

Southern Minnesota Education Consortium #6083

OCTOBER CABINET MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY OCTOBER 19, 2021 9:00am

SMEC OFFICE 21697 HWY 56 AUSTIN, MN 55912

The regular meeting of the Cabinet of Southern Minnesota Education Consortium #6083 was called to order at 9:02am by Dan Armagost on October 19, 2021. Due to COVID-19, proper social distancing recommendations were followed by in-person attendees and the meeting was also held virtually via video conference on Zoom. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by roll call and determination of quorum.

Cabinet members in attendance were Brian Shanks (AC & GE), Paul Besel (GM), Jamie Goebel (LY), Scott Hall (So), and Jim Hecimovich (KPS). Jen Backer (LO) was absent. Administration and staff in attendance were Executive Director Dan Armagost, Director Denise Kennedy, and Administrative Assistant Ashley Rye.

Meeting Agenda

It was requested that one change be made on the agenda and that Scott Hall would be providing the Career Navigator update rather than Dan Armagost as listed. With this change, Scott Hall motioned to approve the meeting agenda, 2nd by Brian Shanks, all were in favor, Motion carried.

Public Recognition

Nothing to report.

Approval of the Consent Agenda

The October Consent Agenda consisted of approval of the September Cabinet meeting minutes, approval of the Treasurer's report and financial report, approval of the NEXT Step Bank account activity, and approval of contracts for Kylea Draayer, Kimberley Richter, and Caleb Wundermachen. Paul Besel proposed to move the approval of staff contracts to New Business as there were some items to be clarified. With this change, Paul motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, Scott Hall 2nd, all were in favor, Motion carried.

Committee Reports

An Admin Council update was provided by Scott Hall. Hall noted that the primary discussions at the last meeting were updates on how the school year has started, a review of the Core Values, and a technology report was provided by Jeff Oian primarily in regard to cyber security trainings. Discussions also ensued regarding how to move forward with the Career Navigator position and the shortage of staffing with contracted Fernbrook Family Center services.

New Business

** indicates action items*

- A. *COVID Updates*: Cabinet members provided updates on their district status with COVID-19 and the current projection of mask mandates and COVID-positive numbers.
- B. *Substitute Teachers and Paraprofessionals*: Dan Armagost noted the increasing need for substitutes across all districts. Level III programs are to utilize the SMEC office to find substitutes for staff first before reaching out to their own build administrative assistants to find staffing coverage. Staff who in need of substitutes are to contact the SMEC office directly. SMEC Administrative Assistant Ashley Rye is currently the main point of contact for staff leave days.
- C. *Kylea Draayer Contract**: Clarification with this contract was sought on the number of workdays, paid vs. unpaid holidays, the number of holidays allotted, and the true definition of the use of the term "school consortium". The following changes to Kylea's contract are as follows: under II.A, duty year is 261 days instead of 260 days as initially stated; under II.B, holidays will be paid and "paid holidays" is clarifying language that should added to this section of the contract; under VI.B, "Consortium rate" will be changed to "Federal rate"; and the term

“school consortium” throughout the contract will be changed to “SMEC”. With these noted changes, Scott Hall motioned to approve Kylea Draayer’s contract, 2nd by Jamie Goebel, all were in favor, Motion carried.

- D. *Kimberley Richter Contract**: Clarification was sought regarding 8.2 Bereavement leave and the approved family that would apply to said leave. Dan Armagost noted that the language in this contract mirrors that of the Master Contract. With this clarification, Brian Shanks motioned to approve this contract, 2nd by Jamie Goebel, all were in favor, Motion carried.
- E. *Caleb Wundermachen Contract**: Clarification was made on the number of contract days for this paraprofessional, with Dan Armagost noting that this count includes non-student days for the purposes of staff development. The following changes will also be made to provide clarification in this contract: under II.A the verbiage should state that there are 4 paid holidays in the agreement year, and the term “school Consortium” shall be changed to “SMEC” throughout. With these said changes, Paul Besel motioned to approve this contract, 2nd by Scott Hall, all were in favor, Motion carried.

