

Executive Board of Directors of the  
Keystone Educational Collaborative  
Meeting Minutes for September 12, 2024, 8:30 am

Zoom Meeting link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89044465470?pwd=0VEksFsQEnC2gdtbskrt3XbZqm5m2w.1>

**Voting Members Present:**

Dr. Steven Meyer  
Mr. Brad Morgan  
Dr. Chris Cassavant  
Dr. Mark Pellegrino  
Dr. Adam Renda  
Ms. Kim Russo  
Dr. Kathleen Burnham  
Mr. Richard Meagher  
Ms. Robin Desmond  
Ms. Colleen Mucha  
Dr. Marc Gosselin

**Non-Members Present:**

Ms. Terri Burchfield  
Ms. Chelsea Darrigo  
Mr. John Demanche  
Ms. Meghan Hewett  
Mr. John Thompson: Fitchburg  
Superintendent

Dr. Pellegrino called the meeting to order at 8:33 am.

An announcement was made that this meeting was being recorded.

Roll Call: Ms. Russo-Yes, Mr. Morgan-Yes, Dr. Pellegrino-Yes, Dr. Meyer-Yes, Dr. Cassavant-Yes, Dr. Renda-Yes, Dr. Gosselin-Yes. Ms. Desmond-Yes, Ms. Mucha-Yes, Mr. Meagher-Yes.

Quorum present.

Dr. Kathleen Burnham arrived at 8:40a

**Approval of Minutes**

Dr. Renda motioned to approve the minutes of the June 6, 2024, meeting. Dr. Meyer seconded the motion. Roll Call: Ms. Russo-Yes, Mr. Morgan-Yes, Dr. Pellegrino-Yes, Dr. Meyer-Yes, Dr. Cassavant-Yes, Dr. Renda-Yes, Dr. Gosselin-abstain. Ms. Desmond-abstain, Ms. Mucha-abstain, Mr. Meagher-Yes, Dr. Burnham-Yes. Vote was 8 yes, 3 abstentions. The motion passed.

## **Action Items:**

### **Vote to approve Appointments to Existing Committees**

Mr. Demanche noted that an appointment was needed for Secretary. Mr. Demanche noted that two appointments were needed for the Warrant committee and one for the Space Committee.

Mr. Demanche confirmed that there wasn't a need for an additional member for the Space Committee. Ms. Burchfield defined the role of each vacant committee member.

Dr. Renda nominated Ms. Colleen Mucha as Secretary. Dr. Cassavant nominated Ms. Kim Russo and Dr. Renda as Warrant committee members. Mr. Demanche confirmed that the Space Committee will remain two members.

Roll Call: Ms. Russo-Yes, Mr. Morgan-Yes, Dr. Pellegrino-Yes, Dr. Meyer-abstain, Dr. Cassavant-Yes Dr. Renda-Yes, Dr. Gosselin-Yes. Ms. Desmond-Yes, Ms. Mucha-Yes, Mr. Meagher-Yes, Dr. Burnham-Yes. Vote was 10 yes, 1 abstention. The motion passed.

### **Vote to move forward with 135 Joslin Street initiative**

Mr. Demanche explained that 135 Joslin Street is expected to go on the market soon. The space would be used for its 1 acre of green space for parking expansion and handicapped playground development. The property would also be used for office space and potential onsite daycare facilities. Mr. Demanche requested a motion to move forward with preliminary discussions with the bank for \$880,000.

Dr. Cassavant motioned to approve moving forward with the 135 Joslin Street initiative. Ms. Mucha seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ms. Russo-Yes, Mr. Morgan-Yes, Dr. Pellegrino-Yes, Dr. Meyer-Yes, Dr. Cassavant-Yes Dr. Renda-Yes, Dr. Gosselin-Yes. Ms. Desmond-Yes, Ms. Mucha-Yes, Mr. Meagher-Yes, Dr. Burnham-Yes. Vote was unanimous. The motion passed.

## **Executive Directors Report**

**Census-** Mr. Demanche reported census for Key Program at 84, Elementary Program at 35 students, and Keystone Academy at 43 with a total census of 162. Mr. Demanche reported that the Key Program continues to have the majority of student referrals and has gone above census to support member district needs and in anticipation of upcoming graduations. Mr. Demanche reported that census for the Elementary/Middle School Alternative Program is starting below census to start the year as they transitioned 11 students to the Academy Program which has added a greater focus on middle school students. Mr. Demanche reported that the student

referral process is underway with students slotted to start within the month. Mr. Demanche reported that Kerry McCann continues to operate as the Asst. Program Admin as the interview process did produce good candidates, however, they declined due to various reasons. Mr. Demanche reported that the Academy Program started off with a strong census with significant referral in the queue. The school year started off strong with the Academy with the new Program Admin: Rick Booth who joins the Collaborative from Worcester Public Schools. Mr. Demanche reported that building modifications occurred over the summer to assist in creating separate zones from the upper middle school students and high school students.

**Status Update/Discussion:**

**Referral Data:** Mr. Demanche reported that the Collaborative continues to grow year after year supplying needed support for our member districts. From 2021 to current, the census has grown by 11% with anticipated further growth once the Collaborative opens its new location.

**Joslin Property:** Mr. Demanche reported that Mill City Construction out of RI won the bid for the Joslin Project. They have partnered with some local contractors to get the project completed. Mill City issued a contract in early July with construction underway. Project completion should be 120 days (mid-November), barring any significant change to orders. The program will be looking to systematically move locations over the Christmas break.

**DESE Mid Cycle Review:** Mr. Demanche reported that Keystone will have its Mid Cycle review on May 19, 2025.

**Annual Audit:** The annual audit is underway and will be presented to the board by December.

**Interface Contract renewal:** Mr. Demanche reported that Ayer/Shirley, Fitchburg, Leominster are currently being supported by INTERFACE, with Winchendon pulling out as they transitioned to Care Solace. Current districts should evaluate the two programs based upon positive feedback from members that are utilizing Care Solace and the anticipated price increase that INTERFACE will have next year.

**Staffing-** Mr. Demanche reported:

- The collaborative has been able to bring on board a new TVI who will be taking on some of Jean Sauer's caseload and nonmember cases that we had to decline from last year.

- Currently we have one teacher out due to a concussion that was incurred over the ESY from one of our students.

**Executive Session: None**

**New Business:** Dr. Pellegrino announced that Mr. Demanche's evaluation is needed. Mr. Demanche provided an update on the status of his continuum SMART goals. Dr. Meyer requested that Mr. Demanche have his anticipated SMART Goals prepared for the next board meeting.

**Adjournment:**

Dr. Pellegrino motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:04am, seconded by Dr. Cassavant. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,  
Meghan Hewett  
Recording Secretary