

MID-STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Regular Board Meeting
Official Minutes
October 21, 2020

PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

The regular meeting of the Mid-State Special Education Executive Committee was called to order by Chairman, Dr. Becky Schuchman, at 9:02 a.m. with remote participation as allowed by Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation related to (COVID-19 pandemic).

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dr. Wes Olson (Remote), Bond County; Dr. Becky Schuchman (Remote), Carlinville; Dr. Gregg Fuerstenau (joined by phone at 9:17 am), Litchfield; Mr. Ben Theilen (Remote), Edinburg; Mr. Aaron Hopper (joined by phone at 9:17 a.m.), Panhandle; Ms. Melissa Ritter (Remote), Ramsey; Mr. Chris Clark (Remote), South Fork; Mr. Robert Koontz (Remote), Mulberry Grove; Dr. Jennifer Garrison (Remote), Vandalia; Mr. Mike Shackelford (Remote), Brownstown; Hillsboro; Ms. Julie Healy (Remote), St. Elmo

OTHERS PRESENT

Mrs. Angela Armour, Director; Mrs. Vickie Throne, Executive Secretary; Ms. Liz Holcomb, Business Manager; Mr. Kurtis Land, CTI technology

Recognition of Visitors: Ms. Robin Yockey, Auditor from Mose, Yockey, Brown and Kull

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Dave Meister, Morrisonville; Mr. David Powell, Hillsboro

CONSENT AGENDA

The following were presented as part of the Consent Agenda for approval:

- Regular Session Minutes from September 16, 2020.
- Destruction of Executive Session Audio Recordings Older than 18 Months from the MSSE March 20, 2019 MSSE and former Christian and MC/C Region.
- Financial report - The FY 21 Balance Sheet and Receipt vs. Expenditures reflect a September 30th fund balance of \$2,374,985.39 which includes revenue of \$503,085.95 and expenditures totaling \$431,727.29. The projected October expenses are estimated at \$459,223.23 with projected revenue of \$1,123,640.89. The resulting October 31st fund balance is projected at \$3,042,646.15.
- October Accounts Payable List in the amount of \$202,509.00 was presented for approval.

A motion made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Theilen to approve the Consent Agenda. Roll Call Vote. Olson, yes; Healy, yes; Koontz, yes; Ritter, yes; Garrison, yes; Clark, yes; Schuchman, yes; Theilen, yes. Motion carried 9-0

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Robin Yockey presented the FY20 audit remotely. She reported the financial statements for FY20 consist of the consolidated report and that the Joint Agreement was not required to have a single audit. While the sub-regions had some activity in the early months of the year, they were all complete by June 30, 2020. In the audit reports that what we have first is the Independent Auditor's Report. It gives and unmodified opinion with the regulatory basis which says that your financial statements are fairly presented in accordance with the regulatory basis of the county or how ISBE requires you to present your financial statements. Also included is the Adverse Opinion-GAAP which is required because the financial statements are available through FOIA to businesses, individuals, and creditors that might not understand the regulatory basis of accounting. The report also indicates that the supplementary schedule that company's report is also fairly stated in relation to the financial statements. There is also a report

required by the Government Auditing Standards, and it includes a reference to one audit finding related to the late filing of both the fiscal year 19 Annual Financial Report and the Annual Statement of Affairs which were not filed until January of 2020. There is a specific compliance requirement included on page two of the AFR for which we are required to respond if either of those forms were filed late for the prior school year. A brief overview of the financial statements is the Joint Agreement ended the year with approximately \$1,360,000 of cash investments. There are no restrictions of the fund balance. Results of operations were a deficit balance of \$551,000.00. This year the financial statements also include the return of \$356,000 of the sub-region fund balance to the member districts. That combined with the \$551,000.00 deficit of operations means that the Joint Agreement fund balance was reduced by \$907,000.00 during the fiscal year. Ms. Yockey reported that the receipts and disbursements were both materially inflated by the payments made by the State of Illinois and payments made to THIS and TRS on behalf of Mid-State certified staff. Ms. Yockey reported that approximately \$6,700,000 was recorded on behalf of payments and that is greater than receipts or disbursements together, so it will be interesting to see what happens to that number next year with the reduction of certified staff at the Joint Agreement. As far as income and expenses, local funds consist of mainly assessments that are 90% of the local funds. State flow-thru and State revenue were approximately \$1,400,000 and Federal flow-thru and Federal revenue were \$710,000.00. We had the final payments of the fiscal year 19 IDEA grant and also the IDEA Preschool grant. As far as expenses by object the largest expenditures continue to be salaries and benefits followed by other objects which include all of the flow through payments to member districts. Hearing no questions or concerns, Ms. Yockey thanked Mrs. Armour and her staff for accommodating the remote audit procedures, and she thank all the superintendents for their time this morning.

