



Governing Board Meeting Minutes May 8, 2023

Attendees

Members

Present	Absent	Member
X (@ 2:43pm)		Sharyl Allen , Deputy Superintendent, Office of Public Instruction
X		Joel Graves (Chair), Superintendent, Eureka Public Schools
X		Anthony Lapke (Vice Chair), Teacher, Glacier High School
X		Adrea Lawrence , Dean, Phyllis J. Washington College of Education, University of Montana, Non-Voting
X		Luke Muszkiewicz , Chair, Board of Trustees, Helena School District No.1
X		Brock Tessman , Deputy Commissioner, Academic, Research & Student Affairs, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education
X		Jason Neiffer , Executive Director, Ex Officio, Non-Voting
X		Mike Agostinelli , Assistant Director/Curriculum Director, Ex Officio, Non-Voting

Staff and Guests

- Sarah Marker, Business Manager, MTDA
- Christen Cole, Distance Learning Operation Manager, MTDA
- Kate Peterson, Student Support and Content Specialist, MTDA
- Ryan Schrenk, EdReady Program Manager, MTDA
- Jason Leonard, EdReady Operations Manager, MTDA
- Virg Hale, EdReady Lead Ambassador, MTDA
- Robyn Nuttall, Instructional Program Director, MTA
- Jodie Hirsch, Instructional Projects Coordinator, MTDA
- Caitlin Byers, Student Support and Content Specialist, MTDA
- Anna East, Tribal Relations and Education Fellow, MTDA
- Lisa Bechtold, MTDA Ambassador, MTDA
- McCall Flynn, Executive Director, Board of Public Education

Minutes

1. Establish the Presence of a Quorum (Chair Graves) - Chair Graves established a quorum is present and called the meeting to order at 2:31pm.
2. Public Comment (Chair Graves) - Chair Graves called for public comment; none was offered.
3. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approval Minutes of the April 2023 Meeting (document attached)
 - i. Executive Director Neiffer noted that he included an email exchange with Nancy Hall from the Governor's budget office regarding the carry-over of one-time-only funds from the 2021 legislature, per a discussion during the April board meeting. Ms. Hall confirmed our ability to carry over those funds and asked we continue to report on their use when we report to the legislature.
 - ii. Vice-chair Lapke moved to accept the minutes; member Thiel seconded.
 - iii. No discussion.
 - iv. The motion was carried unanimously.
 - b. Approval of Financial Report (Neiffer & Marker; document attached)
 - i. Business Manager Marker presented the monthly financial report. Overall, our budget looks good. Most expenses are on track as planned. Ms. Marker discussed the nature of the carry forward and how we will be budgeting that for the FY24 and FY25 budgets now that we have confirmed our ability to carry a rolling reserve with OCHE. Overall, it looks like we'll be close to breaking even this year as budgeted, with the carry forward being spent FY24 and FY25.
 - ii. Vice-chair Lapke moved to accept the financial report, Muszkiewicz seconded.
 - iii. Executive Director Neiffer noted that Ms. Marker has done a great job of managing the complex budget situation for next year, with the challenge of changing status updates due to HB749.
 - iv. The motion was carried unanimously.
4. Discussion/Updates
 - a. HB749 update and discussion
 - i. ED Neiffer reported on the status of HB749, which ultimately passed the Senate and was sent to the governor for his signature. As of today, the bill is still in the governor's office.

1. Chair Graves complimented ED Neiffer for doing a good job of keeping the board up to date and managing the process of working with the Legislature.
 2. Member Muszkiewicz also complemented ED Neiffer and his staff for their proactive approach to working with the legislature and their work advocating on behalf of the program.
 3. Member Thiel asked ED Neiffer questions regarding the planning and budget for the “Clearinghouse” should HB749 pass. ED Neiffer responded that Ms. Marker is gaming out budgeting scenarios in both directions, with or without the additional funding from HB749. He also noted that no matter the result, MTDA staff is already working with vendors to look at adapting systems to meet the goals of the Clearinghouse. Staff is also working up job descriptions to act when we feel we have the authority to do so. Staff is also working on communication plans for schools. ED Neiffer also mentioned long-term prospects for funding and that their staff expected the funding to be one-time-only and then have to go back to ask for additional funding for future programming. The Senate Finance and Claims hearing suggested that half of that funding might be an ongoing appropriation but that we’ll dig into that once the bill is signed.
- b. Montana University System RFP for a statewide learning management system
 - i. Assistant Director/Curriculum Director Agostinelli gave an update regarding MTDA’s participation in the statewide LMS RFP being conducted by OCHE. AD/CD Agostinelli described our input into the process and the elements we are asking for to find the right LMS for our programs and services.
 - ii. Member Thiel complemented the MTDA staff and noted their input on the process is appreciated as they know more than most about what a platform needs to deliver a quality distance learning program.
 - c. Member Muszkiewicz announced that this would be his last board meeting as he is no longer a member of a Montana school board. Chair Graves, ED Neiffer, and Member Allen expressed gratitude for his service. Muszkiewicz expressed his gratitude to ED Neiffer and AD/CD Agostinelli for their expertise, high competence, and vision.
5. Adjourn - The meeting adjourned at 3:13 pm.