

Maine Learning Innovations

Minutes for a Meeting of the Board of Directors held August 20, 2024

Pursuant to email and public website notices, a virtual meeting of the Board of Maine Learning Innovations was convened on Zoom at 3:00 PM, August 20th, 2024. Board members attending were Donna Pelletier, Stacey Blanchard, Nick Gannon, Tina Meserve, and Susan Walters. A quorum was present.

Attending from Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) were Melinda Browne, Don Fournier, Christina O’Grady, Melissa Dubovik, Chelsea Osgood, Jillian Dearborn, and Stephanie Emery.

Attending from Stride was Todd McIntire.

Opening Items.

Approval of Minutes. Nick motioned to approve the minutes of the Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) Governing Board Business Meeting of July 16th, 2024. Susan seconded. All in favor, so moved.

Finance Report.

Jennifer Hight was unable to attend the meeting. Jennifer provided the spreadsheet and FY24 Quarter-4 (Q4) Financial Narrative, which were distributed to the board. Dr. Browne shared the narrative on behalf of Jennifer Hight. MEVA ended the year ending June 30th, 2024, with a surplus.

2023-2024 Financial Summary/Narrative: MEVA shows preliminary/unaudited surplus of \$642,615 for the year ended June 30, 2024. We have utilized \$554,649 in ESSER III revenue for this fiscal year. These funds were used mainly to pay salaries for learning loss recovery, guidance services and summer school, and purchased technology services and equipment. Salaries and benefits remain our largest expense. As of June 30, 2024, we had 58 employees made up of 11.5 Administrative positions and 46.5 Teachers/Ed-Techs. We will have adjustments to these reports as we complete the reconciliations of the accounts in preparation of the audit. Our audit will be conducted by Wipfli and is scheduled to take place the week of October 7th.

MEVA’s revenues are primarily spent on salaries. MEVA’s financial audit is coming the week of Oct 7th. FY24 Q4 financials are reported via Epicenter ahead of the renewal. Donna makes the point that the commission may not be pleased with the amount of surplus we end up with. Dr. Browne there MEVA may experience funding decreases soon; there are unforeseen political impacts that could also play a factor. Dr. Browne states, it is good that we have a surplus to help with any of the financial decreases and to cover any salaries that could be impacted by them. Dr. Browne mentions that MEVA is very disciplined in how money is spent and on what it is spent. Unfortunately, we are sometimes unable to satisfy everyone at the same time.

Donna needed clarity on “long term liability”, in the financials that was shared with the board. Jillian said it referred to employees who had over forty (40) hours banked vacation time prior to the recent policy change.

Nick motioned to approve the FY24 Quarter-4 Financials. Stacey seconded. All in favor, so moved.

Administration. Dr. Melinda Browne presented the Head of School Report.

SY-2024/2025 Launch focus:

- Teacher/Support Teacher Preparation and Training: Two-weeks, beginning August 12th.
- New Teacher Evaluation System.
- Teacher practices.
- MTSS.
- Advisory.
- Products trainings.
- State compliance training (Vector platform).
- Hosted First Process Improvement Meeting, Monday, August 19th.
- First Day of Classes is Monday, August 26th.

Dr. Browne gave a review of the in-person staff day, which was today. Teachers came in person to the MEVA suite, to spend quality time together and to establish bonds. Teachers officially started on August 12th. Teachers have already begun training on the new teacher evaluation system.

Dr. Browne said the advisory groups also command attention and training and are super important to the success of our virtual model. All faculty were completing their state compliance training on the Vector Training platform. We kicked off the academic year with our first Process Improvement (PI) meeting. Thirty-three (33) meetings were scheduled for every Monday at 3:00 pm. The PI meetings were full of various materials and presentations, recorded and stored/posted for faculty’s reference.

