EDCO Collaborative
Colleen Dolan, Andrew Kelley, David King, Thomas Markham, Dana Mullaley, James Sullivan, Judith Vaillancourt

1.0 CALL TO ORDER: 9:36 a.m. – no public participation.

Colleen Dolan welcomed Maugerite (Midge) Connolly to the Board as the new Superintendent from Weston. Ms. Dolan also noted that Ellyse Shuster has completed her term on the Belmont School Committee and therefore will no longer be part of EDCO Board of Directors.

2.0 CONSENT AGENDA
A motion was made by Jon Sills and seconded by Rebecca McFall to approve the consent agenda: minutes of BOD meeting 3.13.17 with one change listing John Brackett as voting member from Watertown. The motion carried unanimously with Anne Wilson abstaining.

3.0 NEW BUSINESS
Colleen Dolan began the budget presentation with a reminder that EDCO is coming very close to realizing its goal of self-sufficient cost centers. This goal is coming to fruition in part due to the CASE and Van Pool rental income for next year. EDCO will be on track to decrease assessments by 50%. The one exception to cost center self-sufficiency is the McSwiney Center although it is moving in the right direction. The gap has closed from a half million deficit five years ago to the
current deficit of $160,000. Ms. Dolan highlighted the changes in district invoicing over the past 5 years and used Bedford as an example. In FY 11 Bedford received several separate invoices for EDCO fees totaling $32, 306. In FY 19, Bedford will receive one invoice in the amount of $10, 526.

The Board requested Ms. Dolan send a similar comparison to each of the districts.

Thomas Markham presented details about the proposed budget and began by noting that EDCO is projecting a surplus of $122, 554 for FY 18 with a proposed $13, 247, 253 in expenses and $13, 369, 807 in revenue. EDCO recognizes that it cannot out price itself with other collaboratives or private schools. EDCO also recognizes the need to continue to add value to districts memberships and to rely less on investments to support programs.

This proposed budget takes into consideration the challenge that EDCO is embarking on in year one of the two year plan to reduce membership assessments.

There will be a health insurance increase for all employees from FY 17 to FY 18 but it is important to note that the rate is still lower than FY 15. EDCO is also recommending a reduction in HRA benefit by 10% that will result in approximately $14,000 in savings.

Helen Charlupski suggested that EDCO look into joining GIC. Thomas Markham said it could be considered but that would be a dramatic shift and not something that could be done for the next fiscal year. He also noted that there was a window of time when municipalities were entering and the rates for GIC are also increasing.

Facility costs and general costs are increasing but these costs were anticipated. EDCO has delayed work on the HVAC system for 3 years and it will need to be addressed this year. The cost of this work will be split with the landlord ($45,000).

On the salary side, there is a need to push for more competitive teacher salaries to recruit and retain the best educators. EDCO has made base adjustments plus 2.5% and Mr. Markham will provide districts a copy of the updated teacher salary schedules.

Judith Vaillancourt commented on the challenge of filling positions for educational interpreters as well as retaining them. The Deaf and Hard of Hearing program lost two interpreters and they are finding it difficult to fill a third. There is data that indicates that some interpreters are going to Reeds Collaborative where salaries are $6,000 - $12,000 more per year. EDCO is recommending an increase to the salary base for interpreters by $2,000 plus the 2.5%. In addition, EDCO could provide a $750 stipend for those with a national certification that is not required by law.

A surplus projection for EDCO’s budget for FY18 is based on many varying factors. Next year EDCO will have a full building with CASE renting classroom space and the relocation of the Partners Program. This relocation will allow for additional cost sharing of teachers and resources at North Crossing Academy.

EDCO is also experiencing an increase in use of space throughout the building through McSwiney Center and outside vendors. EDCO is introducing a Community Education program to bring in
additional revenue during hours when the building isn’t traditionally being used. Next year will also include a full year of rent from NuPath and Van Pool.

The budget includes a reduction in Central Office salaries due to the retirement of Judith Vaillancourt. The budget also takes into account that projections for enrollment growth at NCA are conservative expecting only moderate or flat enrollment growth.

EDCO is recommending tuition increases calculated with the formula prescribed in the Articles of Agreement. The recommendation for tuition rates includes a 14% increase for DHH. While the non-member rate is higher than other competitors it is unlikely that we will lose them because of the ability to offer an inclusion opportunity. The Partners Program would only increase by 2%, NCA would increase by 5%, and there would be no tuition increase for the 45 Day Program or Youth Alternative Program.

As previously noted, the McSwiney Center continues to move in the right direction but will still operate with a deficit next year. Even with the McSwiney deficit, EDCO is still in a surplus in the aggregate with revenues.

Jon Sills noted that previous projections for enrollment at North Crossing Academy were aggressive and this budget is based on flat enrollment and asked how the difference will be addressed.

Colleen Dolan replied that occupancy costs for NCA will decrease significantly because of CASE and Partners taking up space. There is also a decrease in salaries and together these changes amount to approximately $200,000 in savings.

James Sullivan provided an update and overview of EDCO’s IT Department. He reviewed the scope of projects they have initiated and/or are in progress including facilitating (4) separate roundtables to support the technology staff within districts, establishing an IT Help Desk and bringing McSwiney registrations online through Go Sign Me Up. Mr. Sullivan also reviewed some of the applications and tools that have been implemented to support EDCO’s mission such as Moodle, Citrix, Lifesize Cloud and Schoolbrains Student Information System. In addition, EDCO is now partnering with New Horizons to provide PD related to technology.

Karen Thomsen provided an overview of the IDEAS program. Colleen Dolan prefaced this presentation by noting that the IDEAS mission is closely tied to EDCO’s mission and EDCO’s goal is to consolidate the IDEAS program with EDCO membership so districts are not paying additional fees.

The IDEAS (Initiatives for Developing Equity and Achievement for Students) was developed when the former EMI and GBSCAN programs were combined. IDEAS membership includes seats in graduate level courses that promote cultural competency as well as other workshops and seminars for member districts on an as needed basis. IDEAS can also provide customized PD on a long-term basis that might include a school assessment and plan to support long-term goals.

Additional services through IDEAS include consultations, participation in the High School and Middle School Leadership Conferences, Affinity Groups, Ally Groups and Book Groups.
Current IDEAS members include EDCO members (Arlington, Bedford, Concord/Concord-Carlisle, Lexington, Lincoln, Lincoln-Sudbury, Newton, Waltham, Weston), Non-EDCO members (Burlington, Canton, Needham, Wayland, Wellesley, Cambridge Rindge & Latin School), Outside Service Agencies (St. Ann’s Home, Wayside Family Support Network) and Districts with Contracts (Acton-Boxborough, Ashland, Belmont, Brookline, Medway, Sutton).

The current rates for members vary depending on the level the district chooses but ranges from $3,000 – $12,000 annually.

As previously noted, Colleen Dolan suggested that all EDCO memberships should include aspects of the current IDEAS memberships such as the Leadership Conferences, Affinity Groups, Ally Groups, Book Groups at not additional cost to districts. Courses and consultations would be pay as you go just as they are now for McSwiney courses.

Ms. Dolan also expressed appreciation to Karen Thomsen for her dedication to the IDEAS program.

4.0 ADJOURNMENT
A motion was made by James O’Shea and seconded by Helen Charlupski to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

The EDCO UPDATE is provided in your packets.

Respectfully submitted by:

[Signature]
Dana Mullaley 4.6.17