

Approved 6/26/2020

CONCORD AREA SPECIAL EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

120 Meriam Road, Concord, Massachusetts 01742

Telephone: 978-318-1534

Minutes of CASE Board of Directors Meeting of June 18, 2020

Board Members in attendance (Virtual Meeting):

Peter Light, Acton-Boxborough (dep 1:50 PM)

James O'Shea, Carlisle

Laurie Hunter, Concord, Concord-Carlisle

Linda Dwight, Harvard, Chairperson

Rebecca McFall, Lincoln

Bella Wong, Lincoln-Sudbury

Kelly Clenchy, Littleton (dep 1:32 PM)

Mary Jane Rickson, Maynard (dep 1:55 PM)

Brad Crozier, Sudbury (dep 1:15 PM)

Also in attendance:

Sanchita Banerjee

Russell Dupere

Members of the CASE Community

Andrew Paquette

Ian Rhames, CASE Treasurer

MINUTES:

At 12:22 p.m., Linda Dwight called the meeting to order.

A motion was made by Mary Jane Rickson to approve the minutes of the May 29, 2020 Board of Directors meeting as presented. Bella Wong seconded the motion. A roll call vote took place as follows: Crozier, aye; Rickson, aye; Light, aye, O'Shea, aye; Wong, aye; Hunter, aye; McFall, aye; Clenchy, aye; Dwight, aye.

The Executive Director provided a general update to Board members. CASE ended the SY2019-20 with a program enrollment of 116 students. COVID-19 school closure from March 16th till the end of the school year adversely impacted CASE's student enrollment but this was expected given the circumstances.

Transportation Update: The drivers are furloughed for the summer per Board decision on May 29, 2020. We are reviewing all guidance from the state with regards to transportation safety and cleaning practices to be enacted for a safe return to school be it in summer and/or fall.

Re-Opening Update: The task force for re-entry has been formed. We have had a good representation of individuals from various fields. Teachers, related service professionals, nurses, and all central office administrators are part of this group. We are working on a step by step guide to facilitate re-entry.

Celebration of Students: The Executive Director would like to devote this report to our students who aged out this school year at 22 years of age. The accomplishments of our students graduating are: Tim Callahan, *Acton-Boxborough* and Roy Yu, *Acton-Boxborough*. With the amazing staff's support and guidance, they made it to this juncture. Board members congratulated these students who made this key milestone

and commended all the staff and administrators for their work.

Celebration of Key CASE Members: The Executive Director would like to honor a Board member who is retiring this year following his long-term career in education, Jon Sills, Superintendent in Bedford, has been a key advocate for CASE. His work has been profound, and he will be deeply missed as a significant ally of CASE.

Mary Jane Rickson, Interim Superintendent in Maynard, will be ending her tenure at Maynard this year. Within this one year, Mary Jane has shown strong support of all 5 CASE programs located in her district. Her presence at Board meetings and commitment to CASE is highly valued.

Board members thanked both Jon Sills and Mary Jane Rickson for their work at CASE and wished them the very best as they embark on their next chapter.

Parent Reflection of CASE: The Executive Director included a letter from a parent of a Colebrook student who recently graduated from Colebrook High School. This parent thanked all the staff for all that they have done for her child and family.

Linda Dwight thanked Sanchita Banerjee for her detailed report.

A motion was made by Kelly Clenchy to accept the Personnel Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Laurie Hunter. A roll call vote took place as follows: Light, aye; O'Shea, aye; Hunter, aye; McFall, aye; Wong, aye; Clenchy, aye; Rickson, aye; Crozier, aye; Dwight, aye. The Treasurer's Report was also included in the packet.

Public Comment: Gwen Bertrand, CASE Association Co-President, asked about the reduction in the line item for substitutes in the program budget, and that she was concerned about this reduction. She also asked about the increase in legal fees that was also included in the program budget. Gwen also noted that there is no speech/language pathologist, physical therapist or occupational therapist on the re-entry committee. Karen Levy noted there were several therapists who volunteered to be on the committee.

Sanchita Banerjee indicated that the reduction in the substitute line item was due to the fact that students may not be returning on a full-time basis next year due to COVID-19. She also indicated that there is a physical therapist now on the re-entry committee.

A motion was made by Kelly Clenchy to approve the FY'21 Transportation Budget of \$6,307,862. The motion was seconded by Laurie Hunter. A roll call vote took place as follows: Light, aye; O'Shea, aye; Hunter, aye; McFall, aye; Clenchy, aye; Crozier, aye; Dwight, aye. Bella Wong and Mary Jane Rickson abstained. The motion passed.

The Program Budget was presented. James O'Shea asked several questions regarding some of the line items in the program budget. He asked for more details about

increases in the administration line items and the legal line item. The Executive Director and Andy Paquette from TMS pointed out that the reasons for the increase in these line items were a result of changes in administrative secretaries costs based on caseload and in increases in legal, audit and liability insurance costs respectively.