Curriculum Mapping Committee Update:

- Our first committee meeting is on 9/26 at 3:00 pm via Zoom.
- The Curriculum Mapping template is now updated to include the new sections.
- We have a rubric to guide teachers’ map extension efforts. We have a projected completion schedule. See the following information:

A	B
Unit Summary	Brief description of the unit and what the students will be expected to learn.
Scope & Sequence (Timeline)	A scope and sequence is a summary of what is to be taught, the sequence in which it will be taught, and the syllabus outcomes that may be addressed in the intended learning. This should be a linked document in the first unit of your curriculum map. Example: Scope and Sequence
Assessment Description (Per Assessment)	A description of what standards are being assessed and how they are being assessed. For example, a student or parent should be able to say, oh I'm going to do fictional reading and understanding character development and plot. That will be what the teacher assesses in my final product. Ask yourself, "does the assessment truly measure the standards listed for the lesson?" If the answer is "No" - adjust the standards listed for the lesson.
Pacing (Per Unit)	Within the platform, indicate the pacing per unit. This is also shown on the scope and sequence. Students and parents should be able to know how long it will take to get through each unit. This is a fluid document, the pacing may need to be adjusted based on the students. However, there should be a starting expectation.

A	B	C	D	E
Criteria	Needs Improvement (1)	Developing (2)	Proficient (3)	Exemplary (4)
Unit Summary	Summary is vague or missing. Learning expectations are unclear or not stated.	Brief summary provided, but lacks detail. Learning expectations are partially stated.	Clear summary of the unit provided. Most learning expectations are stated.	Comprehensive summary of the unit. All learning expectations are clearly and concisely stated.
Scope & Sequence (Timeline)	No scope and sequence provided, or it's incomplete.	Basic scope and sequence provided, but lacks detail or clear sequencing.	Detailed scope and sequence provided with clear sequencing.	Comprehensive scope and sequence with clear, logical sequencing.
Assessment Description	Assessment descriptions are vague or missing. No clear connection to standards.	Basic description of assessments provided. Some connection to standards, but not clearly articulated.	Clear description of assessments with evident connection to standards. Most parents/students would understand what's being assessed.	Detailed, clear assessment descriptions with explicit connections to standards. All parents/students would easily understand what's being assessed and how.
Pacing (Per Unit)	No pacing information provided, or it's severely inadequate.	Basic pacing information provided, but lacks detail or clarity. Not clearly indicated on the platform or scope and sequence.	Clear pacing information provided for each unit. Indicated on the platform and scope and sequence. Provides a general expectation of time required.	Comprehensive, flexible pacing information provided for each unit. Clearly indicated on both the platform and scope and sequence. Provides detailed time expectations with notes on potential adjustments.
Standards Alignment	No clear alignment with educational standards, or standards are missing entirely.	Some attempt at aligning with standards, but connections are weak or inconsistent. Many relevant standards are missing.	Most content is aligned with appropriate educational standards. Some minor gaps or inconsistencies may exist.	All content is clearly and consistently aligned with appropriate educational standards. Alignment is explicit, comprehensive, and enhances the curriculum.
Ease of Understand and Completeness	Curriculum is difficult to understand or follow. Many essential elements are missing or poorly explained.	Some parts of the curriculum are clear, but others are confusing. Some essential elements are present, but there are significant gaps.	Most of the curriculum is easy to understand. Most essential elements are present and well-explained, with only minor omissions.	Entire curriculum is clear, logical, and easy to follow. All essential elements are present, thoroughly explained, and well-organized.

Due: October Board Meeting

	Summary of Each Unit	Scope & Sequence (Timeline)	Assessment Description (Per Assessment)	Pacing (Per Unit)
7 Math	Due 8/23	Due 8/30	Due 9/13	Due 9/27
7 English	Due 8/23	Due 8/30	Due 9/13	Due 9/27
7 US History 1	Due 8/23	Due 8/30	Due 9/13	Due 9/27
7 Science	Due 8/23	Due 8/30	Due 9/13	Due 9/27
7 Art	Due 8/23	Due 8/30	Due 9/13	Due 9/27

Due: January Board Meeting

	Summary of Each Unit	Scope & Sequence (Timeline)	Assessment Description (Per Assessment)	Pacing (Per Unit)
8 Math	Due 10/25	Due 11/8	Due 11/22	Due 12/13
8 English	Due 10/25	Due 11/8	Due 11/22	Due 12/13
8 US History 2	Due 10/25	Due 11/8	Due 11/22	Due 12/13
8 Science	Due 10/25	Due 11/8	Due 11/22	Due 12/13
8 Art	Due 10/25	Due 11/8	Due 11/22	Due 12/13

