SECEP to be able to keep us in their Workers' Comp Pool by calculating a premium utilizing the highest modification rate allowed and then applying a deductible of up to \$1000 to be paid against each claim that SECEP would pay in addition to our premium for the 2016-2017 FY
- For the 2017-2018 FY, the deductible amount will go to \$1,500
- VACORP has agreed to cap our out of pocket costs for the premium and the deductibles at \$387,000 for FY2018
- SECEP has increased its overall insurance costs for FY2018 to \$400,000

Mr. Sadler stated that this is still an on-going process and that Norfolk Public Schools will be presenting their budget to the city council for final approval in May.

Mr. Sadler stated that the final approval of the SECEP 2017-2018 School Year Budget will take place at the May 31, 2017 meeting.

2017-2018 JOINT BOARD MEETING DATES:

The dates for the SECEP Joint Board Meetings 2017-2018 were established:

Wednesday, October 4, 2017

Wednesday, February 7, 2018

Wednesday, March 28, 2018

Wednesday, May 30, 2018

A motion to accept the dates for the joint board meetings was made by Mr. Thomas Mercer and seconded by Mrs. Carolyn Weems. (Ayes 6, Nays 0). Motion carried.

JOINT BOARD ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

None.

PERSONNEL DOCKET:

A motion was made by Mr. Robert Holt and seconded by Ms. Angelia Allen to accept and approve the Personnel Docket as presented. (Ayes 6, Nays 0). Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next meeting of the SECEP Joint Board will be held on Wednesday, May 31, 2017.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



David B. Sadler
Clerk of the Board

APPROVED:


Judith Brooks-Buck, Chairperson