



State Education Resource Center (SERC)

MINUTES

SERC Board of Directors Regular Meeting

Monday, April 27, 2015 -- 1:00 p.m.

Meriden Board of Education

22 Liberty Street, 3rd Floor, Meriden, CT

Present: Chairman Mark Benigni, Liz Brown, George Coleman, Jeffrey Leake, Steven McKeever (joined the meeting at 2:33 p.m.), Charlene Russell-Tucker, Thomas Swan, Jr. (joined the meeting at 1:35 p.m.), Jennifer Tooker, Diane Ullman (Ms. Ullman joined the meeting by telephone at 2:10).

Absent: Richard Porth, Jr., Agnes Quinones, and Eileen Ziegler.

Others Present: Ingrid M. Canady, SERC Interim Executive Director; Alfred P. Bruno, SERC General Counsel; Jennifer LeBrun, SERC Executive Assistant, Minute Taker; Wendy Simmons, Ph.D., SERC Assistant Director, Matthew Dugan, SERC Assistant Director, and Janet Zarchen, SERC Consultant.

ITEM #1: Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Benigni at 1:10 p.m.

ITEM #2: Approval of Minutes of the March 30, 2015 regular SERC Board of Directors Meeting

Motion to approve minutes from March 30, 2015 regular meeting.

Motion: Ms. Brown

Second: Ms. Tooker

Vote on Motion:

In favor: 4 (Benigni, Brown, Leake and Tooker)

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 2 (Coleman and Russell-Tucker)

ITEM #3: Presentation by Wendy Simmons, Ph.D., SERC Assistant Director and Janet Zarchen, SERC Consultant

Re: Curriculum & Instruction

An informational presentation was given by Dr. Simmons and Ms. Zarchen who provided information on the Curriculum & Instruction Initiative at SERC. Information was provided on the different content areas that are included in this Initiative. Dr. Simmons discussed the Statewide Para-educator Council and provided information on how SERC collaborates directly with the CT State Department of Education (CSDE) on the Council.

Ms. Canady presented on Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and shared data on the work SERC has done with Conard High School in West Hartford. Mr. Coleman and Chairman Benigni suggested that SERC share its data with CABA

and CAS so that it may be included in their publications. This will showcase the work we are doing in the agency and may also help to generate contracts.

Ms. Zarchen presented on the Analyzing Literacy Data for Tiers of Instruction Project and provided a list participating schools. Ms. Zarchen also shared information on the Leadership and Learning Center/CALI Data Process. There was general discussion.

Item #4: Report from Ingrid M. Canady, SERC Interim Executive Director

A. Fiscal Update

Ms. Canady provided Board Members with a current SERC Income Statement and shared that all contracts with the CSDE have been signed and confirmed. There was conversation around IDEA Funds and the Early Childhood budget for the 2015-16 year. Ms. Canady shared that there could possibly be a significant reduction in IDEA funds as well as a cut in Early Childhood budget.

After general conversation, Board members agreed that the SERC staff need to be informed of the potential decreases in order to properly plan for the 2015-16 year.

B. SERC's Legislative Agenda

Ms. Canady shared that she met with Representative Michelle Cook, Speaker of the House, Brendan Sharkey, and Senator Tony Hwang. At the meetings, Ms. Canady shared as much information about SERC as possible and reported that the meetings were positive and beneficial. Ms. Canady is currently working to schedule meetings with Representative Juan Candelaria, Representative Jason Rojas, Representative David Rutigliano, and Senator Martin Looney. Chairman Benigni added that he felt the meeting with Speaker Sharkey went very well.

C. Fiscal & Finance Administrative Officer/Position Update

Ms. Canady shared that first interviews for the position are scheduled on May 5 and May 8 at SERC. Ms. Canady hopes to have the position filled by the May Board meeting.

Item #5: Executive Session

Motion to enter into Executive Session

Motion: Mr. Coleman

Second: Ms. Brown

Vote on Motion:

In favor: 7 (Benigni, Brown, Coleman, Leake, Swan, Russell-Tucker, Tooker)

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

The Board voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session at 2:20 p.m.

