

BrightWorks

2 Pine Tree Drive, Arden Hills, MN 55112

Executive Board Meeting

April 16, 2025

Members Present:

Carol Bomben, Community Representative

Andrea Cuene, Community Representative

Kacy Deschene, Electoral District 1

Jessica Ellison, (Virtual) Electoral District 1

Karen Gabler, Electoral District 3

Bill Harvey, Community Representative

Sarah Johansen, Electoral District 4

Deborah M. Pauly, Electoral District 4

Members Absent:

None

Staff Present:

Ingrid Aasan, Director of Special Education, Regional Low Incidence Facilitator

Kim Baartman, COMPASS Regional Math Lead

Gina Boots, Teacher & Apprenticeship Liaison

Colleen Feller, Director of SparkPath & Director of Human Resources

Derek Francis, COMPASS Culturally Responsive Instructional Leadership Regional Lead

Lydia Lindsoe, COMPASS Culturally Responsive Instructional Leadership Regional Lead

Dawn Resch, COMPASS Regional Literacy Lead

John Schultz, Executive Director

Angela Skrade, Executive Assistant, Office Manager, Executive Board Support (Recorder)

Chris Streiff-Oji, Regional COMPASS Director

Tom Wiczorek, Business Manager

Visitors:

Karsten Anderson, St. Francis, Superintendent

Barb Duffrin, Mahtomedi, Superintendent

Eric Hansen, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan, Director of Secondary Education

Louise Hinz, South Washington County, Representative Assembly Member

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Chad Johnson, (Attended Virtually) Shakopee, Representative Assembly Member

Virginia Mancini, St. Louis Park, Representative Assembly Member

Laura Oksnevad, St. Anthony-New Brighton, Representative Assembly Member

Call to Order:

Chair Harvey called the meeting to order at 3:37pm, after a quorum was met.

BrightWorks Meeting Attendee Introductions & Public Input:

BrightWorks Executive Board, and BrightWorks Leadership Team and staff introductions were made. No public was present.

Approval of Agenda:

Chair Harvey called for a motion to approve the agenda.

A motion was made by Ms. Cuene and seconded by Ms. Bomben to approve the agenda as submitted. The motion carried.

Organizational Meeting:

A review of the officer and committee assignments was conducted. Mr. Harvey was nominated to remain Board Chair, Ms. Cuene was nominated to remain Vice Chair, Ms. Pauly was nominated for the position of Board Treasurer, Ms. Gabler was nominated to remain Board Clerk, Ms. Bomben and Ms. Cuene were nominated to remain on the Board Policy Committee and Ms. Johansen was nominated to replace Ms. Ellison on the Board Policy Committee.

Chair Harvey called for a motion to approve the Organizational Meeting.

A motion was made by Ms. Bomben and seconded by Ms. Ellison to approve the Organizational meeting as submitted. The motion carried.

Approval of Election Results:

April 2025 Electoral Representative Assembly Member election results were presented by Executive Director Schultz and Ms. Skrade. The results of the election are:

Electoral District 2 - Laura Oksnevad, St. Anthony-New Brighton School District

Electoral District 3 - Paula Cole, Richfield School District

Chair Harvey called for a motion to approve the Election Results.

A motion was made by Ms. Ellison and seconded by Ms. Pauly to approve the Election Results as submitted. The motion carried.

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Financial Update:

Mr. Wieczorek presented the January, February, and March financial reports. He states that expenditure is higher than revenue, and cash flow has continued to be a challenge, due to the READ Act. He reported the situation has improved somewhat as the state is now getting READ Act reimbursements out sooner, and currently, he is maintaining cash flow.