A motion made by Mr. Shackelford and seconded by Ms. Ritter to approve the FY20 Audit as presented. Roll Call Vote. Olson, yes; Healy, yes; Garrison, yes; Schuchman, yes; Shackelford, yes; Clark, yes; Ritter, yes; Theilen, yes; Koontz, yes. Motion carried 9-0

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATION

Mrs. Armour reported that in August, the Department of Human Services conducted its 3-year compliance review of our Secondary Transition Education Program. The review documents that in FY20 we received \$206,500 in DHS STEP funding which supported 120 students and resulted in 45 completed outcomes. A DHS outcome required at least 60 days and 240 hours of employer paid employment. Once again, all Program and Performance Review items were met at 100% overall with no Findings or Corrective Action. In spite of the change to all remote last spring and the challenges of the current school year, our STEP program and Transition Services are continuing to meet the needs of our high school students. We might all agree that the ultimate purpose of the education that we provide for all students is to see them successfully transition to employment, group home with supported employment, a technical/trade school, or a college/university. We have a very strong program, recognized by DHS, with considerable experience and expertise that provides education and supports our students as they transition. In addition to the regular STEP program which supports itself with the exception of the required match funding, we took advantage of a COVID program through DHS from April through September, connecting with and supporting students enrolled in the STEP program. To date, we have received over \$48,000 in these COVID funds. Some employees might have looked at this "opportunity" as a whole lot of extra work since nearly 1,000 contacts were made with students during the spring and summer. Mrs. Armour received feedback from the Transition Specialists and their comments included, "Meeting the kids in person, via zoom, and or Google meets, has been well worth it. The stories I have heard and the support I feel we gave them, has been extremely rewarding. I love my job." "It has been nice to have to "slow down" a bit and really take time with students. I have learned a lot during the COVID experience." We made sure that a portion of this funding went back to the students who stayed engaged in school and learning as well as completed transition activities. This is just one example of how our long history of partnering with community and state agencies pays off for our students. These ladies are hard-working, innovative, dedicated, and exceptional transition coordinators. Mrs. Armour announced that she will be presenting Laura Snyder, Joan Saatkamp, and Randi Riemann with the Making a Difference Award for all of their efforts on behalf of Mid-State and our member districts.

Mrs. Armour reported that in the packet that Vickie sent late yesterday with your Zoom link, there was a separate pdf containing information on Time-out and Physical restraint. As you recall, it was about 18 months ago that we were all responding to requests for information regarding practices and data related to time-out and restraint in districts which resulted in the Chicago Tribune article that came out last November, and then the emergency administrative rules and resulting legislative changes that are now in place. Mrs. Armour noted that it's important that we are implementing sound practices that provide educational benefits to all students as well as following procedures and documenting as required. We have simplified the information and created a process to assist in meeting the new requirements. Mrs. Becker, who is a board-certified behavior analyst, provided a brief overview of what you need to know and is designing a short training for your designee, principals, teachers, and other staff who may be involved. Mrs. Armour recommended that it would be wise to have Mrs. Becker and/or your program coordinator on your district committee that meets annually. Mrs. Becker reported that there have been some important changes made to the rules when using restrictive interventions. These new rules apply to all students not just students with IEPs. Restrictive interventions can only be used when there is imminent danger of serious physical harm AND less restrictive interventions have been attempted and unsuccessful. Time out and physical restraint must not be used for punishment, discipline, convenience or to prevent property damage. The new TO/PR rules include changes to how we must supervise students in time out or physical restraint, what happens in the time out environment, and procedures for monitoring and documenting the use of restrictive interventions. We have developed a check list of specific steps that districts need to take to be in compliance with the new requirements. First, school boards must adopt PRESS Policy 7:190 and the MSSE Policy and Procedures for Behavioral Interventions. Districts need to designate one person to maintain TO, ITO, and PR records, provide eight hours of training by December 31st to those staff using TO, ITO, and PR, and ensure that all incidents of TO, ITO, and PR are documented using ISBE form 11-01. This includes ensuring that parents are notified within one business day and the necessary documentation is entered into SIS within two business days following the use of a restrictive intervention. If a child experiences a restrictive intervention three days in a 30-day period, an IEP or Review meeting must be held. If a child experiences a prone or supine restraint on two days within a 30-day period an IEP or Review meeting must be held. Finally, an annual review of all restrictive interventions used during the school year must be conducted by a district committee that includes a principal and other individuals who are knowledgeable about the use of restrictive interventions. MSSE is prepared to assist districts with these new requirements and have developed a google documentation form to help track needed data for the annual review of process

