



**SERC Board of Directors
Regular Meeting Minutes**

SERC

**100 Roscommon Drive, Suite 110
Middletown, CT 06457**

January 28, 2020

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Present: George A. Coleman, Jeffrey Leake (joined the meeting by telephone and left the meeting at 1:31p.m.), Richard Porth, Charlene Russell-Tucker, Tom Swan (joined the meeting by telephone), and Brittney Yancy

Absent: Elizabeth Brown and Agnes Quinones

Others Present: Ingrid M. Canady, Executive Director, Stephen Proffitt, Director for Special Education Programs & Instructional Design, Kristy Giacco, Program Services Manager, Michelle Weaver, Consultant/Legal Counsel/ Legislative Liaison, Glen Hale, Chief Financial Officer, Krystal Hewitt, Human Resources Manager, Michelle LeBrun-Griffin, Consultant, Sarah Jones, Consultant and Jennifer LeBrun, SERC Executive Assistant

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by George A. Coleman at 12:00 p.m.

II. Public Comment*

No Public Comment

III. Approval of the Draft Minutes of the November 26, 2019 Regular Meeting

“Motion to approve minutes of the November 26, 2019, Regular Meeting with the addition of Sarah Jones, SERC Consultant, added to meeting attendance.”

Motion: Mr. Porth

Second: Mr. Leake

Vote on Motion:

In favor: 5 (Coleman, Leake, Porth, Russell-Tucker, Swan)

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 1 (Yancy)

IV. **Welcome to Newly Appointed Board Member, Brittney Yancy**

a. Board Member Oath – *Michelle Weaver*

Mr. Coleman welcomed Ms. Brittney Yancy to the SERC Board of Directors. Ms. Yancy is a newly appointed Board Member by Senate President Pro Tempore, Martin M. Looney. Mr. Coleman and Ms. Canady met with Ms. Yancy on January 24, 2020, to provide an orientation to SERC and discuss the Roles and Responsibilities of the Board of Directors.

Ms. Yancy is an Assistant Professor of Humanities at Goodwin University. Her research focuses on 20th Century US social movements, urban radicalism, critical race theory, women’s activism, and black women’s political and intellectual history. Ms. Yancy’s full bio is available on the SERC website.

SERC’s General Counsel, Michelle Weaver, swore in Ms. Yancy.

V. **Items for Discussion**

a. Fiscal Audit Summary – *Glen Hale*

Mr. Hale shared an update on the independent SERC Audit, which is now complete. There are no findings or areas of concern and the process went well. The Financial Statements and Independent Auditors’ Report and the Federal and State Single Audit were provide to Board Members. Mr. Joe Centofanti, Auditor, from PFK O’Connor Davies, LLP, will attend the March Board of Directors meeting to provide a detailed report of the audit to members.

There was discussion around the biennial State Audit that is currently in process. Mr. Hale will share all audit findings and provide his suggested solutions and/or corrections at the March Regular Meeting of the Board or as soon as the audit is complete.

Mr. Hale indicated that the preliminary findings from the State Audit are around policies and procedures, not fiscal or monetary issues. Mr. Porth requested that it be made public that SERC is aware and on top of the findings and is working diligently to address them.

There was general conversation.

b. Board of Directors Upcoming Meeting Calendar*

Board Members were asked to review their calendars and advise Ms. LeBrun if the May 26, 2020 and December 15, 2020 meeting dates will work for them.

VI. Updates from Ingrid M. Canady, Executive Director

a. Meeting with the Commissioner and the Graustein Memorial Fund - 12/12/19

Ms. Canady met with Commissioner Cardona, Charlene Russell-Tucker and members of the Leadership Team from the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund to discuss

funding for SERC's equity work and discussed a potential funding match from the Connecticut State Department of Education.

Ms. Canady and Ms. Russell-Tucker discussed the great need for equity training around the state and the critical need for sustainability and capacity building within SERC and other organizations to be able to address this need. Ms. Russell-Tucker is requesting an additional meeting with the Graustein Foundation, SERC and Commissioner Cardona, in order to continue the conversation around the funding match. Ms. LeBrun will assist with scheduling this meeting as soon as possible.

Mr. Coleman offered the Board's assistance with securing the funding match. There was discussion about SERC helping to coordinate equity work to avoid duplicating efforts and overwhelming districts. A plan needs to be developed to agree on who will be doing what part of the work.

Mr. Coleman agreed to assist with creating a draft letter to Commissioner Cardona.

There was general conversation.

b. Quasi-Public CEO Meeting – 1/15/20

Ms. Weaver attended the January 15, 2020, quasi-public CEO meeting on Ms. Canady's behalf. Mr. Paul Mounds, Chief Operating Operator of the Governor's office, led the meeting. Ms. Weaver shared that there are 16 quasi-public agencies in Connecticut and approximately 9 agencies were in attendance. The meeting agenda focused on the audit of the Port Authority and the legislative plan for quasi-public agencies. Ms. Weaver stated the findings of the Port Authority audit would affect other quasi-public Agencies in CT. The main findings of their audit focused around technology. The Governor's office will make a list of required changes and will send written directives to heads of quasi-public agencies asking them to address certain changes through their bylaws.