Present in executive session were Board Chair Mark Benigni and members Liz Brown, George Coleman, Jeffrey Leake, Steven McKeever, Charlene Russell-Tucker, Thomas Swan, Jr., Jennifer Tooker, and Diane Ullman (Ms. Ullman joined the Executive Session by telephone). Also invited to go into part of executive session was Ingrid M. Canady, Interim Executive Director.

Motion to exit Executive Session with no motions or actions taken.

Motion: Ms. Brown
Second: Ms. Tooker

Vote on Motion:

In favor: 9 (Benigni, Brown, Coleman, Leake, McKeever, Swan, Russell-Tucker, Tooker and Ullman)
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0

The Board voted unanimously to exit Executive Session at 2:44 p.m.

Dr. Ullman left the meeting at 2:55 p.m.

ITEM #6: Items Requiring Action

A. Medical Benefits/Discussion

Matt Dugan, SERC Assistant Director, shared background on the work SERC has been engaging in with Ovation Benefit Advisors and members of Finance Committee regarding employee benefits.

Mr. Dugan and Ms. Canady presented the recommendations from Ovation Benefits and the cost savings each proposed plan would provide. Ms. Canady asked for approval from the Board to enter into a one year contract so that updated medical benefits can be in place and available to staff by July 1, 2015. There was general discussion.

Motion to approve entering into a one-year Medical Benefit contract.

Motion: Mr. Swan
Second: Ms. Brown

Vote on Motion:

In Favor: 8 (Benigni, Brown, Coleman, Leake, McKeever, Russell-Tucker, Swan and Tooker)

Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously to accept the Finance Committee recommendations regarding medical benefits.

B. Proposed Longevity Stipends

Ms. Canady and members of the Finance Committee shared information on a proposed one-time longevity stipend for all SERC staff members. Ms. Canady reported that the stipends will come out of the revenue budget. There was general discussion.

Motion to approve Longevity Stipend.

Motion: Mr. Leake
Second: Mr. McKeever

Vote on Motion:

In Favor: 8 (Benigni, Brown, Coleman, Leake, McKeever, Russell-Tucker, Swan, and Tooker)
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously to approve Longevity Stipends as presented.

C. Proposed Board Vice-Chair

Motion to approve George A. Coleman as the Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors.

Motion: Mr. Leake
Second: Ms. Brown

Vote on Motion:

In Favor: 8 (Benigni, Brown, Leake, McKeever, Russell-Tucker, Swan and Tooker)
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 1 (Coleman)

Motion carried.

D. Lead Program Committee

Motion to approve George A. Coleman as the Lead of the Program Committee.

Motion: Mr. Swan
Second: Ms. Russell-Tucker

Vote on Motion:

In Favor: 8 (Benigni, Brown, Leake, McKeever, Russell-Tucker, Swan and Tooker)
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 1 (Coleman)

Motion carried.

ITEM #7: Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee

Mr. McKeever reported on the Total Compensation Plan for employees. The plan showcases all of the benefits offered to employees.

It was recommended for the Finance Committee and Operations Committee to review the proposed salary schedule. Once the proposed schedule is reviewed by the committees, it will then be brought back to the full Board of Directors for final approval. There was a general discussion.

Motion to accept the Finance Committee recommendation regarding 403b match.

Motion: Mr. McKeever
Second: Ms. Brown

Vote on Motion:

In Favor: 8 (Benigni, Brown, Coleman, Leake, McKeever, Russell-Tucker, Swan and Tooker)
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Operations Committee – No Report

ITEM #8: Items for Discussion

A. Freedom of Information/Board of Directors Training

It was suggested by General Counsel Alfred P. Bruno that Thomas Hennick from the Office of Governmental Accountability Freedom of Information Commission present to the Board at the May 18 Board of Directors meeting. Approval was given by the Board to Mr. Bruno to see if Mr. Hennick is available to present at the May 18 meeting.

B. "Meet & Greet" Session

The Board of Directors will join the SERC staff for a meet & greet session at the June 22 staff meeting. Board of Directors meeting will begin thereafter at 11:30 a.m.

Mr. Coleman suggested a half-day Board Member Retreat at the end of the fiscal year. This idea will be discussed and explored further at the May Board meeting.

ITEM #9: Adjournment

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 3:49 p.m.

Submitted by:

Jennifer LeBrun, Board Recording Secretary