

Mid-East Suffolk Teacher Resource and Computer Training Center (MESTRACT)

Policy Board Meeting Minutes, Thursday, September 17, 2020 at 4 pm Online through Zoom

Board Members:

Public School Teachers Present: Liz Mancini, Eva Pere, Lauren Cani, Doreen Marullo, Leslie Brophy, Kelly Lynch, Jacki Margraf, Regina Casale, Joanne Simicich, Janet Slote, Carole Stacy, Laurie Piccoli, Patricia Nicholson, Sheila Tobin-Cavooris

Non-Public Teachers Present: Janet Pirraglia, Debbie Pagano

Other Members Present: Alan Baum, Bernadette Uzzi, Dr. Craig Markson, Donna Guiffre

Absent: Stephanie Pawlik, Merrill Thompson, Rita Moloney, Michelle Charles, Andrew Weik, Allison Cascarelli (McDermott), Sara Campbell, Valerie Schwamborn, Laura Spencer, Jennifer Burns, Carolyn Walsh, Virginia McCaffrey, Melissa DeRosa

Quorum present? Yes

Others Present: Kristine Cucinello, Executive Director MESTRACT, Dr. Nancy Murolo

Proceedings:

Call to order: 4:07 pm

Director's Report: Welcome back to school! Thank you to all of you for serving on the policy board. I am very proud of the amazing collaborative professional learning community we have created for the over 6,000 teachers MESTRACT serves. Your hard work is appreciated!

The Teacher Center Program office has asked directors to review Education Law 316 and Open Meetings Law with policy boards every year during our first meeting. A copy of Education Law 316 is provided in the Google meeting folder.

Education Law 316: The Policy Board is composed of members from the Center's district(s), required members as per Ed Law 316, and additional members as per our bylaws. Education Law 316 requires that the policy board consist of 51% *teachers, at least one administrator from the Local Education Agency or BOCES, at least one parent representative, at least one higher education representative, and at least one business representative*. Teacher centers are charged with personalizing programs to meet the local professional learning needs of classroom teachers.

Teacher Center Funding: As of September 8th, the teacher center program office did not have any information about the 2020-2021 funding allocation. NYSUT is advocating for teacher centers and we are hopeful that we will not be defunded entirely. The Grants and Finance Office has also withheld some of the funding reimbursements from the 2019-2020 school year to the LEAs for teacher centers. A schedule for the release of these funds was not provided.

Minutes: Alan Baum made a motion which was seconded by Janet Pirraglia to approve the minutes from the June 11th, 2020 policy board meeting. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Final Grant Expenditure Report 2019-2020: Our total grant allocation was \$197,638 and we spent \$195,936 which is 99% of the total.

Financials: Kelly Lynch made a motion which was seconded by Lauren Cani to approve the financial documents as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Open Meetings Law Review: Each year teacher centers are required to review Open Meetings Law with the policy board. The **New York State Open Meetings Law** ("OML") provides the public with a right of access to the meetings of a large number of government bodies at the state and local level. The law entitles the public to notice of these meetings and gives members of the public the ability to inspect and view the meeting minutes. Kristine reviewed the details of OML in a Google Slides presentation with the policy board.

Fall Programs: All approved fall programs have been posted to the MESTRACT Frontline catalog. Registrations for these programs are coming in slowly. Kristine will share the screen showing the Frontline catalog.

Approval of New Retiree and Parent Representatives: Alan Baum made a motion to appoint Nancy Murolo to the retiree position on the policy board as per our bylaws. Donna Guiffre seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried. Craig Markson made a motion to appoint Virginia McCaffrey as the MESTRACT parent representative. Joanne Simicich seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Teacher Center Operations Discussion: Kristine opened a discussion with the policy board about the possibility of reduced or lost funding. She discussed how operations of the teacher center might work if no funding was provided this year.

Instructional Materials Device Loan Programs: Kristine asked the policy board for their ideas regarding device loans to teachers while following CDC and NYS Covid guidance. The policy board felt that some remote teachers may want to use the devices and distribution of the devices can be arranged with policy board members rather than asking each teacher to come to the MESTRACT Office in Stony Brook.

NYS COVID Emergency Certifications: New York State Office of Teaching is offering emergency COVID-19 certificates to allow people who were not able to take and pass the required exam(s) to work in public schools or districts for a one year period. A link to the website with further information was provided. Certification exams are being administered throughout the state at certain testing locations.

Notes and Asides:

The policy board meeting schedule was provided.

Our next policy board meeting will be on Wednesday, November 18th at 4pm via Zoom.

Eva Pere made a motion to adjourn. Laurie Piccoli seconded the motion. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 4:48 pm.