

Executive Board of Directors of the  
Keystone Educational Collaborative  
Meeting Minutes for December 4, 2025, 8:30 am

Zoom Meeting link

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83071284765?pwd=8itphyN3gHO2QOae2WpsvpxStl15MD.1>

**Voting Members Present:**

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

**Non-Members Present:**

Ms. Terri Burchfield  
Ms. Chelsea Darrigo  
Mr. John Demanche  
Ms. Meghan Hewett  
Mr. Bruce Norling  
Ms. Jennifer Bassett-Glynn

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

Roll Call: Ms. Kim Russo – Yes, Dr. Steven Meyer-Yes, Dr. Chris Casavant -Yes, Dr. Daniel Riley – Yes, Ms. Colleen Mucha-Yes, Dr. Mark Pellegrino-Yes, Ms. Charlotte King – Yes, Dr. Adam Renda – Yes, Mr. Brad Morgan-Yes, Ms. Robin Desmond - Yes. Quorum present.

**Approval of Minutes**

Dr. Chris Casavant motioned to approve the minutes of the October 23, 2025, meeting. Dr. Steven Meyer seconded the motion. Roll Call: Ms. Kim Russo – Yes, Dr. Steven Meyer-Yes, Dr. Chris Casavant -Yes, Dr. Daniel Riley – Yes, Ms. Colleen Mucha-Yes, Dr. Mark Pellegrino-Yes, Ms. Charlotte King – Yes, Dr. Adam Renda – Yes, Mr. Brad Morgan-Yes, Ms. Robin Desmond – Yes. The vote was 10 yes. The motion passed unanimously.

**Action Items:**

**Vote to accept FY25 Annual Audit Report**

Mr. Bruce Norling and Ms. Jennifer Bassett-Glynn reported a clean audit opinion for the FY25 Annual Audit report with no findings. Testing was conducted on expenditures, revenue, and payroll with no findings. Ms. Jennifer Bassett-Glynn reported that the financial statements showed a good year with a small surplus in general funds. Mr. Bruce Norling reported a liability regarding a footnote for a significant decrease in net position as a result of the implementation of OPEB. The auditors assured the board that there is no major concern as the liability is projected out over the next 30 years. Ms. Terri Burchfield recommended that the cumulative surplus in general funds be allocated to Operations.

Dr. Steven Meyer motioned to accept the FY25 Annual Audit report. Dr. Casavant seconded the motion. Roll Call: Ms. Kim Russo – Yes, Dr. Steven Meyer-Yes, Dr. Chris Casavant -Yes, Dr. Daniel Riley – Yes, Ms. Colleen Mucha-Yes, Dr. Mark Pellegrino-Yes, Ms. Charlotte King – Yes, Dr. Adam Renda – Yes, Mr. Brad Morgan-Yes, Ms. Robin Desmond – Yes. The vote was 10 yes. The motion passed unanimously.

**Vote to approve FY25 Annual Report:**

Mr. John Demanche reported that Keystone Educational Collaborative's 2024–2025 annual report highlights the organization's strong support for its mission and 12 member districts through expanded, high-quality special education programs aligned with district needs. Eleven of the twelve member districts utilized Collaborative programs, and notably, about 88% of students enrolled in the Collaborative are from its member districts, showing close alignment with member priorities and student requirements.

Financially, the Collaborative saw about a 17% increase in primary revenue over the prior year, primarily from student programs and contract services, which constitute over 97% of revenue. This growth funds ongoing investments in staffing and infrastructure, including the purchase and renovation of a second building to expand capacity and reduce lease costs, while operational expenses remained below projections.

The Collaborative's programs demonstrate significant cost-effectiveness for member districts. Tuition rates for the three core programs—KEY, Keystone Elementary/Middle, and Keystone Academy—offer substantial savings compared to private special education options within a one-

hour radius, with estimated annual savings per student of approximately \$43,810 for KEY, \$17,029 for the Elementary/Middle program, and \$16,090 for the Academy, translating to an overall estimated cost savings of around \$76,929 per student annually for districts choosing these programs.

Staffing remains heavily focused on direct student support, with 93% of positions involving daily student contact. Approximately 32% of employees have over five years of tenure, supporting program stability. The Collaborative has also expanded vocational and therapeutic roles in response to member district needs.

Member district survey feedback reflects high satisfaction with the Collaborative's quality, responsiveness, and effectiveness. The organization's nearly 50-year legacy, combined with ongoing program innovation and community partnerships, positions it well to support students and families effectively into the future.

This summary reflects data and insights from the 2024-2025 Keystone Educational Collaborative annual report, illustrating its mission fulfillment, financial strength, member district satisfaction, and substantial cost-saving benefits for special education programming.

Dr. Steven Meyer motioned to approve the FY25 Annual Report. Dr. Casavant seconded the motion. Roll Call: Ms. Kim Russo – Yes, Dr. Steven Meyer-Yes, Dr. Chris Casavant -Yes, Dr. Daniel Riley – Yes, Ms. Colleen Mucha-Yes, Dr. Mark Pellegrino-Yes, Ms. Charlotte King – Yes, Dr. Adam Renda – Yes, Mr. Brad Morgan-Yes, Ms. Robin Desmond – Yes. The vote was 10 yes. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Executive Directors Report**

**Census-** Mr. Demanche reported that the current census for the Key Program is at 78 with a projected census of 88, the current census for Keystone Elementary / Middle School Program is at 40 with a projected census of 52, and the current census for Keystone Academy Program is at 36 with a projected census of 43; totaling a census of 154 with a projected total census of 183. Mr. Demanche reported that there are no changes to report for the Key Program, the Keystone Elementary / Middle School Program, or the Academy Program. The Key Program has been slightly impacted with the immigration issues and parents deciding to return to their country, resulting in disenrollment of their child(ren) from services. The Keystone Elementary /

Middle School Program had an uptick of referrals, with 2 students starting after the Thanksgiving holiday. The Mayor of Fitchburg and service members from both the Fitchburg Police and Fire Departments visited the site on November 24, 2025 to participate in a school Day of Thanks event. The mayor has been a large supporter of the Collaborative. Keystone Academy has had a fluctuation in census attributed to students relocating outside of this catchment area. There has also been a growing issue with students that should have had guardianship delegated, but parents delayed or did not want to take on the responsibility.

**Status Update/Discussion:**

**143 Joslin Property:** No news to report.

**360 Electric Ave Property:** Mr. Demanche reported that the Collaborative will begin working on Capital Improvement projects which will be completed via a multi-year plan. No other news to report.

**98 Adams Street (Lease / Property):** No news to report.

**Staffing:**

Mr. Demanche reported that The Collaborative's staffing is currently proportional with student enrollment and will continue to be monitored with the influx of or decrease of student services needed.

**DESE Mid Cycle Review:** Mr. Demanche reported that Keystone Mid Cycle review was completed on October 31, 2025, on the progress update.

**Advisory Board:** Mr. Demanche reported that the following items were discussed at the Advisory Board meeting held on October 30, 2025: new Seclusion guidelines and opting out of EL services for students that this is not applicable due to disability. Dr. Mark Pellegrino asked a follow up question regarding a status update on the new Seclusion guidelines. Mr. Demanche summarized how these new guidelines may potentially impact everyone, including on a student, parental, counselor, medical, and district level.

**Executive Session:** None

**New Business:** None

**Adjournment:**

Dr. Steven Meyer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9am, seconded by Dr. Renda. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Meghan Hewett

Recording Secretary