

FEH BOCES CDAC Meeting Notes

November 9, 2016

5:00 to 8:00 PM

Present:

HIGHLIGHTS/LEARNINGS

There are a wide-range of ideas that have been generated and there is some concern about whether we are ready for new programs. Steve shared some of the emerging priorities/issues.

1. Important ideas that are short term priorities:
 - a. Full Day Alternative Ed program (Stand alone program, only districts that have students in the program would be billed for the services)
 - b. The ideas for new CTE programs will be considered and the critical question will be whether there are enough students interested in participating in the programs
 - i. We want to nurture the P-TEC and new Coding and Gaming program
 - c. There are a few Management Services possibilities (e.g. recruitment and hiring)
 - i. What districts are interested?
 - d. Suggestion—Host a District Board meeting at BOCES so that Board members can learn more about the BOCES programs and hear from teachers/students.
 - i. Extend invitation to all Boards to visit.
 - e. Remember that districts can use BOCES space and technology for meetings or services.

COMMUNICATION ISSUES FROM THREE ROLE ALIKE GROUPS

BOARD MEMBERS

- Provide more opportunities for Board members to become more familiar with BOCES programs and budget issues.
- Need information about important upcoming agenda items. (Steve showed participants how to find this information on the web site.)

SUPERINTENDENTS

- Emphasize that our best communication is FACE TO FACE
- We want to talk about the differences between 1-way information sharing and conversations. We prefer time for conversations.
 - Maximize conversations to share how we are managing different issues. We want to talk with one another about how we are addressing critical issues in our districts (labor-management, mental health issues, etc.)
- Minimize duplication, especially in emails
- We'd like to review how we receive information. For example,
 - Cross Contracting—please send to our business managers/clerks with just a CC to the superintendent. And, it would be helpful if they could be sent in bunches rather than one at a time.
 - Information intended for principals needs to be sent directly to principals, again, with copies to the superintendent.
 - Perhaps we can talk about these communication issues and make a series of recommendations.

FINANCE TEAM

- We need to collect and put onto our BOCES website the contact information with a clear description of “who do you call for _____?” The contact information should minimally include: name, number, email, department and purpose/role.
- We also need to collect and put onto our District websites the contact information with a clear description of “who do you call for _____?” The contact information should minimally include: name, number, email, department and purpose/role.
- Currently all information comes to the superintendent and we would like to suggest that we rework this so that the information goes to the right person with a CC to the Superintendent if necessary.
 - The Superintendent needs to know which issues s/he needs to manage and which are being managed by staff.

Small Group Note-Taking

1. What are the best communication practices of the FEH BOCES?
 - Superintendent meetings
 - Business Office meetings
 - Budget process conference calls
 - Health Insurance meetings
 - Tech meetings on a monthly basis
 - E-mail board minutes
 - Rely on board members to bring updates/highlights back to districts
 - Big presentations
 - Modules of budgets, cost of programs
 - Regular face to face meetings
 - Communicate with appropriate people in the districts and not just the Superintendents
 - The CTE brochures shared at the first meeting were very helpful. They provide a good description of the programs and services
2. What are the biggest challenges in our communication practices?
 - Unsure of the right people to contact in districts
 - Not always a quick response
 - Follow-up communication
 - NERIC communication needs to be better and have more resources
 - Share board minutes between and among boards
 - BOCES website needs to be more user friendly
 - Feel that decisions are already made prior to board meeting
 - We need more information on budget
 - Maintaining communication
 - Limit the amount of emails that go to Superintendents as they are often duplicates
 - Face to Face for interaction not email reviews
3. Do you know how to find the “resource people” at the BOCES when you have a question? Are BOCES staff members supporting you to find the right person to answer your question?
 - It would be helpful to create a contact list for the website
 - Superintendent to BOCES - chain of command is very good about getting back to you
 - Marc Dalton – please update website and include tech department with names and numbers

4. What recommendations do you have to improve our customer orientation and services?
- Focus on district needs
 - Follow-up and responsiveness
 - Correspondence with districts
 - Create a survey to local Board members on what they would like to know about
 - Need to have some time where local Board members can understand the BOCES
 - Give heads up on staff increase and administrative costs
 - Follow through is important
 - Update FEH BOCES website
 - Continue to meet in the summer
 - Send cross contracts to secretaries/clerks
 - Problem solve Face to Face
 - Review and pull key information instead of forwarding emails
 - Less scripted presentations and more time to talk at meetings—we appreciate open forums
 - It would be helpful to have a list of acronyms so that we could all reference what people are talking about- maybe this could be included on the website

Highlights of Conversation

- Face to Face meetings between districts and BOCES
- Having a proper contact person for issues
- Update FEH BOCES website to include Department contact list
- Need to have more discussions about BOCES regularly not just once a year
- Discussion items should be shared with local board members prior to the FEH Board meetings
- Ratios of how district aide is factored needs to be reviewed
- Getting BOE more familiar with BOCES, not just at budget time
- Need a personnel directory by department for BOCES and districts
- Employee and employer have a voice for Health Insurance decisions
- BOCES Board training of programs and finance costs each year
- Budget - would like to see BOCES to adhere to tax cap -- maybe an average of all school districts