

Executive Board of Directors of the
Keystone Educational Collaborative
Meeting Minutes for September 11, 2025, 8:30 am

Zoom Meeting link

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88044215039?pwd=BNi31TAkWMnP03TMLvOwnULtVExE06.1>

Voting Members Present:

Dr. Chris Casavant
Ms. Robin Desmond
Dr. Jodi Fortuna
Ms. Charlotte King
Dr. Steven Meyer
Mr. Brad Morgan
Ms. Colleen Mucha
Dr. Mark Pellegrino
Dr. Adam Renda
Ms. Rosemary Reynolds
Dr. Daniel Riley
Ms. Kim Russo

Non-Members Present:

Ms. Terri Burchfield
Mr. John Demanche
Ms. Meghan Hewett

Dr. Pellegrino called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Roll Call: Dr. Mark Pellegrino – Yes, Dr. Christopher Casavant-Yes, Ms. Rosemary Reynolds-Yes, Ms. Kim Russo-Yes, Dr. Jodi Fortuna-Yes, Ms. Charlotte King-Yes, Dr. Steven Meyer-Yes, Dr. Adam Rendo-Yes, Mr. Brad Morgan – Yes. Quorum present.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Kim Russo motioned to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2025 meeting. Dr. Casavant seconded the motion. Roll Call: Dr. Mark Pellegrino – Yes, Dr. Christopher Casavant-Yes, Ms. Rosemary Reynolds-Yes, Ms. Kim Russo-Yes, Dr. Jodi Fortuna-Abstain, Ms. Charlotte King-Yes, Dr. Steven Meyer-Yes, Dr. Adam Rendo-Yes, Mr. Brad Morgan – Yes. The vote was 8 yes, 1 abstention. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Colleen Mucha arrived at 8:32am

Dr. Daniel Riley arrived at 8:33am

Action Items:

Vote to approve Appointments to Existing Committees

Mr. Demanche noted that an appointment was needed for Budget. Mr. Demanche noted that one appointment was needed for the Warrant committee, one appointment for the Governance committee, and one for the Space Committee.

Dr. Casavant volunteered for the Budget Committee. Dr. Renda volunteered for the Space Committee. Ms. Russo volunteered for the Governance Committee. Ms. Mucha volunteered for the Warrant committee.

Roll Call: Dr. Mark Pellegrino – Yes, Dr. Christopher Casavant-Yes, Ms. Rosemary Reynolds-Yes, Ms. Kim Russo-Yes, Dr. Jodi Fortuna-Yes, Ms. Charlotte King-Yes, Dr. Steven Meyer-Yes, Dr. Adam Rendo-Yes, Mr. Brad Morgan – Yes, Ms. Colleen Mucha – Yes, Dr. Daniel Riley – Yes. Vote was unanimous. The motion passed.

Ms. Robin Desmond arrived at 8:38am

Executive Directors Report

Census-Mr. Demanche reported census for Key Program at 77, Elementary Program at 39 students, and Keystone Academy at 36 with a total census of 152. Mr. Demanche reported that the Key Program ended strongly with an overall average census of 82 for the year with 8 (eight) students moving on at the end of the year. Two students graduated, two students returned to district, once moved to the Academy, two went to more restrictive environments, and one returned to Puerto Rico. Currently, the Collaborative is working with local and federal agencies on a potential abduction of one of our DCF students by the parent. Mr. Demanche reported that the Keystone Elementary/ Middle School Program closed the year on a strong note, maintaining an average census of 38 students. Thirteen students transitioned out of the program: ten returned to their home districts, two transferred to Keystone Academy, and one graduated and enrolled at Sizer School. Mr. Demanche reported that all Programs continue to receive referrals (17) for both placements and extended evaluations over the summer and since the start of the school year. Mr. Demanche reported that Keystone Academy program ended the year strong with an average of 41 students for the year. The program graduated six (6) students. Two students went onto higher education, two students remained for the 18-22 program, and two

students were undecided on long-term goals. Mr. Demanche reported that all programs continue to receive referrals (13) for both placements and extended evaluations over the summer and since the start of the school year. Student packets are under ongoing review, and eligible students are being enrolled as appropriate for each program.

Status Update/Discussion:

Orientation: Mr. Demanche reported the 2025/2026 Orientation Survey Results (8/20/25) and the acknowledgement of the Collaborative's 50-year anniversary this year:

- Attendance & Response: 150 attendees, 133 surveys completed (88% response rate). Of these, 130 surveys (98%) were exceptionally positive, highlighting Keystone's 50 years of service and dedication and the excitement for the new year.
- Two sub-categories noted with high response rates included areas of Employee Engagement / Diversity and Employee Morale.
- When staff look around Keystone, they see a community built on teamwork and collaboration, where colleagues support one another with respect, unity, and a shared sense of purpose. They see dedication and longevity, with professionals who persevere and remain committed to making a lasting difference. There is a clear passion for students, reflected in caring, motivated educators who find joy in every success. Staff also recognize growth and change, embracing opportunity, progress, and excitement for the future. The room was filled with positive energy, smiles, and friendships that felt like extended family. Keystone is described as a place of diversity and inclusion, where different backgrounds, skills, and experiences are celebrated, and above all, a true community of connection and appreciation where people feel fortunate to belong.

I SEE.....

- Teamwork, growth, diversity, and longevity
- Passion for students
- caring dedicated professional
- Change
- Caring, amazing coworkers, dedicated Admin
- perseverance and determination
- opportunity
- motivation, friendship, and teamwork
- positive energy smiles
- room of dedicated people that I am fortunate to work with
- teamwork and effective professionals
- happy smiling faces
- dedication to service
- dedicated people doing a challenging job

143 Joslin Property: No news to report

360 Electric Ave Property: No news to report

98 Adams Street (Lease / Property): Over the summer, additional space was completed to support the Academy 18–22 program and to create clearer separation between the Lower Academy (middle school) and Upper Academy (high school) learning environments.

Staffing:

Mr. Demanche reported that The Collaborative is currently fully staffed with teachers, paraprofessionals, and all ancillary service providers. Over the summer, one site experienced turnover when four teachers accepted higher-paying positions at another program. While current salary scales remain aligned with those of member districts, several districts have renegotiated contracts in recent years, creating salary pressures across the region. The Collaborative will continue to review its compensation structure to ensure competitiveness for the next school year.

DESE Mid Cycle Review: Mr. Demanche reported that Keystone Mid Cycle review was conducted on May 19, 2025. During the review, the Academy was cited for not meeting required timelines for incident report filing within the CHAMP system. In response, new protocols have been implemented, and supervisors have been trained accordingly. These updates will be documented in the progress report submitted to DESE.

Executive Board Attendance Summary: Mr. Demanche reported the following attendance record for each district for the Executive Board during the 2024/2025 school year: Gardner: 100%, Lunenburg: 100%, Narragansett: 100%, Ayer/Shirley: 83%, Quabbin: 83%, Ash/West: 66%, Clinton: 66%, Winchendon: 66%, N. Middlesex: 66%, West Boylston: 66%, Leominster: 50%, Fitchburg: 16%.

Advisory Board Attendance: Mr. Demanche reported that the overall Advisory Meetings were attended by 50% of members from last years.

Executive Session: None

New Business: None

Adjournment:

Dr. Casavant motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:42am, seconded by Dr. Meyer. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Meghan Hewett
Recording Secretary