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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING MINUTES**  
**December 14, 2016, 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM**  
**Natick Town Hall, School Committee Room (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor)**

**In Attendance:**

Jim Adams, Ashland  
Ed Gotgart, Framingham  
Brad Jackson, Holliston  
Jeff Marsden, Medfield  
Peter Sanchioni, Natick  
Anne Wilson, Sudbury

Bill McAlduff, Dover-Sherborn  
Maureen Sabolinski, Franklin  
Cathy MacLeod, Hopkinton  
Armand Pires, Medway  
Dan Gutekanst, Needham  
David Lussier, Wellesley

**Also in Attendance:**

Marcia Berkowitz, ACCEPT  
Paulajo Gaines, DESE  
Bruce Norling, CPA, Bruce Norling CPA  
Lisa Slavin, MassBay Community College

Cathy Ellis, ACCEPT  
Bill Hurley, ACCEPT  
David Podell, MassBay Community College

**Not in Attendance:**

Nancy Gustafson, Millis

Jon Evans, South Middlesex Regional  
Vocational Technical School

**1) Welcome and Introductions**

Dr. Gutekanst called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m. and welcomed the Board and guests to the meeting. Ms. Berkowitz introduced Paulajo Gaines from DESE, Bruce Norling from Bruce Norling CPA, P.C., and David Podell and Lisa Slavin from Massachusetts Bay Community College in Wellesley.

**2) Review of Minutes**

Dr. Gutekanst requested a motion to approve the minutes from the September 14, 2016 meeting. Dr. Marsden put forth the motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented and Dr. Wilson seconded the motion. All were in favor. No minutes were kept and no action taken during the October 26, 2016 meeting as there was no quorum.

**3) Financial Update**

Bruce Norling, CPA reported on a successful audit for the fiscal year 2015 – 2016. Mr. Norling told the Board that he was pleased to report that after conducting the audit, with Bill Hurley and Cathy Ellis' cooperation and assistance, he did not have any recommendations for fiscal or operational changes this year. He did not note any instances of noncompliance or other matters not consistent with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards. Mr. Norling stated that all findings and recommendations from previous audits have been implemented by the Collaborative and it is his overall opinion that the audit shows the Collaborative is in a positive financial standing and has strong business operations. Mr. Norling pointed out the OPEB Trust reporting is new this year and can be found in the financial statements on pages

15 – 16. Mr. Norling stated he is pleased the OPEB Trust was formally implemented and the Collaborative has started funding the trust annually.

Dr. Gutekanst requested a vote to approve the Financial Audit for the Year Ended June 30, 2016, as presented by Bruce Norling, for submission to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Office of the State Auditor per the DESE regulations and guidelines. Dr. Jackson put forth the motion to approve the independent audit report as presented by Bruce Norling; Dr. Wilson seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Dr. Gutekanst requested the Board move to approve the amount of \$95,172 as the addition to the cumulative surplus and to keep this amount in the Collaborative fund balance; not returning the surplus to member districts, as has been done in past years. Dr. Jackson put forth the motion to approve and retain the cumulative surplus of \$95,172 in the Collaborative fund balance. Dr. Lussier seconded the motion. All were in favor.

**4) Presentation: Massachusetts Bay Community College**

Dr. David Podell, President, and Lisa Slavin, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management, from MassBay Community College (MBCC) explained the range of programs and opportunities available to students at MBCC. They shared that MBCC is open to exploring partnerships with ACCEPT's member districts. Ms. Slavin reported she has been developing relationships with district guidance counselors and looks forward to continuing these relationships and developing new ones. She is available to meet at the College or in the districts. She also offered to set up professional development opportunities and tours of the College. Dr. Podell and Ms. Slavin asked the Board for their feedback on how MBCC can best serve their graduating students. Ms. Berkowitz discussed the ACCEPT students in the 5 for 5 Program and their participation in courses at MBCC.

**5) Executive Director's Report**

Dr. Sabolinski and Dr. Pires reported to the Board on findings regarding remote participation for Board meetings. After consultation with an attorney, they found that remote participation is permitted however, those participating remotely would not count toward a quorum. Based on this information, it was decided not to pursue this idea further.

Marcia Berkowitz reported that she took a new approach to the Annual Report this year. Ms. Berkowitz stated that during the strategic planning process and the search for the new building it became clear that there is a lack of understanding of the role collaboratives serve in general, and ACCEPT's offerings in particular. This year's report provided an overview of Massachusetts' collaboratives and highlights many of the unique factors that define the ACCEPT Advantage. Students are the reason collaboratives exist so an effort was made to highlight students within the Report. Ms. Berkowitz called attention to page 13 of the Report, where a summary of progress in meeting the key objectives can be found. She also made note of the cost savings of Collaborative programs; tuitions are significantly less than competing private school programs.

Dr. Gutekanst requested a motion to approve the Annual Report for 2015 – 2016 per the DESE regulations and guidelines that require the Board to approve and submit the Collaborative's Annual Report. Dr. Marsden put forth the motion to approve the 2015 – 2016 Annual Report, as presented, to be submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Dr. Pires seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Ms. Berkowitz updated the Board on the progress of construction at 4 Tech Circle. Demolition was completed and we are awaiting permits for construction to begin. Ms. Berkowitz and Mr. Hurley visited the site and have been meeting with the contractor and architect. They have identified the specifications for the new phone system and technology infrastructure and selected vendors. They are also looking for community partners to offset expenses for projects at the new building and have put together a brochure to ask for donations. Ms. Berkowitz requested permission to accept donations for the new building and the Board verbally approved her request.

Ms. Berkowitz reported that Wayland Public Schools approached her and expressed interest in becoming a member of the collaborative. Currently Wayland has one student enrolled in an ACCEPT program. Ms. Berkowitz discussed the value of membership and asked the Board to consider Wayland's request. After discussion it was decided to table membership action until after Wayland appoints their new superintendent.

The Board discussed the Framingham Public Schools' decision to delay school opening due to extreme cold as it related to ACCEPT's transportation services. It was decided that since the forecast indicated no issues with road conditions, ACCEPT would make an exception to its policy not to transport into or out of a district with a delay or cancellation. Moving forward, such decision will be made on a case-by-case basis when road conditions are not a concern.

#### **6) Adjournment**

Dr. Gutekanst requested a motion to adjourn the meeting and enter into Executive Session. Dr. Lussier put forth the motion to end the meeting and Dr. Jackson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting ended at 11:25 a.m.

#### **Future Meeting Dates** (all meetings begin at 10:00 AM):

January 25, 2017

March 15, 2017

May 3, 2017

June 7, 2017 (contingency date in case of weather-related cancellation)