Mr. Wieczorek followed with an overview of the FY2026 budget, which includes a proposed 2% salary increase, and a slight membership increase. Access to the new Long Term Facilities Maintenance program (formerly Health & Safety) will now be included as part of BrightWorks membership and will no longer require a separate membership fee. A clarification was requested on the proposed membership rates. Mr. Wieczorek elaborated that Associate members will pay a flat fee of \$1,200 for the year. Member districts will pay \$2 per pupil, with the fee capped at \$16k. He confirmed that larger districts will benefit from the cap. He reported the next year's budget will total almost 700k, net and direct, with new programs for Wellness, and Teachers Apprenticeship. He reports he is showing a balanced budget, but he may have a little cushion with Federal and indirect. He states this is just for administration, and that costs will be balanced with state aid.

Questions were answered regarding grant funding and the advance that was provided by the Minnesota Department of Education (MOE). Mr. Wieczorek explained that grant funding is paid on a monthly, or quarterly basis. So, payments are all about timing. He states there have been moments when he was worried about the finances. He prefers to have at least 2 payrolls covered but assured the board we are at that point now. Concerns were raised regarding loss of funding. Mr. Wieczorek shared that half of READ Act is Federally funded, but it is Title 1 funding, so he believes it is safe to assume it will continue this way. He states if there are problems, READ Act staffing would need to be reduced. He discussed the advance and explained that the budget does not reflect cash flow, so the advance does not show up here. He confirmed we will need to pay this back and will be able to do this once MOE has paid the full amount, but he expressed this process will need to begin again in July 2025.

More questions were raised regarding the fund balance. Mr. Wieczorek stated that he is comfortable with the fund balance. He explained it was used a little the previous year, but that we currently have a balanced budget.

He advised that if we continue to have the READ Act, we will need to grow the fund balance by \$400k, and the only way to build this up is by increasing membership fees over time.

Human Resources Update:

Ms. Feller reported in this period there were 6 new hires, 2 staffing reassignments, one staff resignation, one retirement, and one termination. She explained that most new hires were related to the COMPASS program, and that 30-40 interviews were held in the last couple of weeks. This process is ongoing.

Chair Harvey called for a motion to approve the Financial Update.

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A motion was made by Ms. Ellison and seconded by Ms. Deschene to approve the Financial Update as submitted. The motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

Chair Harvey called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

A motion was made by Ms. Gabler and seconded by Ms. Bomben to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted. The motion carried.

Annual Meeting:

The annual meeting began with a round of visitor introductions. Executive Director Schultz gave a brief introduction, sharing that the purpose of the Annual Meeting is for our Representative Assembly Members to learn more about who we are and the services and opportunities BrightWorks provides.

Leadership Team Reports

Executive Director Schultz and Ms. Feller provided an update on the BrightWorks and SparkPath Strategic Plans for the time frame between 2023-2026, the goals that have been met, and the work that continues. Ms. Aasan, Ms. Boots, Ms. Feller, Ms. Resch, Ms. Skrade, and Ms. Streif Oji, shared brief presentations with the board on the programs they oversee. Questions from the board on these programs were answered.

Policy Review:

Executive Director Schultz reviewed Policies 406,412,417,418,419,520, in the first read and 103, 210,405,452, in the second read.

Chair Harvey called for a motion to approve the policy readings.

A motion was made by Ms. Pauly and seconded by Ms. Ellison to approve the review of Policies 406, 412, 417, 418, 419, 520, in the first read and 103, 210, 405, 452, in the second read as submitted. The motion carried.

HOTT Forum:

Discussion was held on a variety of topics, including district administrative hirings, building construction, school openings, strategic planning, bond referendums, handling change in districts, the National landscape, State landscape, and programs being affected by Federal cuts. COMPASS staff provided updates on their work in districts supporting MN equity leaders, Literacy, and schools reaching out for assistance with implementation of updated Math Standards. Information was shared with the board about an upcoming Math Standards event. Chair Harvey thanked Ms. Bomben for her longstanding dedication to the Brightworks Board.

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Other Business:

None

Adjournment:

Chair Harvey called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:37pm

A motion was made by Ms. Gabler and seconded by Ms. Oksnevad to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.



John Schultz, Executive Director


Bill Harvey (Jun 20, 2025 11:46 CDT)

Bill Harvey, Board Chair

Next Meeting Date: June 18, 2025
