

**APPROVED MINUTES
SOUTHEASTERN COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
JOINT BOARD MEETING
SEPTEMBER 27, 2023**

The SECEP Joint Board ("Board") convened on September 27, 2023, at 12:00 pm at the SECEP Administrative office and virtually. Attending the meeting were:

Joint Board Members:

Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck	Suffolk Public Schools	Vice Chair
Mr. Mike Lamonea*	Chesapeake City Public Schools	
Mr. Carlos Clanton*	Norfolk Public Schools	
Mrs. Quniana Futrell*	Portsmouth Public Schools	
Mrs. Lynn Bradley*	Southampton Public Schools	
Mrs. Kimberly Melnyk	Virginia Beach City Public Schools	

(*) virtual

Superintendents:

Dr. Jared Cotton	Chesapeake City Public Schools	Executive Officer
Dr. Sharon Byrdsong	Norfolk Public Schools	
Dr. Elie Bracy III*	Portsmouth Public Schools	
Dr. Donald Robertson	Virginia Beach City Public Schools	

(*) virtual

SECEP Staff:

Mrs. Laura Armstrong	Executive Director
Mrs. Edna Felton	Finance Coordinator
Ms. Neysha Pearson	Executive Assistant

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice Chairwoman Dr. Brooks-Buck called the meeting to order at 12:32 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Dr. Brooks-Buck requested a motion to approve the minutes from the May 24, 2023, meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Clanton and seconded by Mrs. Lynn Bradley. The motion carried. (Ayes 5, Nays 0, Abstentions 1)

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

None.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

Dr. Cotton stated that the Committee of Superintendents met earlier and discussed SECEP's request to carry over funds. If the Board approves the request, the funds will cover the cost of replacing aging technology equipment and relocating the SECEP office. Mrs. Armstrong will

present additional details in her report to the Board. The Superintendents support the request to carry over funds.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Request to Carry Over Funds:

Mrs. Armstrong presented SECEP's request to carry over \$438,550 from FY 2023 to FY 2024 for consideration by the Board. If approved, \$288,550 of the carryover funds will be designated to replace aging technology equipment, including laptops, desktops, iPads, monitors, and docking stations. Up to \$150,000 of the carryover funds will be used to support one-time expenses related to relocating the administrative office building on January 1, 2024. Unexpended funds will be returned to divisions.

As discussed in a previous Board meeting, the relocation is expected to result in rent and overhead savings. Carryover funds will cover the cost of movers, furniture and equipment replacement, and security measures. Security measures include access control, keyless entry, and cyber locks for server protection. An additional air conditioner will be added to the server room to prevent overheating and potential replacement costs.

Mrs. Armstrong noted Dr. Byrdsong's request at the Committee of Superintendents' meeting for information about a previous request to use carryover funds to purchase technology equipment. Mrs. Armstrong stated that she researched the matter between meetings. The Board approved a carryover of \$285,000 from FY 2020 to FY 2021 for one-time technology and safety expenditures related to COVID-19 on September 20, 2020. Technology expenditures included the purchase of 660 Chromebooks and accessories for the devices and web cameras for existing devices that lacked video capability (approximately \$182,000). Safety expenditures included the purchase of personal protective equipment, sanitation supplies, movable screens, and sneeze guards to support staff and students participating in in-person learning (approximately \$105,000).

Mrs. Armstrong also noted Dr. Byrdsong's request at the Committee of Superintendents' meeting for the amount of Norfolk Public Schools' contribution to the carryover request. Mrs. Armstrong presented a chart delineating each school division's monetary contribution and proportion of the request. Contributions are based on the percentage of revenue by division. If the request is approved, Norfolk Public Schools' contribution will be \$49,117.60, which is 11.2% of the \$438,550 request.

Mrs. Kimberly Melnyk asked for clarification regarding the Superintendents' approval status. Mrs. Armstrong affirmed the Superintendents' recommendation for approval to use the carryover funds.

Dr. Brooks-Buck asked the Board if there were any questions regarding the request for carryover funds. There were none.

Dr. Brooks-Buck called for a motion to approve the request for carryover funds. A motion was made by Mrs. Melnyk and seconded by Mr. Clanton. The motion carried. (6 Ayes, 0 Nays)

Enrollment Report:

Mrs. Armstrong presented current and budgeted enrollment and pending referrals by program.

Personnel Report:

Mrs. Armstrong informed the Board of the updated format of the Personnel Report. The format was updated to reflect alignment with the Annual School Report and MUNIS.

Mrs. Armstrong called attention to the Staff Category Key. Teaching positions are now categorized by the number of months in the contract (Teacher-10, Teacher-11, and Teacher-12). Teacher job titles are listed under each. Mrs. Armstrong provided examples of Teacher-11 job titles such as Reading Specialist, School Counselor, and Teacher Specialist. Teacher Specialists are master-level teachers who support summer programming during the 11th month of the contract. Teacher Specialists work in the classroom supporting staff and students during the regular school year.

Locations and Facilities:

Mrs. Armstrong reported that SECEP worked with Special Education Directors last year to consolidate classrooms in comprehensive schools. This action enabled SECEP to cluster classrooms and better leverage resources.

Walk-through metal detectors were added at the Norfolk and Suffolk centers; one additional walk-through metal detector was added at the Chesapeake center. All centers received updated handheld metal detector wands. SECEP is beginning to replace walkie-talkies operating on analog frequencies with two-way communication devices that use digital frequencies.

SECEP applied for a Virginia Department of Education School Security Grant to recoup security equipment expenditures. Additional internal and external cameras will be purchased for centers if funds are awarded.

Office of Civil Rights Review:

Mrs. Armstrong updated the Board on the progress of the review. SECEP submitted the third revision of the proposed procedures on seclusion and restraint on October 25, 2023. Submissions are based on model procedures crafted by Sands Anderson. The review process is still underway, with the hope of reaching an agreement soon.

Initial student reviews for compensatory services were submitted on June 30, 2023. The next set of reviews will be submitted on October 16, 2023. On-going monitoring is pending approval of procedures on seclusion and restraint.

Dr. Brooks-Buck asked Mrs. Armstrong if the students came from the same program type. Mrs. Armstrong responded that data shows variability across programs. Some students model appropriate behaviors upon entering the program and display behavioral bursts before responding to the structure of SECEP's programs. Other students engage in high rates of behavior upon entering the program. Rates of behavior decrease as the students begin responding to programming.

Strategic Plan Launch:

SECEP launched its Strategic Plan, Pathway to 2028, on September 15, 2023.

JOINT BOARD ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Melnyk shared positive feedback on her experience visiting SECEP classrooms at Windsor Woods Elementary School. Dr. Donald Robertson recalled positive experiences with SECEP as a Virginia Beach City Public Schools principal. He expressed appreciation for the services SECEP staff provide to students.

PERSONNEL DOCKET:

The personnel docket was provided to the Board. The Coordinator of Instruction and Program Improvement retired in June 2023. The position remains open. Two Teacher-11 contracts were extended by one month, creating two Teacher-12 positions for the 2023-2024 school year to maintain the duties previously handled by the Coordinator of Instruction and Program Improvement. A closed session was not required.

ADJOURNMENT:

Dr. Brooks-Buck adjourned the meeting at 12:59 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Laura W. Armstrong,
Clerk of the Board

APPROVED:



Mr. Thomas Mercer
Chairperson