There was general conversation.

c. PA 19-12 B/L Curriculum and Advisory Group Committee Meeting on - 1/21/20

Ms. Canady asked Ms. Michelle LeBrun-Griffin, SERC Curriculum Development Team Member, to provide an overview of the Connecticut Legislation, PA 19-12, the African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino High School Course of Studies. Ms. LeBrun-Griffin reviewed Legislative and CT State Department timelines and the committee descriptions. Board Advisory Members self-selected their committees. Individual Committees met on Tuesday, January 21, 2020 at the Graustein Foundation in Hamden and the Advisory Board has met twice. The Advisory Board consists of legislators, State Department of Education representatives, public university staff, high school curriculum coordinators and educators, education organizations and community organizations. The next step is to create an Executive Review Panel. Ms. Canady and Ms. LeBrun-Griffin receive feedback and requests to be part of this work on a daily basis.

Mr. Coleman asked Ms. LeBrun-Griffin how families are a part of the work. Ms. LeBrun-Griffin shared that families participate through community agencies, organizations and school districts. Focus groups will be scheduled throughout communities to gather input from families.

Ms. Canady shared that a documentary cataloging the creation of the curriculum will be developed by Wheel to Sea Productions. Families and students are key in this production and they will have a stake in it.

Ms. Russell-Tucker requested a one-page document describing the curriculum work. Ms. LeBrun-Griffin shared that the SERC team is currently working to prepare the document and a web page dedicated to the curriculum work. The one-pager will be provided to Board Members as soon as it is completed.

The Advisory Board would like see portions of the curriculum used throughout other classes in order to make a greater impact. They want to see it out in communities. Ms. Russell-Tucker added that the opportunities to take the work into communities should be included in the talking points.

There was general conversation.

d. SERC Future Location

Ms. Canady, Mr. Van Kolton, SERC's Facilities Manager and Mr. Alex Balzano, SERC's System Administrator, toured the Waterbury building today. Alan Lagocki, architect, has approval to submit the final drawings and is ready to present them to the Department of Administrative Services (DAS). DAS is optimistic that the move will take place, but it may take up to another 18 months to finalize approval to relocate.

The current lease for the Roscommon building will expire on January 31, 2020. SERC no

longer has the approval to negotiate or extend the lease. DAS is currently negotiating a 3-year lease with a clause that allows reciprocal termination of the lease without penalty with 6 months notice.. There is no rent increase.. S While the lease is being negotiated SERC will transition to a month to month lease with no change in terms.

Mr. Coleman asked that SERC request a step-by-step leasing process and definite timeframe for approval from DAS committed to writing. Mr. Coleman finds it unacceptable that it may take an additional 18 months before approval and that there has been no confirmed timeline provided.

Ms. Canady stated that SERC would appreciate the Board's assistance with obtaining requested information from DAS. Ms. Canady shared that DAS is currently working with its legal team on the Vinal Tech location.

SERC will develop the communication with DAS for the Board of Directors to review.

e. Collaboration Updates (Level-up, Clifford Beers, CFSP Grant, and Connecticut Children's Office for Community Child Health)

All potential collaborations are associated with funding for SERC.

SERC is in negotiations with the Bureau of Rehabilitation regarding Level-up. This multi-year contract will come through CSDE.

Ms. Canady will be meeting with the Directors of Clifford Beers on Wednesday, February 5, 2020, to discuss further.

SERC continues its partnership with the Connecticut Family School Partnership collaborative as part of the five year grant to support students social, emotional and academic outcomes. We are on year two of the grant.



A meeting took place with CSDE's Turnaround Office to explore future collaborations and opportunities to support the Commissioner's Network Schools.

f. Hiring Updates

Interviews for the Associate Director will begin in February. Ms. Canady is hoping to make decisions on all open positions soon.

VII. **Updates from George A. Coleman, Chairperson**

No additional updates. Mr. Coleman will move forward contacting DAS regarding the new location.

Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

Mr. Hale shared that the balance sheet is healthy and strong. There are no concerns on the receivables and expenses are on track.

b. Program Committee

Mr. Proffitt shared information of SERC's program development. Updates included the status of the 2020-2021 IDEA proposal development process, the Bureau of Special Education priorities, in-district contracts, new electronic participant evaluation, current grants and collaborative work between SERC/RESs/CSDE including training cadre of trainers on inclusive practices provided by Frances Stetson, special education leadership training and the PPT Leadership Institute.

Ms. Canady asked that Board Members to hold the evening of May 19th and the full day on May 20th in their calendars for the Dismantling Systemic Racism Conference.

There was general conversation.

c. Operations Committee

No Report.

VIII. **SERC Foundation Update**

a. Update from Jeffrey Leake, Chairperson, SERC Foundation

No update

X. **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

* **Note:**

If you wish to speak during “public comment” and would like the Board to receive a copy of your remarks, please bring 15 copies to the meeting. A public comment sheet will be available at 11:30 a.m. Each speaker is limited to three minutes.