Due: February Board Meeting				
	Summary of Each Unit	Scope & Sequence (Timeline)	Assessment Description (Per Assessment)	Pacing (Per Unit)
Algebra I	Due 12/13	Due 1/10	Due 1/24	Due 2/7
Algebra I Essentials	Due 12/13	Due 1/10	Due 1/24	Due 2/7
English Foundations I	Due 12/13	Due 1/10	Due 1/24	Due 2/7
English Foundations I Essentials	Due 12/13	Due 1/10	Due 1/24	Due 2/7
Earth Science	Due 12/13	Due 1/10	Due 1/24	Due 2/7
Geography	Due 12/13	Due 1/10	Due 1/24	Due 2/7
Introduction to Art	Due 12/13	Due 1/10	Due 1/24	Due 2/7
Physical Education & Health	Due 12/13	Due 1/10	Due 1/24	Due 2/7
Due: March Board Meeting				
	Summary of Each Unit	Scope & Sequence (Timeline)	Assessment Description (Per Assessment)	Pacing (Per Unit)
Geometry	Due 1/10	Due 1/24	Due 2/7	Due 2/28
Geometry Essentials	Due 1/10	Due 1/24	Due 2/7	Due 2/28
English Foundations II	Due 1/10	Due 1/24	Due 2/7	Due 2/28
English Foundations II Essentials	Due 1/10	Due 1/24	Due 2/7	Due 2/28
Biology	Due 1/10	Due 1/24	Due 2/7	Due 2/28
Biology Essentials	Due 1/10	Due 1/24	Due 2/7	Due 2/28
Personal Finance	Due 1/10	Due 1/24	Due 2/7	Due 2/28
Civics	Due 1/10	Due 1/24	Due 2/7	Due 2/28

Charter Contract Renewal Progress:

- MEVA’s draft renewal contract was sent to you for review. Please share your feedback if you have any.
- Donna and Melinda will sign the application and submit it via Epicenter on 8/30.
- The MCSC will meet with focus groups and observe classes on 9/4. We are preparing for their virtual visit.
- The MEVA Public Hearing for Charter Contract Renewal is on 9/26 at 1:00 – 2:30 pm via Zoom.

Dr. Browne shared the SY-2024/2025 assessment calendar. MEVA administers the Accuplacer, I-Ready algebra, NWEA MAP Growth math, reading, and language usage (fall, winter, and spring), as well as state assessments: Maine Through Year (MTY) and Science. The MDOE split the science window for the 8th and 11th grades this Spring. Dr. Browne reported that the commission decided recently that all the charter schools will be required to do both NWEA growth assessments and the MTY exams. The MTY was not giving the growth information needed which they needed.

Donna asked if MEVA would have to do site rentals three (3) times per year now. Dr. Browne confirmed and stated that MEVA would make it work.

Dr. Browne said the curriculum mapping committee is now established. The first meeting is on 9/26 at 3:00 pm in zoom. Teachers were pulled aside to update their maps, using the new template, over these past couple weeks. MEVA outlined a plan for grades 7, 8 and high school. Dr. Browne stated we would like to have those maps up for review and approval in October. Donna said, it looks like MEVA is going to be quite busy this coming year.

Dr. Browne discussed the Literacy Grant. MEVA applied for last school year and was awarded funds. This project pulled in literacy standards, allowing teachers to discover ways to utilize skill-building ideas in their classes, including math, science, social studies, English, and other classes.

Our presenter, Melissa Dubovik, high school math teacher, was among a total of fourteen (14) faculty who participated in this literacy grant project. Melissa discussed unpacking standards; it was nice to break things down and think outside of the normal course content. Melissa started to add open response questions in her math worksheets and assessments to give students more practice and confidence. Melissa planned to find ways for students to explain their understanding of the concepts that they will be using in geometry. The literacy grant team reviewed students' NWEA MAP Growth scores and looked for areas where students need to grow and achieve.

Donna and Tina thanked Melissa and the team for working throughout the summer and for the wonderful presentation.

Dr. Browne sent the board the draft charter contract renewal for their review. Dr. Browne said that Donna can go in and sign the application after the board meeting in Epicenter. Dr. Browne reported that the application cannot be submitted until August 30th. Dr. Browne has talked through the process with Amy Allen and Lana Ewing at the commission. The one area MEVA knew needed work was in math proficiency. MEVA was already working on it and the commission recognized that.