After some discussion, a motion was made by Kelly Clenchy to approve the FY'21 Program Budget of \$7,768,223.49. The motion was seconded by Peter Light. A roll call vote took place as follows: Light, aye; O'Shea, aye; Hunter, aye; McFall, aye; Wong, aye; Clenchy, aye; Rickson, aye; Crozier, aye; Dwight, aye.

The Executive Director presented information on the extension of programs at 8 Post Office Square in Acton. Additional space has become available at this site. At this location, CASE currently houses 3 programs – approved public days school (Colebrook High School), the high school program for medically fragile students, and its program serving students aged 18-22.

CASE has experienced significant ongoing challenges in securing space in public school settings for its students. In addition to this challenge, each year, CASE experiences shifts in program locations that result in moving and separating existing programs causing adverse effects on our ability to run programs with safety and in a coordinated and cost-effective manner.

The goal is to relocate two CASE programs that currently are located in Carlisle and at the Blanchard Memorial School in Boxborough.

CASE currently has 3 programs and its transportation department at 8 Post Office Square in Acton. For these programs that are existing at this site, there are 2 leases, one from 2017 and a second from 2019. CASE is proposing an expansion of its programs in this location. Instead of having 3 leases that end at 3 different times, it is being recommended that CASE make all 3 leases co-terminus. In this regard, a review of lease amendments will be done by the Board, being proposed by our landlord for the 8 Post Square leases.

Russell Dupere indicated that the associate in his office has been working with Sanchita Banerjee on this issue. The insurance company has assured us that they can meet the requirements in the lease and the changes regarding the insurance.

James O'Shea spoke about the idea of removing CASE classes from the districts. It's part of the program that is embedded in the schools. The students in the CASE programs can be included in those other activities. He wondered if this is common to where we come from as an organization, and when a district goes to place a student, they know they are in one of these welcoming communities and how will that impact people's decisions.

Sanchita Banerjee indicated that this is a very difficult recommendation but one that was not taken lightly. Both programs at Carlisle and Blanchard had one of the toughest years in recent history due to the level of needs presented by students and the supervision and management needed as a result. In addition, CASE lost out on

approximately 20 or so referrals of students looking to be placed in non-public school settings. This is showing us that there are students who need to be served and expansion of CASE programming to a public day location would address the needs of this population. We are not giving up on our inclusion options. We are keeping our public middle school option in Maynard. We also still have two public elementary school options and another couple of middle public school options. The program expansion at 8 Post Office Square will be an excellent way to program for and stabilize students who need a sub-separate setting. Here we want to serve elementary and middle school aged students who cannot be served in the public schools.

Peter Light indicated that AB will be taking over the CASE classroom in Blanchard for next school year and so this will not be an option for CASE. He stated that CASE classrooms are being included in the Acton-Boxborough building project.

Laurie Hunter indicated that Concord and Concord Carlisle have opened many programs in district ranging from PreK level all the way up to post high school level and the only students they are referring out are those in crisis who need a level of intervention best served in a sub-separate setting. The program option at 8 Post Office Square in Acton would serve this purpose well.

Courtney Hudgins indicated that as appropriate and when students are ready, she would be looking into inclusion opportunities at the Acton-Boxborough elementary and middle schools for next year.

Brad Crozier left the meeting at 1:15 PM

A motion was made by Peter Light to amend the existing leases for programs at 8 Post Office Square, Acton as outlined in memo and to include the expansion of the CASE programs at this location. The motion was seconded by Kelly Clenchy. A roll call vote took place as follows: Light, aye; O'Shea, aye; Hunter, aye; McFall, aye; Wong, aye; Clenchy, aye; Rickson, aye; Dwight, aye.

Kelly Clenchy left the meeting at 1:32 PM.

A motion was made by Becky McFall to approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the CASE Board of Directors and the CASE Professional Association related to Educators Evaluation for the FY20 school year in light of COVID-19 school closures, and give Linda Dwight authorize to sign the MOA on behalf of the Board. The motion was seconded by Laurie Hunter. A roll call vote took place as follows: Light, aye; O'Shea, aye; Hunter, aye; McFall, aye; Wong, aye; Rickson, aye; Dwight, aye.

Peter Light left the meeting at 1:50 PM.

Mary Jane Rickson left the meeting.

Since there was not a quorum, the Board was unable to vote on the remaining agenda items. These agenda items will be tabled for the next meeting.

It was agreed that another Board meeting needs to be scheduled before June 30, 2020. The Board scheduled Friday, June 26, 2020 at 11:00 AM.

At 2:04 PM, Linda Dwight adjourned the meeting.