
Minutes of the Regular Session of the EDUCAUSE Board

Wednesday and Thursday, June 26–27, 2019, Toronto, Canada

Note: All times listed are eastern time (ET)

Attendance

Board members attending: Hilary Baker, Raechelle (Rae) Clemmons, Elias Eldayrie, Barron Koralesky (*Secretary*), Edward (Ed) Leach, Keith (Mac) McIntosh (*Treasurer*), Joseph (Joe) Moreau, Michele Norin (*Chair*), John O'Brien (President and CEO; *ex officio*), Loretta Parham, Carol Smith, Louis Soares, Sue Workman (*Vice Chair*)

- **Staff attending:** Eden Dahlstrom, Susan Grajek, Mairéad Martin, Nicole McWhirter, Stacy Ruwe, Catherine Yang, Karen Mateer
- **Guests attending:** Tracy Schroeder, Vice President of Information Services and Technology, Boston University, Nominations Committee Chair; Ron Kraemer, Vice President for IT and Chief Information and Digital Officer, University of Notre Dame (retired)

Wednesday, June 26, 2019

Call to Order

Board Chair Michele Norin called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. She began by offering a special welcome to Carol Smith and Karen Mateer (both were unable to attend the February board meeting) and thanked Nicole McWhirter for setting up the new board portal, which was introduced in a limited capacity for this meeting. Norin reviewed the agenda and noted that Vice Chair Sue Workman will manage parking lot items.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Keith Macintosh moved to approve the meeting minutes from the February 26–27, 2019, meeting. Louis Soares seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

It was noted that for future meetings these routine votes will be done in advance of the meeting via the board portal.

President's Report

John O'Brien and members of the Executive Team provided updates on the association activities since the last board meeting. O'Brien reminded the board that these presentations are intended to highlight materials that were already covered in greater depth in the board book, with the intention of teeing up questions and discussion.

O'Brien provided an update of the ongoing work with the International Task Force (ITF), co-chaired by board member Hilary Baker, noting that the diversity of perspectives offered by the group have been truly illuminating. Baker added that each meeting has focused on a particular theme, with time spent covering what EDUCAUSE is doing in that area, followed by a discussion of what task force members are doing within their own organizations, and then exploring areas where synergies or opportunities for collaboration may exist. There is a sense that ITF members appreciate being heard by EDUCAUSE—especially through the round robin sharing that occurs at each meeting—and that the ensuing discussions have been enlightening. The task force will meet monthly through October and will present its recommendations at the October board meeting. O'Brien also shared a few upcoming travel and activities, highlighting those that provide opportunities for strategic engagement, such as an upcoming speaking engagement with the American Association of State Colleges & Universities.

Vice President of Communities and Research Susan Grajek provided highlights from the areas she oversees. In June, Leah Lang, director of analytics services, and Jim Burnett, director of membership, traveled to the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., to deliver a presentation to the US Department of Defense (DoD) on the benefits of EDUCAUSE and the Core Data Service and began conversations on how to onboard the 24 institutions run by the DoD. Grajek also revealed the names of those selected to receive EDUCAUSE awards, including a new DEI Leadership Award, at the annual conference. Finally, Grajek introduced a forthcoming series of strategic spotlights—highly visual briefs showcasing data and member case studies—aimed at higher education leaders. The first in the series will be on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and is to be published in partnership with the American Council on Education (ACE). The subsequent board discussion centered on suggestions for potential partners for other strategic spotlight topic areas.

Chief Information Officer Mairéad Martin provided an update on recent activities of the IT department and its path to IT maturity. IT continues to focus on remediation and foundational work with an emphasis on four main areas: enhancing security and mitigating risk; redesigning infrastructure; improving process, especially from the standpoint of an IT service catalog; and building the team with a cohesive vision for how we do technology. Board members commended Martin on the amount of work she has done in the short time she has been with EDUCAUSE.

Vice President of Digital Communications and Content Catherine Yang covered highlights from the marketing newsletter migration and web personalization projects, offering questions for discussion and encouraging board members to chime in with good examples of personalization strategies on their campuses. Sharing that EDUCAUSE continues to examine the area of wayfinding and our web search function, she expressed an interest in hearing about approaches that have been successful at board member institutions.

Vice President of Professional Learning Eden Dahlstrom presented an update on EDUCAUSE's learning and career development portfolio and a concept map of the proposed EDUCAUSE Academy, a new framework meant to simplify and restructure educational and experiential programs to provide members with a clearer and more holistic view of what EDUCAUSE offers. The board was both excited about and supportive of the EDUCAUSE Academy concept. Following an enthusiastic discussion around the EDUCAUSE Academy as the front-facing access point and umbrella label for all professional learning

and career advancement opportunities at EDUCAUSE, Chair Norin suggested the topic be placed in the parking lot and revisited at a future meeting in more detail.