Dr. Browne said we have a history of identifying deficient areas and closing the gaps. We appreciate the board and the faculty working together to accomplish our strategic goals.

Dr. Browne reports that Amy and Lana will be observing classes, interviewing parents, students, and teachers, soon as part of the renewal process. September 26th is the public hearing from 1:00 -2:30 pm. We are getting the announcement out to parents. Everyone is invited to speak and put in a word about MEVA. The Public Hearing will be held in Zoom and will be accessible to everyone. If individuals want to come and participate in our MEVA suite then we can provide that accommodation.

FY-2024/2025 Enrollment Report:

There were thirty-six (36) new students accepted last week. By end of day today we will have an additional ten (10). Meghan Crosby projects that we will meet the enrollment target (460 students) by the end of the week.

Grade	New	Returning	Not Registered	Total
7	29	0	0	29
8	13	20	0	33
9	26	54	-6	80
10	44	71	-4	115
11	36	72	-2	108
12	18	60	-2	78
Total	166	277	-14	443

Enrollment Goal	460
Available Seats	17
Active Applications (Confirmed "yes" Seat Offer Responses)	74

During MEVA and Stride Enrollment meetings, it was identified that the enrollment demand was stronger now than back during the pandemic (Covid-19). There was traction through word of mouth, Dr. Browne stated. The enrollment count is 443 currently and the enrollment goal is 460 for this year. The Three-year budget plan/projection indicated the need for enrollment to be at least 460.

Donna asked about the 74 active, in-progress, applications. Dr. Browne explained that we can and plan to accept more than our target enrollment to account for the typical attrition.

Governance.

Dr. Browne reviewed the outcomes of the (Prior Year) MEVA FY24 Board Goals, approved on August 15, 2023:

Goal 1: In order to support administrators and staff to provide a high-quality learning experience for the MEVA student population, *all* School Board members will participate in the minimal professional development opportunities provided by MCSC per MEVA's performance framework. **Met.**

Goal 2: The MEVA School Board will ensure the school provides a high-quality learning experience by ensuring the development of a rigorous program of studies. **Met.**

Goal 3: The MEVA School Board will provide a continuous learning experience for students by engaging in the school's renewal process to begin in the Spring of 2024. **Met.**

Goal 4: As the Maine legislature has enacted a new law specific to teacher salaries, the School Board will ensure the development of an updated regional competitive salary scale survey. **Met and ongoing.**

Donna presented the Proposed MEVA SCHOOL BOARD GOALS School Year 2024-2025

Goal 1: In order to support administrators and staff to provide a high quality learning experience for the MEVA student population, all School Board members will participate in the required professional development opportunities provided by MCSC per MEVA's performance framework, June, 2025.

Goal 2: By September, 2025, the MEVA Board will have a sustainable governing board of 6-8 diverse members who bring the needed skills to the board to ensure effective governance.

Goal 3: By August, 2025, the MEVA Board will conduct effective oversight of the academic program and ensure that all members understand where the organization is on its path to closing any achievement gaps.

Goal 4: By August, 2025, each MEVA Board member will exhibit responsibility for attaining the goals of the board.

Tina recommended adjusting the wording “minimal” to “required” on the first goal. Tina stated that the commission should provide details on what is required this year.

Dr. Browne and Donna will be meeting with the commission soon and it will be a good time to ask them about expected board training.

Tina motioned to approve the SY-2024/2025 board goals. Susan seconded. All in favor, so moved.

The board reviewed the EBCA: Crisis Plan, Emergency Management Plan, and Contract with Maine General for School Physician/Nurse, as an annual compliance exercise.

Public Discussion.

Dr. Browne shared upcoming policies for the board to review/approve in September.

- Intellectual Property.
- Procurement. There is a federal expanded policy that schools are adopting which we plan to share.
- Pest Management (IPM) Policy – updated.

Dr. Browne announced that September was the annual board of directors meeting where the election of officers and members would take place.

Adjournment.

Tina motioned to adjourn. Nick seconded. So moved by Donna. The meeting was adjourned at 3:53 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Emery and Dr. Melinda Browne
Secretary pro tempore