

Maine Compact for Higher Education

Board of Directors Meeting

5.8.08

FAME Office, Augusta

Minutes

Board members present: Mary Cathcart, Laird Covey, Joseph Foley, Joyce Hedlund, Martha Johnston, Danny MacDonald, Susan Percy, Kent Peterson, Derek Pierce, Lynn Ploof-Davis, Colleen Quint, Rep. Christopher Rector, Betty Robinson, and George Spann.

Guests and Staff present: Melanie Arsenault, Employer Initiative program director, Larinda Meade, College Transitions program director, Henry Bourgeois, and Dianne Heino.

Joseph Foley, chair of the board, opened the meeting at 9:35 a.m.

Minutes of the January 24, 2008 board meeting. Mr. Foley asked the members if they had any corrections to the minutes; no changes were suggested. The board:

Voted, on a motion by Ms. Robinson, seconded by Mr. Spann, to approve the minutes of the January 24, 2008 Board of Directors meeting. The vote was unanimous.

Employer Initiative update. Ms. Arsenault summarized 8-month accomplishments and responded to board member questions:

- a. Staff engaged: completed. Advisory Committee appointed and charged: completed.
- b. Kick-off press conference with supporting employers that launches program and web site: She reported that she has evaluated the best timing of a press conference and decided to wait until we have a coordinated marketing campaign in place. She is in discussion with a local TV station about a special series focused on adults returning to college. The website is under development.
- c. Evaluation plan designed and implemented; consultant engaged: Arbor Consulting Partners have been engaged to perform the evaluation.
- d. Preparation/publication of case statement (brochure), best practices, tool kit, and resources directory: Design of these materials is in various stages. Coordinating efforts with others with similar interests takes additional time but will pay off in increased efficiency, cost savings, and greater likelihood of program sustainability.
- e. Six regional workshops: initial design completed, partners on board, target audience identified. Ten on-site assistance visits: 3 completed by end of April. 20 awareness-building presentations locally and statewide: 13 have been completed, and two are scheduled. Statewide recognition conference: This will be combined with the annual Compact for Higher Education Symposium to be held on August 7, 2008.
- f. Program delivered to small organizations through one industry association: The program has entered into a partnership with the Maine Manufacturers Association (MMA), an industry association with 260 members. MMA will offer our services to their members needing workforce development help.
- g. Learning's to Date
 1. It became apparent very quickly that this work could not be accomplished by just one organization. Considerable effort has been expended in developing partnerships with a variety of programs and resources across the state and outside of Maine, including U.S. and State of Maine departments of Labor, human resource chapters, the Maine LiLA program, Maine Apprenticeship program, Maine College Transitions program, and TRIO programs.

Employer Initiative – update (continued)

2. Some sectors also need our assistance in influencing and brokering relationships within the higher education community to meet the workforce development training needs of their industries. We are currently working with providers of Early Childhood Education degree programs to broaden the offerings to the 600+ Headstart staff across the state.
3. Another lesson that may significantly impact this initiative is the difficulty that many of our small and medium size employers may have in supporting their workers educational goals financially. Without this type of assistance many workers will have major obstacles in returning to school – regardless of their ability, desire and motivation. As a result we are working directly with employers and workers to research all forms of possible financial assistance including Apprenticeships, Opportunity Maine, LiLA's and the Competitive Skills Scholarship program.
4. The major lesson we've learned is to be diligent yet patient in our efforts and progress. We are changing many beliefs and cultures. It has only been in the last five to seven years in Maine that one could no longer rely on finding a good paying job and benefits with just a high school education.

College Transitions. Ms. Meade gave the board an update on the College Transitions program and responded to board member clarifying questions:

Major accomplishments:

- College Transitions programs across the state serving 25% more students than anticipated!
- Solid infrastructure for data collection supporting student success.
- Set of marketing tools branding College Transitions as the bridge to post secondary success.

Infrastructure:

- Solid infrastructure in place to ensure quality and consistency: Request for Proposals, Department of Education contracting, program standards, and a mechanism for data collection.
- Engaged partnerships with Maine Education Opportunities Center, Maine Centers for Women, Work and Community, Maine Department of Labor CareerCenters, Opportunity Maine, Maine Department of Education, MELMAC Education Foundation, Compact for Higher Education, and others.

Marketing and Outreach

- Logo and brochures ensuring statewide branding developed and distributed statewide.
- "Our Maine" television segment developed and implemented. On air once a day for nine weeks. Continued use for trade shows and websites.
- TV and Radio PSAs developed and schedule created for statewide distribution.
- Agreement to use 1-800-322-5455 for statewide publicity.

Technical Assistance and Professional Development:

- All programs visited for program improvement.
- E-mail and phone call contact on a regular basis to ensure program quality.
- Consistent quality professional development offerings in a variety of delivery modes including the Annual Conference Bridges to Success, 90 registrants, workshops at the Maine Adult Education Association conference.

Curriculum:

- Focus of the annual Bridges to Success conference designed to support a seamless transition to post secondary education.
- Posted on the Department of Education website for program use.
- Builds on and coordinates with course outlines and curriculum designed for college success.

Data and Evaluation:

- Using the Logic Model to document the implementation of College Transitions, the first year will focus on questions: Based on data collected from local programs, what is the demographic picture of Maine College Transitions Program? What are the common characteristics across the state? What are the unique characteristics? And what elements of established best practices are in place? What new ones have emerged?
- Maine Adult Education Management Information System has been revised and implemented to ensure consistent quality data collection.

Alfond Scholarship Foundation (ASF). Mr. Bourgeois and Mr. Foley updated the Board on the ASF program:

- a. The FAME-ASF contract has yet to be executed. Attorneys representing HAF, ASF, FAME and Merrill Lynch are still negotiating about ASF fund portability and messaging/leafleting options and costs.
- b. Board committees are working:
 - (1) Education and Investment committees met twice to plan for the April 24 ASF Board meeting. and have set priorities leading up to the next board meeting on July 24.
 - (2) Enrollment/Evaluation committee is seeking a proposal from USM and will meet soon.
 - (3) A Steering Committee composed of senior staff at FAME and MGH meet monthly.
- c. A business plan for the ASF will be prepared, including a budget and clarifying the role of the Compact the next three years.
- d. Results: Since January 1st, about 500 expectant parents have signed releases, indicating their willingness to discuss the program, and each has been sent an enrollment kit; over 200 have been personally contacted by the hospital HR staff. 125 parents have submitted applications –most are incomplete or are awaiting the birth of the baby and his/her SSN and name. Two applications are complete and ready to send to Merrill Lynch. About 400 babies have been born at the two MaineGeneral Health facilities in the last 4 months.

Symposium. Mr. Bourgeois presented an outline for the August Symposium, asking the board if it wished to focus on Financial Aid as its theme. Board members discussed the issue and agreed that Financial Access (i.e. broader than student aid) should be the focus, with appropriate attention paid to sources of aid, needs of low income students, and efforts to fill the gap. Mr. Foley and other members stressed the importance of including employers and business people on panels to discuss their opportunities to help incumbent workers with college-going aid.

Mr. Foley thanked the board, and adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Henry Bourgeois, Compact Executive Director
May 30, 2008