Vice President of Business Services and CFO Stacy Ruwe spent her time reviewing proposed changes in how the membership team calculates market share and how the new approach will allow for a better use of resources, especially when recruiting new members. In short, by narrowing down the population to EDUCAUSE's serviceable market, we can be more targeted in how we speak to and reach potential members. Loretta Parham expressed concern that this reemphasis may have unintended consequences and, in particular, a disproportionately negative impact on smaller institutions serving diverse populations, such as tribal colleges and/or HBCUs. Norin asked about the driver behind this shift and Ruwe summed it up as an ROI issue. Raechelle Clemmons expressed her support, adding that this shift will allow us to more accurately and clearly understand our market. The conversation that ensued centered around the impacts that this shift may have on different types of institution types, why certain types of institutions are more likely to be members, and ways we may be able to entice institutions or groups of institutions that historically have not become members of EDUCAUSE to consider membership through consortial or other special arrangements. Ruwe assured the board the review and consideration of the serviceable target market versus the total market will be regularly reviewed with an ongoing internal conversation. The board was asked to endorse the recommendation to proceed with the new market share analysis and agreed with unanimous support. In addition, Ruwe shared that membership renewals were tracking 6% ahead of the same time for the previous year and that the .edu domain rate increase had been approved.

2019 Organizational Goals: Status Updates

O'Brien provided a status report on the 2019 organizational goals. Most notably, he shared that the majority of tasks supporting the high-level goals are on track and therefore he expects that the majority of organizational goals will be met by the end of 2019. He highlighted a few items that had changed since the last meeting, noting in particular that the ultimate deliverable of an implemented and operational community platform would not occur until 2020 due to staffing and resource bottlenecks. Also, the decision to refrain from adding any additional software implementation to the already packed list in 2019, including a mentor matching application, limits the organization's ability to scale mentoring opportunities.

The board encouraged the EDUCAUSE staff to take an agile approach to projects. Clemmons asked if the culture at EDUCAUSE is one where things have to be perfect in order to release a product or launch a program. Grajek shared that EDUCAUSE has historically been both consensus- and excellence-driven, which often does slow things down. Staff shared that there are definitely pockets of experimenting and incubating, with new approaches to getting the work done. Workman pointed out that board members are all struggling with similar issues on their respective campuses. Staff agreed that it was important to take a more iterative and agile approach to projects and feel that EDUCAUSE is moving in the right direction.

Board Policies

McWhirter directed the group's attention to two policies provided in the board book that require board review and approval: the Board Travel Expense Reimbursement Policy and the Executive Compensation Policy.

With regard to the travel expense policy, Baker commented that her institution requires travel insurance for any international travel, and asked that this be considered as an allowable reimbursable expenses if we co-locate future board meetings with an international event as we did this time. It was noted that we may need to include an addendum to address costs associated with international travel.

Workman moved to approve the travel expense policy. Keith McIntosh seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

With regard to the compensation policy, Ruwe provided context, noting that EDUCAUSE does the research on executive compensation trends and presents the information to the board on an annual basis. The policy under consideration reflects current practice.

Elias Eldayrie moved to approve the Executive Compensation Policy. McIntosh seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

With regard to the approval process, Baker asked about perhaps moving to a two-stage approval process: review the policy at one meeting, approve it at another. O'Brien commented that we could consider the practice of a first reading and a second reading involving any policy changes; however, he noted that using the board portal will allow for a more iterative and flexible process. Parham suggested using the first and second reading approach for new policies only.

Personalization

Yang led the board in a strategy session on personalization. She showed the evolution from theory to practice and gave examples to illustrate how the approach has evolved, making it much more data-driven. Yang led the board through an exercise on web navigation, which elicited comments and questions on how this will change our current format. Yang noted that board feedback will help inform the work that will be done, and that the goal is for the website to be simpler and less menu-driven, which will contribute to greater accessibility. Yang also shared that the marketing team is in the process of implementing a new marketing automation tool that will provide new artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) functionality, which will lead to the ability to provide content recommendations to members in 2020. She continued to report on what we've learned so far, emphasizing a focus on fundamentals, universal design, continuous improvement, and agility due to the rapidly changing environment, as well as paying attention to trends that will continue to make us forward-looking.

Enterprise Risk Management

Ruwe led board members in an exercise to gauge their opinions about our risk tolerance vis-à-vis various vulnerabilities in eight risk areas. Martin provided additional context for each of the eight areas, and the board's ratings were then compared to EDUCAUSE staff ratings in these same areas. Responses to the risk exercise validated EDUCAUSE's current risk profile as being in alignment with board tolerance.

Trimester Financial Review

Eldayrie provided the Audit Committee report, noting they were very comfortable with the audit firm's process and that EDUCAUSE received a clean audit.

Eldayrie moved to approve the committee's recommendation to accept the audit as presented. Parham seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Board Treasurer McIntosh reported that the Finance Committee met to discuss the Form 990, and thanked EDUCAUSE staff, especially Alex Alavi, for their professionalism and thoroughness in providing the information. McIntosh commented on the need for continuity as officers change roles on the board. He also covered the investment highlights, reiterating that EDUCAUSE received a clean audit. He noted a concern regarding the small group of EDUCAUSE staff who choose not to enroll in the staff pension plan. The EDUCAUSE staff plan is currently an opt-in plan, and discussion centered on the possibility of either making the plan mandatory or changing to an opt-out only system.

