

Maine Compact for Higher Education

Board of Directors Meeting

January 15, 2010

FAME, Augusta

Minutes

Board members present: Wendy Ault, Alan Burton, Mary Cathcart, Joseph Foley, Joyce Hedlund, Meredith Jones, Richard Pattenau, Kent Peterson, Derek Pierce, Lynn Ploof Davis, Colleen Quint, Chris Rector, Theodore Scontras, George Spann and John Witherspoon.

Guests and Staff present: Henry Bourgeois, Patricia Hart, and Dianne Heino.

Summary of strategic assessment process. Mr. Foley opened the board meeting at 9:35 a.m., and briefly summarized the board's strategic re-assessment work of the last five months. He reminded the board members that we began in August with a candid assessment of achievements and missed opportunities, followed by an examination of demographic and economic trends at the September meeting. In November, the board discussed the implications of what we had learned for the organization's vision, mission and goal, and the board reached general consensus on broad objectives going forward.

Today's meeting, Mr. Foley explained, is intended to reach agreement on the organization's basic vision, goal, beliefs, mission and strategies.

Compact Strategy for 2010-12

With small modifications, the board reached consensus on the following vision, goal, beliefs and mission statements; these statements were initially discussed in November and are similar to the statements adopted in 2004. The board also reached consensus on four primary strategies to achieve the goal, noted below, and discussed programs within each strategy.

Vision: *Maine's workers are among the best educated and highly skilled in America.*

Goal: *The proportion of Maine's workers who have earned a college degree or postsecondary certificate will reach the New England average by 2020.*

Our specific target is to increase the percentage of Maine's working-age population (ages 25-64) with an associate's, bachelors, or graduate degree from 39% today to 56% by 2020 -- this will require an additional 40,000 degree-holders above projections.

The Compact uses the word 'college' to include postsecondary credentials, including non-degree professional certificates and associate's, bachelors and graduate degrees. Certificate attainment is not measured, and it is not yet possible to set a specific target.

Core beliefs:

- *Education achievement is the catalyst and foundation for individual opportunity, sustainable economic growth, and a high quality of life.*
- *Earning a college degree is a right and responsibility of all Maine people.*

Mission: *The Compact's mission is to champion higher education attainment.*

Strategies and programs:

Strategy 1: Engage the business community

- **Rationale:** we need to inform, engage and rally more business leaders and employers – locally, statewide, and on our board -- to make the investments necessary to dramatically increase education attainment. We need a committed and diversified constituency for higher education led by business people. We need to acknowledge and encourage businesses and employers to invest in their worker's education. Access to the business community is a distinctive asset of the Compact.
- **Programs & tactics:**
 - o Increase business leader participation on the Compact's board.
 - o Modify, grow and sustain the Employer Initiative.*
 - o Symposium on business/employer actions to support higher education.*
 - o Analyze/report on Maine's 21st century workforce knowledge/skills needs, and the characteristics of a 'great Maine employee'.
 - o Conduct briefings on higher education/ policy process for business people.

Strategy 2: Support preparation of a higher education investment plan

- **Rationale:** Maine needs a long-term and comprehensive plan to guide public and private investments in higher education – a plan that encompasses the needs students, institutions, and employers. Absence of a plan makes it difficult to advocate for short-term solutions. As an independent non-partisan organization, the Compact would add value in helping prepare a plan.
- **Programs & tactics:**
 - o Work closely with UMS and MCCS and other institutions to support and complement their long-range strategic planning initiatives.

Strategy 3: Advocate for strategic and increased investments in higher education.

- **Rationale:** Maine needs a unified vision and voice for higher education at the Legislature and across the state to increase higher education attainment.
- **Programs & tactics:**
 - o Advocate for an increase in need-based scholarships.
 - o Advocate for an effective policy and adequate sustainable financing of UMS, MCCS and MMA facilities and infrastructure improvements.
 - o Conduct briefings for gubernatorial/Legislator candidates on the importance of higher education to Maine's long-term economic growth.

Strategy 4: Support programs of innovation and excellence

- **Rationale:** the Compact should identify and promote innovative programs that increase attainment, and manage creative initiatives when the opportunity arises.
- **Program & tactics:**
 - o Administer the Alford Scholarship Foundation.*
 - o Manage and expand the College Transitions program.*
 - o Support Early College programs.*
 - o Strengthen the adult education system with a college-going focus.

*Note: current Compact programs are noted by an asterisk**

Mr. Foley thanked the board members for their thoughtful comments. He suggested that a small committee (Mr. Foley, Ms. Quint, Mr. Bancroft and Mr. Burton) work with Mr. Bourgeois to outline the next steps – i.e. how we should organize (governance, partners, and resources) to implement the plan -- and bring a recommendation to the board at the March 30 meeting. Everyone agreed that having a written recommendation would facilitate board discussion and decision-making.

2009 financial report. Mr. Bourgeois presented the statement of year-to-date financial activities, noting that we ended the year with a balance of \$3,629, slightly below the budget projection of \$7,221. Referring to the statement of year-end financial position, he noted that the Compact's net assets are \$148,190 which provides a good cushion for a small non-profit corporation.

In response to questions from board members, Mr. Bourgeois explained that there were two significant variances in the actual December 31, 2009 activities compared to the budget:

- The college transitions revenue of \$215,540 is significantly higher than the original revenue budget of \$100,000 – as are the corresponding expenditures. This is due to a request from the Department of Education to have their adult education's professional development activities coordinated by the college transitions consultant for one year. Because the CT directors and staff directly benefit from these professional development activities, we agreed to help the Department. The contract for this work ends June 30, 2010.
- The Alford Scholarship Foundation's direct expenses of \$2,793 are lower than the budgeted amount of \$17,500. Mr. Bourgeois explained that we are very prudent in our operations and we are still learning as the program unfolds; we have reflected lower expenses in the 2010 estimate.

Another board member asked why the director's actual YTD salary expense exceeded his actual salary by \$2,469. Mr. Bourgeois did not know and told the board member that he would find out and report to the officers.

2010 budget. Mr. Bourgeois briefly described the proposed 2010 budget, indicating that it was nearly identical to the 2010 budget given to the board at their November 13, 2009 meeting. He said there was one exception – the addition of \$29,000 in revenue from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation for implementation of the Compact's strategy (e.g. consultant expenses, printing costs, etc.). With a corresponding estimated direct expense of \$29,000 for consulting expenses, printing, etc., this change did not affect the bottom line. The board:

VOTED, on a motion by Ms. Jones, seconded by Ms. Quint, to approve the proposed 2010 budget for the Compact. The vote was unanimous.

Minutes. Mr. Foley asked the board to review the minutes of the last meeting. The board:

VOTED, on a motion by Ms. Quint, seconded by Mr. Spann, to approve the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of November 13, 2009. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Foley thanked the board members and adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Henry Bourgeois, Executive Director, January 27, 2010