

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING MINUTES**  
**June 7, 2017 10:30 AM to 11:30**  
**4 Tech Circle, Natick MA**

**In Attendance:**

Jim Adams, Ashland	William McAlduff, Dover-Sherborn
Robert Tremblay, Framingham	Maureen Sabolinski, Franklin
Cathy MacLeod, Hopkinton	Jeffrey Marsden, Medfield
Armand Pires, Medway	Nancy Gustafson, Millis
Peter Sanchioni, Natick	Dan Gutekanst, Needham
Jonathan Evans, South Middlesex Regional	Anne Wilson, Sudbury
David Lussier, Wellesley	

**Also in attendance:**

Marcia Berkowitz, ACCEPT	Bill Hurley, ACCEPT
Cathy Ellis, ACCEPT	

**Not in Attendance:**

Brad Jackson, Holliston

**1) Welcome and Introductions**

Marcia Berkowitz welcomed the Board Members to the first meeting at the ACCEPT Center for Learning and Growth. Ms. Berkowitz stated that the Center was the fruit of nearly two years of effort on the part of many; she thanked the Board for their unwavering support of this endeavor. Ms. Berkowitz also thanked the ACCEPT staff who worked tirelessly to make the move to the new Center successful. Ms. Berkowitz acknowledged Bill Hurley's steadfast efforts, guidance, and commitment and thanked him helping to make the new Center a reality.

Ms. Berkowitz thanked the retiring Board Members, Bill McAlduff and Maureen Sabolinski, for their involvement, commitment, advice, and willingness to share resources and host classrooms for the Collaborative over the years. The Board extended their well wishes to both.

**2) Review of Minutes**

Dr. Gutekanst recommended a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes from the May 3, 2017 meeting as presented. Dr. Marsden put forth a motion to approve the Minutes; Dr. Lussier seconded the motion. All were in favor with Dr. Wilson abstaining from the vote.

**3) Financial Update and Fund Balance presentation– Bill Hurley**

As follow up to the discussion at the May 3<sup>rd</sup> Board Meeting, Mr. Hurley gave a brief explanation of the accounting principles utilized for the surplus fund. He stated that for the coming year and long term, ACCEPT is in a strong position. Mr. Hurley will be addressing ways to reduce the Collaborative's accounts receivable at the upcoming Business Manager's meeting. Mr. Hurley stated the main challenge is Transportation Services. The assessment model implemented two years ago relied on a predictable budget. However, unforeseen

challenges have compromised the integrity of the model. Strategies are being developed and implemented to accommodate these challenges. In particular, we are working with Van Pool to formalize a partnership to reduce vendor costs and increase capacity. He plans to discuss an adjustment to the assessment model with the Business Managers. One proposal is for districts to utilize FY2017 surplus to pay the difference between the assessment and actual expense in lieu of waiting until FY2019. Mr. Hurley is excited about the new era for the Collaborative and believes we are positioned to be extremely successful in the years to come.

**4) Executive Director's Report – Marcia Berkowitz**

Ms. Berkowitz shared that the consensus is that holding the ACCEPT Board Meeting immediately following the Tri-County Superintendents' Meeting was challenging given the extended period out of the office. Based on feedback the ACCEPT Board Meetings will move to Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.

Ms. Berkowitz invited the Board members to join her on June 15<sup>th</sup> for the “soft” opening that will include the annual Awards Ceremony. One award to be bestowed will be the Michael J. Palladino Award given to an ACCEPT student who has turned 22. The recipient is a student who exemplifies the Collaborative's commitment to minimizing the impact of a disability and maximizing opportunities in the community. This year the recipient is Cedric Binelli-Messi from Framingham. Cedric represents our students in the best possible ways. The second award to be given that day will be the Susan S. Rees Award for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, recognizing an ACCEPT teacher for their outstanding work with students and their contributions to the Collaborative. Ms. Berkowitz was pleased to inform the Board that this year's recipient is Nikee Gugnani.

Ms. Berkowitz thanked Jim Adams and the Ashland Public Schools for hosting our programs for the past 10 years; an arrangement that gave the Collaborative space needed to grow. The Collaborative staff is appreciative of the relationships we've developed and the opportunities being in Ashland has afforded us.

Ms. Berkowitz stated that the next big project is moving the classrooms to their new homes. Some will be coming to 4 Tech Circle and others are moving to Medway Public Schools. All programs will be in their new locations for the start of the Extended School Year program and will remain there for the fall. The Collaborative team is finalizing plans for the ESY program and are excited about this year's theme, *“ACCEPT's Got Talent.”* The enrollment is strong, currently at approximately 120 students.

Ms. Berkowitz stated that one of the Collaborative's strategic goals was to improve the HR process. She reported on progress made in this area and that she is pleased with the directions things are moving. The application process is now electronic and integrates with the payroll system, increasing both accuracy and efficiency. Ms. Berkowitz also reported that the areas of ambiguity in the Employee Manual were identified and they are working on alleviating confusion, in particular, clarifying the language around retiree benefits.

Based on meetings and feedback from the CAP Grant Team, Ms. Berkowitz reported that a revised dashboard has been developed. The new version, which will be provided quarterly,

focuses on the state of the Collaborative. Ms. Berkowitz said that she is happy to provide individual district-specific information upon request.

**5) Approvals**

Dr. Gutekanst requested a motion to approve the list of staff appointments and reappointments as presented. Dr. Sanchioni put forth the motion to approve the staff appointments and reappointments and Ms. Gustafson seconded the motion. All were in favor.

**6) Adjournment**

Dr. Gutekanst requested a motion to adjourn the meeting and begin the OPEB meeting. Dr. Marsden put forth the motion to adjourn and Dr. Tremblay seconded the motion. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.