

MID-STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
Regular Board Meeting  
Official Minutes  
September 18, 2019

PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

The regular meeting of the Mid-State Special Education Executive Committee was called to order by Chairman Dr. Wes Olson at 9:04 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dr. Wes Olson, Bond County; Mr. Mike Shackelford, Brownstown; Dr. Becky Schuchman, Carlinsville; Mr. Ben Theilen, Edinburg; Mr. David Powell, Hillsboro; Dr. Gregg Fuerstenau, Litchfield; Dave Meister, Morrisonville; Mr. Steve Phillips, Mulberry Grove; Mr. Aaron Hopper, Panhandle; Ms. Melissa Ritter, Ramsey; Ms. Julie Healy, St. Elmo; Mr. Chris Clark, South Fork; Dr. Jennifer Garrison, Vandalia

OTHERS PRESENT

Mrs. Angela Armour, Director; Mrs. Lyn Becker, Assistant Director; Mrs. Vickie Throne, Executive Secretary

Recognition of Visitors: None

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approval of Regular and Closed Session Minutes from August 21, 2019.
- Approval of Destruction of Executive Session Audio Recordings Older than 18 Months
- Financial report to date for FY20.
  - Mrs. Armour reported that the balance sheets for both July and August are included. July reflects assets of \$859,289.75 and August of \$1,351,191.33. Receipts vs. Expenditures reflect an August 31<sup>st</sup> cash balance of \$1,196,191.33 which included Revenue of \$576,952.06 and expenditures totaling \$235,050.48.
  - The projected September expenses are \$317,119.03 with projected revenue of \$729,745.16 attributable to district assessments. This does not include the transfers from CR to repay the loan. The resulting September 30<sup>th</sup> fund balance is projected at \$1,618,817.46.
  - Mrs. Armour reported that for the MSSE old account the revised balance sheet reflects current assets of \$546,980.51. The Receipt vs. Expenditures report includes Revenue of \$121,930.42 and expenditures total \$412,263.99.
  - The projected September expenses are estimated at \$3,000.00 with projected revenue of \$200.00. The resulting September 30<sup>th</sup> fund balance is projected at \$560,469.81.
  - Mrs. Armour reported that the Bond/Fayette balance sheet shows current assets of \$22,297.09. Christian Region balance sheet shows current assets of \$155,029.72. The \$150,000.00 loan from MSSE is documented in August. The MC/C Region balance sheet shows current assets of \$271,523.00.

- **Accounts Payable Review & Approval-** It was noted in the advanced packet that EBF is not included this month.
  - MSSE = \$13,173.88 Old – 15 Bills
  - MSSE = \$68,664.43 New – 16 Bills
  - BF = None
  - CR = None
  - MCC = \$1,256.91

A motion made by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Meister to approve the Consent Agenda, carried by a roll call vote of 13 yeas, 0 nays.

## REPORTS AND COMMUNICATION

### Director's Report

Mrs. Armour reported that we are almost fully staffed which is a blessing. However, we are still working to meet unmet and upcoming needs in the area of school psychology.

Mrs. Armour is pleased that some district superintendents are also hearing there will be a fix for the “drafting error” related to PA 101-0515 in the fall veto session. Although this is being referred to as “the RtI law,” it goes well beyond by formalizing what ISBE has been saying about RtI for years. Mrs. Armour noted that we will be vocal when the opportunity presents itself to be heard because this legislation, as written, will do more to ultimately harm kids than to help them. After considering the legal interpretation of the components provided by several legal sources, we are moving forward with recommendations while carefully considering the potential negative impact on staff and students. On Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>, superintendents received an email from Mrs. Armour providing a letter meeting the notification requirements to parents that is required within the first 20 days of school or eligibility. Mrs. Armour reminded superintendents that to it should be posted on the district and MSSE websites. If this is a continued requirement, it will be recommended to be added to the school handbook. To address the required “related service logs,” we have made all related service providers aware of the requirement and are working with providers to choose an option that meets the requirements and is the least burdensome for the individual. In many cases, they can use or modify a method of tracking service and progress that they are already using. EmbraceDS provided notification that they have modified a service report used for billing or time tracking to pull only the information required in the legislation. Another component of the law requires “copies of all written material that will be considered by the IEP team at the meeting” be provided to parents no later than 3 days prior to the meeting. After receiving additional information at a workshop with our legal counsel tomorrow, we will then move forward with attempting to meet this requirement. We will be focusing on the intent of the law which was to provide parents information so that they can be meaningful participants in their child’s IEP meeting. Mrs. Armour also noted that superintendents may hear from staff regarding these additional requirements as we can’t name anyone working in or with special education that this doesn’t potentially impact.