Mrs. Armour reported that all thirteen districts FY21 IDEA Flow-Through and Pre-School grants are approved. The FY21 Final IDEA part B Flow-Through and Pre-School allocations have been released and were provided in the advanced packet. The IDEA grants were written with the 95% allocation, so some additional funds are available to write for or carry-over to FY22. Mrs. Armour reported that she and Mrs. Throne reviewed the schools in each district who have youth-in-care this school year as compared to last. Mrs. Armour will be sharing district specific information so that adjustments can be made to maximize your reimbursement from both IDEA and YIC/orphanage. This may require amending the IDEA grant or may involve adjusting which paraprofessional assistants you are charging to the grant. In response to questions about the use of the 5% of IDEA Flow-Through funds that are required to be set-aside for Professional Development and in-service, Mrs. Armour noted that some years it can be difficult to spend the 5% on special education related professional development. Mrs. Armour confirmed with the ISBE IDEA supervisor that although 5% must be set aside, these funds will roll-over to next year if not expended. She stated that the actual requirement for PD is "very light" and the district must expend "something on professional development" utilizing the IDEA funds. Mrs. Armour reminded the Board that if you have included your Mid-State purchased service for Professional Development in your IDEA grant, you'll show the payment/assessment on your expenditure report and in the Periodic Report having easily met the requirement. Mrs. Armour reported that the IDEA Periodic Report for the first quarter is coming due at the end of this month. Mrs. Armour is available to assist with the completion of this requirement and noted that ISBE will eventually freeze funds if this report is not completed.

Mrs. Armour reported that along with our continued mentoring of new teachers and CPI trainings, Lyn Becker and Emma Reichert, behavior and autism specialist, provided a three-part virtual training series on

a new communication, behavior and functional skills curriculum, assessment and professional guide called Essential for Living. Similar to the VB-MAPP, this instrument based on the principles of applied behavior analysis is designed to be used with students in the life skills programs who have more significant challenges and cannot be assessed using traditional methods. Participants in the training included 10 junior high and secondary life skills teachers from 8 of our member districts. Teachers who participated in this training reported they are excited to have a tool that will help them effectively evaluate, instruct and progress monitor the neediest students in their class. One-on-one coaching will be provided to each participant as they learn to use EFL with their students. The EFL training series was recorded so additional staff can access the training as needed. We also have an exciting training coming up on Social Skills that will be presented by Infinetec. This training will present evidenced based practices recommended by the National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorder including scripting, video modeling, and social stories. Participants will learn about the research behind the evidence-based practices and will be guided through practical uses in the classroom and school setting. This virtual Social Skills training is being held on the afternoon of Friday, November 6, 2020 and is also free of charge to member district staff and parents

Mrs. Armour announced that the embrace e-signature feature has been activated. She thanked all superintendents for signing and returning the embrace document for your district so quickly. She shared that we have already heard from some very happy program coordinators and SLPs regarding this new feature.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mrs. Armour presented the PRESS 105 for second reading and approval.

A motion made by Dr. Fuerstenau and seconded by Mr. Clark to approve the 2nd reading of PRESS 105, as presented. Roll Call Vote. Ritter, yes; Olson, (video frozen); Clark, yes; Healy (video frozen); Koontz, yes; Hopper, yes; Shackelford, yes; Fuerstenau, yes; Garrison, yes; Theilen, yes, Schuchman, yes. Motion carried 9-0

DISCUSSION

None


ADJOURNMENT

A motion made by Ms. Ritter and seconded by Mr. Theilen to adjourn the meeting at 9:39 a.m. Roll Call Vote. Hopper, yes; Dr. Olson, no response; Ms. Healy, no response; Garrison, yes; Fuerstenau, yes; Schuchman, yes; Shackelford, yes; Mr. Clark, no response; Ritter, yes; Theilen, yes; Koontz, yes. Motion carried 8-0

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Vickie Throne, Executive Secretary


Chairperson


Date


Secretary of the Board


Date