

SOUTHEASTERN COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
(SECEP)
MINUTES OF MEETING
SEPTEMBER 28, 2022

The Southeastern Cooperative Educational Programs (SECEP) held its Joint Board Meeting on Wednesday, September 28, 2022, at the Smithfield Building in Norfolk, VA.

PRESENT: Board Members: Rev. Thomas Mercer, Mr. Robert Holt, Mr. Carlos Clanton, Mr. Vernon Tillage Jr., Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck, Mrs. Kimberly Melnyk

ABSENT: Board Members: Mr. Michael Vines, Mr. William Worsham,

PRESENT: Committee of Superintendents: Dr. Jared Cotton, Dr. Theo Cramer, Dr. Sharon Brydsong, Mrs. Pamela Battle-Hardy for Dr. Elie Bracy III, Dr. John Gordon III (via zoom), Mrs. Roni Myers-Daub for Dr. Aaron Spence

ABSENT: Committee of Superintendents: Dr. Tamara Sterling, Dr. Elie Bracy III, Dr. Gwendolyn Shannon

PRESENT: SECEP Staff: Mrs. Laura Armstrong, Ms. Neysha Pearson

The Joint Board Meeting was called to order at 12:34 p.m.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Mercer asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the May 25, 2022, Joint Board meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Tillage and was seconded by Dr. Brooks-Buck. Motion carried. (Ayes 6, Nays 0)

Mr. Mercer asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Called Joint Board meeting held on June 29, 2022. A motion was made by Dr. Brooks-Buck and seconded by Mr. Tillage. Motion carried. (Ayes 6, Nays 0)

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Mr. Mercer reminded the Board that as previously approved during the May 25, 2022, Joint Board meeting, he would continue as the Chairperson, and Dr. Brooks-Buck would continue as the Vice-Chairperson through January 01, 2023, due to the changes in the election procedures for the November elections.

Mrs. Armstrong presented the Election of Officers slate:

Executive Officer: Dr. Jared Cotton
Chairperson: Mr. Thomas Mercer
Vice Chairperson: Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck
Clerk: Mrs. Laura Armstrong

Deputy Clerk: Ms. Neysha Pearson
Agent: Dr. Sharon Byrdsong
Deputy Agent: Mr. Steven Jenkins

Mr. Mercer asked for a motion to approve the slate of officers. A motion was made by Dr. Brooks-Buck and seconded by Mr. Tillage. Motion carried. (Ayes 6, Nays 0)

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

None.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

Mr. Cotton stated that the Committee of Superintendents met earlier and supported the items Mrs. Armstrong intended to bring in front of the Board (i.e., a one-time bonus for SECEP staff, the decompression proposal, and the Safety Project at Renaissance Academy).

Mrs. Armstrong asked the Board for \$90,000 from the Carryover funds to fund GASB45.

Mr. Mercer called for a motion to approve the request. A motion was made by Dr. Brooks-Buck and seconded by Mr. Tillage. Motion carried. (Ayes 6, Nays 0)

Mrs. Armstrong petitioned the Board to approve a one-time bonus of \$1,000 for all SECEP staff hired as of October 01, 2022. Mr. Mercer addressed concerns about the language used when presenting the bonus to staff to manage staff expectations versus the amount staff receives.

Mrs. Armstrong presented to the Board the gross, net, and total costs of possible bonuses ranging from \$1,000-\$1,500 (gross). Mr. Mercer asked what the gross amount would be for staff to net a bonus of \$1,000. Mrs. Armstrong replied that it would be \$1,550.

Mr. Mercer asked if anyone would like to make a motion to approve a one-time bonus of \$1,550 for SECEP staff. A motion was made by Dr. Brooks-Buck and seconded by Mrs. Melnyk. Motion carried. (Ayes 6, Nays 0)

Mrs. Armstrong presented her decompression proposal. To support the cost of giving approximately 209 SECEP staff a 2% salary increase (total cost is roughly \$300,000), Mrs. Armstrong reviewed current staffing needs and openings. It was decided to freeze some positions and restructure other positions.