Mrs. Armour reported that on September 13, 2019, Mrs. Becker participated in the “Field Education Day 2019” at the University of Illinois. This annual social work internship fair gave 150 social work students the opportunity to learn about internships offered through school districts, special education cooperatives, mental health organizations, and not for profit agencies. Mrs. Becker was able to share information about MSSE and our member districts with several master’s level social workers who will be looking for an internship in FY21.

Mrs. Armour reported that the Steering & Finance Committees met on September 4<sup>th</sup>. Information was reviewed related to the cooperative Base Funding Minimum and the proposed Resolution provided by NPT. Additional legal information was sought from Shane Jones and a conference call was held last Tuesday including Dr. Olson and Mr. Powell. Committees met this morning prior to our meeting.

Mrs. Armour presented the Administrator and Teacher Salary Report from FY19 noting the report will be posted on our website.

Mrs. Armour presented the Vendor Contracts Over \$25,000.00 from FY19 noting the report will be posted on our website.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion made by Mr. Shackelford and seconded by Ms. Healy to enter into executive session carried by a roll call vote of 13 yeas, 0 nays at 9:17 a.m.

A motion made by Mr. Hopper and seconded by Mr. Phillips to return to open session carried by a roll call vote of 13 yeas, 0 nays at 9:45 a.m.

### ACTION ON BUSINESS ITEMS FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

No action was taken regarding the NPT EBF Resolution.

Dr. Olson reported that there needs to be discussion regarding legal representation of the Mid-State Cooperative. In terms of current legal issues that are in process the recommendation is to stay with the current counsel; however, there has been discussion at previous meetings and there is a need and a want amongst this body to have discussion moving forward specifically in regards to student cases or anything related to students. Dr. Olson has asked for input from others so that direction can be given to Mrs. Armour on how to proceed. Mrs. Armour reported that the list she has provided are law firms that provide legal counsel specific to special education. Mrs. Armour has had the opportunity to listen to several of these firms speak at presentations she has attended. Dr. Olson reported that he has had positive interaction with Brandon Wright and believes that he is one of the premier special education attorneys in the State. Dr. Olson reported that he has personally used two separate firms to represent his district. There is a legal firm they contact regarding labor and HR issues and another firm that they use for specific student issues. Dr. Olson asked if the board wishes to have a formal RFP or if it is a situation where we are providing guidance to the Director to say "the next time there is a student issue" we want to you call this specific law firm. Dr. Schuchman asked if there is still a need for a legal firm to help with the special education issues since the teachers and assistants are now hired by the school districts. The board directed Mrs. Armour to contact Brandon Wright to see if his firm would be able to represent Mid-State. Mr. Shackelford reported that it is his understanding that Brandon Wright currently represents NPT. Mr. Shackelford has concerns that it could be a conflict for the current EBF issue we are experiencing. Dr. Olson reported that we would not involve Mr. Wright in this issue.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

### NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Armour referenced the proposed FY20 Action Plan, and thanked everyone for taking the time to meet with Lyn Becker to discuss district specific data and related goals. We have committed those discussions to writing and will be sharing with coordinators and any other staff that may be involved in planning to efficiently and effectively target those goals. She noted that the action plan takes a step back from that the more district specific goals and encompasses targets that we all have related to student achievement and well-being and increasing those outcomes. Although will continue to focus some of our time and efforts on compliance as districts expect us to, the most important contribution we can provide is to target how we help a district, a school, or a group of students move toward proficiency. Mrs. Armour reported that as she sat in a training last week with a group of principals listening to Dr. Kathleen

Webber talk about where all the data is and how we can drill down to get to student specific data, it became very clear that we personally have access to none of it because it is all tied to districts. Mrs. Armour plans to work with the State Board to figure out how, with the superintendent's permission, we can access student specific data from our 13 districts that is important in order to help your schools. The coordinators are also going to work on how to assist and model best practices and help to monitor student progress. If a student is not progressing, we would then reevaluate, rewrite and try different interventions and focus more on the outcomes.

The Director's Goals were provided in advance and no discussion occurred.

A motion made by Mr. Shackelford and seconded by Ms. Ritter to approve the FY20 MSSE Action Plan and the FY20 Director's Goals as presented, carried by a roll call vote of 13 yeas, 0 nays.

DISCUSSION

The next Executive Committee Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 16 at 9:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

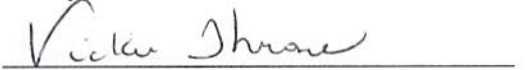
A motion made by Mr. Powell and seconded by Mr. Clark to adjourn the meeting at 10:07 a.m. carried unanimously by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Vickie Throne, Executive Secretary

  
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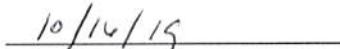
Chairperson

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Executive Secretary

  
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Date

  
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Date