Review of Parking Lot Items

Day 1 parking lot items included (1) further discussion of EDUCAUSE Academy and (2) consortium pricing and other strategies for attracting underrepresented member types. It was determined that Dahlstrom would solicit additional input from a small group of board members, including Soares, Koralesky, Smith, and McIntosh to further unpack the user experience and organizational structure opportunities that come with creating the EDUCAUSE Academy and report back to the board their recommendations. With regard to consortium pricing and other strategies for attracting underrepresented member types, McIntosh recommended that we hold this until the next strategic planning or member model discussion, which will likely take place in June 2020. Ruwe added that the Finance Committee, which also oversees membership, can discuss this issue at an upcoming meeting.

Thursday, June 27, 2019

Norin started the meeting with a recap of Day 1 and review of Day 2 agenda, which includes the board nominations process and two in-depth discussions around digital transformation and analytics.

Update on Recommendations Made by the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Nominations

Koralesky praised Tracy Schroeder, vice president of information services and technology at Boston University, as the 2019 Nominations Committee chair and her efforts toward implementing many of the recommendations made by the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Nominations, which had been presented to the board in October 2018. McWhirter offered some thoughts on the use of data and privacy issues in presenting information about the candidates to the committee. Workman provided a perspective from the Corporate Members Advisory Committee about the makeup of the board, and Clemmons observed that it's hard to bring new (non-CIO) perspectives to the board if it's mainly CIOs who are voting.

Presentation of Board Finalist and At-Large Options/Recommendations

Schroeder joined the meeting at 8:25 a.m. to present the Nominations Committee report, highlighting work done by the committee to encourage interest and engagement with the nominations process. Schroeder described the committee process for making its decisions for the eight semifinalists, then provided additional background about each candidate. Following Schroeder's report out, the board deliberated on the candidates and selected the following names to appear on the ballot for the 2019 election:

- Klara Jelinkova, Rice University
- Helen Norris, Chapman University
- Mark Roman, Simon Fraser University
- Jennifer Sparrow, Penn State University

Digital Transformation

Grajek engaged board members in an overview of the association's work on and vision for digital transformation (Dx). She shared a working definition developed by the Digital Transformation Task Force, calling out board member Joe Moreau for his active participation in this group. Grajek then provided case studies as background before leading board members through a visioning exercise aimed at understanding the future impact of Dx in higher education. The board postactivity discussion included comments about needing to understand what a truly transformed future looks like and how we get there, and how Dx isn't about technology but about institutional transformation driven by technology. Baker suggested that the definition of Dx presented to the board needs some reworking, while McIntosh suggested we consider how other industries are using the terminology. Norin wrapped up the conversation and suggested that the board return to this issue in the future.

Executive Session

The board entered executive session at 11:58 a.m. Joining the discussion was Ron Kraemer, retired vice president for IT and chief information and digital officer for the University of Notre Dame, to discuss the 360 degree review for O'Brien. The board recommends a three-year frequency for future 360 reviews. The executive session adjourned at 12:46 p.m.

Data Analytics

The full meeting reconvened at 12:50 p.m., and the group continued its discussion of Dx and what board members can do to support the Dx initiative within EDUCAUSE. Grajek noted that Dx depends on having a good data and analytics capability. The discussion shifted to focus on data analytics and how data can be used to effect change at the institutional level; the role of the CIO in enabling change; the idea of picking a topic that we want to focus on or attempt to solve with analytics; and possible partnership with other associations to advance our work in this area. Ultimately, the conversation found its way back to Dx, and the consensus was that EDUCAUSE should not only contextualize any work around analytics within the larger Dx conversation but also within every conversation, whether it be on teaching and learning, security, etc.

Review of Parking Lot Items

Day 2 parking lot items included (1) at-large appointments to the board and (2) potential agenda items for the October board meeting. The board started by discussing the current makeup of board membership, along with perceived gaps that exist and how those could be addressed through at-large appointments or through the leadership pipeline efforts. It was determined that O'Brien would draft a document outlining driving principles for the board makeup. These principles, along with at-large appointments, will be discussed at a special meeting of the board to be held virtually following the board election but prior to the October meeting. With regard to the October meeting, McWhirter shared that the 2020 organizational goals will be presented and Norin raised the topic of discussing the planning process itself. Baker noted that International Task Force recommendations would be presented and Workman added that an update on the activities of the Corporate Member Advisory Committee is also a potential topic for the next meeting.

Round Robin

Before the meeting came to a close, Norin asked meeting participants to share their thoughts and reflections about the board meeting or about the Convergence Forum that took place earlier in the week. Board members were uniformly appreciative of the quality of the meeting and the discussion, singling out McWhirter for her organization of the agenda and materials. Each participant cited a deep respect for fellow board members and a sense of pride and enthusiasm for the work of the association.

Adjourn Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.