Mr. Mercer opened the floor to questions. Dr. Byrdsong asked if SECEP coordinated with Norfolk Public Schools or another third-party contractor to come up with the cost/sustainability of the decompression proposal. Mrs. Armstrong answered in the negative. Ms. Armstrong discussed continuing to align SECEP's pay scales with Norfolk Public Schools' pay scales. Dr. Byrdsong suggested that SECEP's Finance Coordinator work with its Norfolk Public Schools counterpart to discuss the criteria around the decompression proposal to verify the number of staff eligible to receive a 2% salary increase. Dr. Brooks-Buck suggested tabling the discussion until the next Board meeting so that both finance departments can meet. Mr. Clanton put forth a motion to adopt the recommendation to align the affected SECEP employees, in alignment with the NPS model for Phase I compression in the amount of roughly \$300,000; when both finance departments (SECEP & NPS) have spoken, and eligibility is verified the decompression proposal

for SECEP employees can move forward. Dr. Brooks-Buck seconded the motion. Motion carried. (Ayes 6, Nays 0)

Mrs. Armstrong requested using \$7,108 from the Long-Term Project Fund to install a new security camera at the SECEP entrance of Renaissance Academy. A motion to approve the request was made by Dr. Brooks-Buck and was seconded by Mrs. Melnyk. Motion carried. (Ayes 6, Nays 0)

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Mrs. Armstrong presented a PowerPoint to the Board that covered the following topics:

STUDENT FOCUS:

Mrs. Armstrong discussed changes implemented within Project SEARCH. SECEP Project SEARCH has established a relationship with Sentara healthcare systems and has transitioned from Maryview Medical Center to Sentara Leigh Hospital. Project SEARCH has also broadened its applicant pool and has had some Re-ED participants.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT:

SECEP plans to use resources provided by VDOE to train staff in cultural competency. Leadership at SECEP and ODU have developed a Core Foundations of Behaviors Curriculum. The curriculum includes 8 video modules on program and classroom structure, antecedent strategies, prompting, and reinforcement delivery. Implementation of the curriculum started SY 21-22 and is expected to continue in the current school year. All classrooms will receive at least one monthly informal observation so that classroom staff receives regular feedback on their performance.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

SECEP participated in the nationwide vendor fair Surfer's Healing. Students had the opportunity to participate as well.

Students will be hosting two plant sales this October. The first plant sale will be held on October 21, 2022, at the greenhouse at Renaissance Academy; the second sale will be held on October 29, 2022, at the greenhouse at SECEP's Chesapeake Center.

SECEP will also participate in ODU's research project to support Teacher Assistants in the Teacher Development Program and first-year Teachers.

STRATEGIC PLANNING:

Leadership at SECEP will be developing a new Strategic Plan that will go into 2028.

ENROLLMENT & PERSONNEL REPORTS:

Mrs. Armstrong reviewed the current staffing numbers, the racial composition of staff, and the reasons for professional staff leaving SECEP.

Mrs. Armstrong also reviewed the enrollment information on each program.

SECEP LOCATIONS:

Mrs. Armstrong stated that an updated list of SECEP locations was included in the 2022-2023 school year board packets.

PERSONNEL DOCKET:

Mrs. Armstrong read the MOTION FOR GOING INTO CLOSED SESSION. A motion to enter a closed session was made by Dr. Brooks-Buck and seconded by Mr. Clanton. Motion carried. (Ayes 5, Nays 0)

Mrs. Armstrong read A RESOLUTION OF CERTIFICATION OF THE CLOSED SESSION OF SEPTEMBER 28, 2022.

A motion to end the closed session was made by Dr. Brooks-Buck and seconded by Mr. Clanton. Motion carried. (Ayes 5, Nays 0)

Mr. Mercer asked for a motion to accept and approve the personnel docket. A motion was made by Mr. Clanton and was seconded by Dr. Brooks-Buck. Motion carried. (Ayes 5, Nays 0)


NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next meeting of the SECEP Joint Board will be held on Wednesday, February 1, 2023, at 12:30 p.m., at the Smithfield Building in Norfolk, VA.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:46 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,


Laura W. Armstrong,
Clerk of the Board

APPROVED:



Mr. Thomas Mercer
Chairperson