

Central Carolina RESA Board of Directors Meeting

NCSBA Assembly Hall

March 15, 2024

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Minutes

Board of Directors in Attendance

Kieth Sutton (Warren), Frank Creech (Greene), Stan Winborne (Granville), Rhonda Schueler (Franklin), Ethan Lenker (Pitt), Lane Mills (Wilson), Rodney Peterson (Person), Steve Ellis (Nash), Andy Bryan (Edgecombe), Robert Taylor (Wake), Cindy Bennet (Vance), Catty Moore (Durham), and Matthew Cheeseman (Beaufort).

Affiliate Members in Attendance

Tony Jackson (Chatham) and Michelle Handly (School for the Deaf and Blind).

Guests

Kendra King (DPI), Ryan Steele (Imagine Learning), Kris Case (Imagine Learning), Adriane Harden (Imagine Learning), and Catherine Truitt (NCDPI).

Staff

Patrick Miller, Dana Stutzman, and Katherine Chambers

Welcome

Dr. Patrick Miller welcomed the room at 9:00 AM and encouraged attendees to help themselves to breakfast, which was provided by the meeting sponsor, Imagine Learning.

The Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships

Kris Case, Ryan Steele, and Adriane Harden introduced themselves and Imagine Learning. The team listed the districts in North Carolina that they currently collaborate with, emphasizing the breadth of their reach and service capabilities. Imagine Learning highly regards its vendor partnerships, with their main focus being on the value provided through overlapping services and products that can enhance efficiency. They strive to be strategic in their partnerships, possess a deep understanding of their client's goals, offer a comprehensive list of partner districts with aligned objectives, and provide implementation planning along with support for educators.

Imagine Learning wants to maintain communication with districts throughout the entirety of the partnership and not just during contract renewals. These partnerships offer clear service plans tailored to meet specific goals, support stakeholders through change management, and feature a dedicated team that meets regularly to ensure effective collaboration. Adriane Harden concluded by emphasizing the

need to assess the tangible outcomes of partnerships and the efficacy of problem resolution in meeting organizational goals.

Approval of February 9 Minutes

Patrick Miller asked the room to review the February 9, 2024, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes. Dr. Rodney Peterson gave a motion to approve the Minutes, Dr. Ethan Lenker seconded, and the Minutes were passed unanimously.

Approval of Finance Report

Mr. Sutton directed Board Members to review the Finance Report, highlighting several key points. He noted that CCRESA has agreed to serve as the fiscal agent for the Z. Smith Reynolds Principal of the Year Grant, with Dana Stutzman collaborating with Dr. Patrick Green on the project. Mr. Sutton confirmed that CCRESA is maintaining its budget according to plan and mentioned that a recent audit was completed. Due to significant funding received by the state for the CCP3 grant, a detailed "yellow book" audit was necessary. The audit noted the recurring deficiencies that have always been listed in the yearly audit will need to be addressed moving forward. Dr. Miller added the need for the yellow book audit was unexpected, but the CCRESA will need to comply with the suggestion for external financial oversight to remove the deficiencies moving forward. To address this, Dr. Miller and Mrs. Stutzman will begin the process of hiring a third-party accountant.

Mr. Sutton proposed two motions: one to accept the financial statement and another to authorize the hiring of a third-party accountant and approve the audit findings. Dr. Steve Ellis gave the motion to approve the Financial Report, Dr. Rhonda Schuelher seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously. Dr. Rodney Peterson gave the motion to approve the third-party accountant and approve the audit findings, Dr. Ethan Lenker seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

A Conversation with the State Superintendent

Superintendent Catherine Truitt expressed her gratitude to the attendees for welcoming her to the meeting. She has enjoyed visiting the various RESAs across the state and intended to use this session to address any questions the Superintendents might have regarding several key topics. These include the *Prism Math Initiative Grant*, the computer science course graduation requirement, career development, professional development for grades 6-8, mental health issues, and the EVAAS growth model.

The *Prism Math Initiative Grant* will start in the Fall of 2024. There will be a limited rollout and then move into a full pilot. This pilot will be instrumental in the final design of the initiative. They are currently taking teachers/districts to be in the full study, which will be split into 2 cohorts of teachers that will happen in the fall of 2025.

Regarding the computer science course graduation requirement, Dr. Truitt stated that there are many options to fulfill this requirement and the list of courses that qualify to satisfy this requirement is long.

Career development in schools is mandated by legislation, emphasizing the need for student self-assessment and the exploration of career pathways. This unfolds in three stages, a process many schools have already integrated, often through external vendors. To further clarify and enhance this framework, a summit is scheduled for the end of April. Despite a record number of high credentials being awarded last year in our state, there remains a gap in educational attainment: while 72% of juniors express intentions to attend college, only about 40% actually enroll. Furthermore, only 23% of North Carolina's youth achieve a four-year degree by age 24. This highlights a critical disconnect between students' educational aspirations and their actual pathways. Catherine Truitt suggests people reach out to Catherine Joyce for any further questions.

The LETRS program is currently in place to train middle school teachers in reading literacy. The Aspire PD, a 40-hour asynchronous professional development course, funding is expected to be included in the upcoming short session. Advocacy efforts are underway to secure a \$500 stipend for teachers who complete this training. The rollout of this initiative will be statewide, aiming not only to enhance ELA literacy but to improve literacy skills through math instruction.

Board members raised concerns about the uncertainty of funding relative to the actual need for addressing mental health issues. Superintendent Truitt mentioned the potential for telehealth options, however the state does not have control over the federal government's timing and methods for rolling out these grants. There was also a mention of a suicide risk assessment tool incorporated into a 'Parents Bill of Rights,' which will allow parents to opt-in or opt-out. In the upcoming April Superintendents' quarterly meeting, major initiatives and outlined priorities for mental health will be discussed further, signifying an ongoing commitment to enhancing mental health support within the educational system.

Discussions are ongoing with SAS about developing a criterion-based growth model, as the existing EVAAS growth model poses challenges for teachers in helping students achieve proficiency. A comparison was made between the norm-referenced EVAAS model, which benchmarks students against each other (ensuring a constant bottom 25%), and a criteria-referenced model which evaluates students against set standards and checkpoints.

In addition to ongoing major initiatives, Superintendent Truitt will address the discussed priorities at the April Superintendents' quarterly meeting

Housekeeping Items: ED Report, CCP3 Update, 2024-2025 Meeting Dates, District Issues/Concerns

Dr. Miller wrapped up the meeting with some housekeeping items. NCPeak is successfully conducting the Lead and Learn program for principals, offering eight sessions annually. The sessions have received positive feedback and CCRESA plans to continue working with NCPeak for next year.

The CCP3 Principal Fellows also attend the Lead and Learn sessions and have expressed positive feedback. Dr. Miller reminded board members that the CCP3 program's newest cohort will be starting in the fall and we will be starting recruitment for the fifth cohort in the fall as well.

Finally, Dr. Miller reviewed the 2024-2025 council and board of directors meeting dates with the Board Members, who all agreed to the scheduled dates without any objections. He also proposed to the Board Members the idea of including Tyrrell County joining in HR council meetings at half the cost of a standard affiliate membership. The board members supported both the continuation of the Lead and Learn sessions and the inclusion of Tyrrell County in HR council meetings.

Board of Directors meeting adjourned at 11:05 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Keith Sutton
CCRESA Secretary/Treasurer