Old Business

- A. *Career Navigator*: Scott Hall provided an update on the status of the Career Navigator position. Four candidates applied for the position and were to be interviewed; one candidate cancelled the interview, another did not show for the interview. As for the remaining two interviewees, one withdrew interest in the position and the other declined the job offer. The Career Navigator position has been re-posted and the interview committee for qualified applicants will remain the same.
- B. *Level III Transportation*: Dan Armagost reiterated that the utilization of SMEC paraprofessionals has led to staff working overtime. The consideration of SMEC taking over all Level III transportation continues with Dan Armagost continuing to look into ways that SMEC can receive all transportation funding directly. This could change transportation plans for school year 2022-2023. Armagost will continue to communicate with the state as to how this can work for the next school year and will provide updates at the next meeting.
- C. *ELL Newcomers Program*: Dan Armagost shared with running this program through an ALC, general education funds would go directly to the resident district and all compensatory revenue would go to SMEC. The next conversation would be if the revenue would be enough to cover the costs of piloting this program. Updates will continue to be provided.

Administrative Reports

- A. *Business Management Updates*
- Bank account balance as of 10/18/2021: \$1,325,281.37
 - Access Fees have all been paid and placed in an assigned fund.
 - The audit was rescheduled for November 2nd. Financials 420, 422, 427 and 419 are completed, 740 is currently being worked on.
 - Next Business Manager meeting will be November 11, 2021.
- B. *Director Denise Kennedy*
- *October 25th Staff Development Day*: The AT Committee is presenting a hands-on AT training, all teachers and support staff are welcome to attend if available.
 - *Free/Reduced Lunch Forms for Level III Students*: As students transfer between SMEC programs, it was proposed that to reduce parent paperwork, lunch forms be transferred with the student. Districts will consult with Business Managers to see if this is a possibility.
 - *SPED % per District*: Special Education numbers are on the rise this year throughout the consortium, especially in comparison to last year and pre-COVID numbers. The current percentages are estimates and will be updated after the New Year.

- *LETRS*: Dan and Denise met with Christian Wernau and Kursten Dubbels regarding funding that was promised for piloting this program. It was shared that there is no organized way that the state will be allocating the funds for LETRS, and SMEC is currently not going to receive funds as promised for piloting a program. After training, there will be two SMEC staff considered to be LETRS trainers. MDE is planning to roll-out a first come, first serve training to all teachers within the state; administration is highly encouraged to watch for the MDE email rolling out registration and ensure that teachers sign-up as soon as possible. Ideally, every SPED teacher in the co-op would be trained in LETRS.

C. *Executive Director Dan Armagost*

- *Restrictive Procedures/Seclusions*: the report has been submitted for all districts.
- *SMEC Greenhouse*: students are doing the groundwork and all concrete work will be hired out. Students will assist in assembling the greenhouse with the supervision of teacher Scott Swanek and a hired carpenter.
- *Strategic Planning*: Still scheduled to happen in the summer.
- *Building and Grounds Equipment*: Any equipment will not be purchased until the audit is complete. Another shed will be considered for additional storage. Dan Sr. and Joe Goldman have been purchasing necessary equipment for projects out of their own pockets and donated to SMEC, which has been very helpful with big projects.

Cabinet Comments

- A request was made to receive Business Manager meeting minutes prior to the Cabinet meetings for any discussion items.
- Moving forward, Cabinet Meeting packets will be sent out a week in advance for Cabinet review prior to the meeting.

The next regular meeting is Tuesday November 16th, 2021 at 9:00 A.M. at the SMEC office and via Zoom.

Motion to adjourn by Scott Hall, 2nd by Paul Besel, all in favor and meeting adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 10:29 A.M.