

MID-STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Regular Board Meeting
Official Minutes
August 8, 2023

PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

The regular meeting of the Mid-State Special Education Executive Committee held at the Regional Office of Education #3 in Vandalia was called to order by Chairman, Ms. Melissa Ritter at 9:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Bond County: Dr. Wes Olson arrived at 9:04 am; Brownstown: Mr. Mike Shackelford; Edinburg: Ms. Ashley Francis, arrived at 9:17 a.m.; Hillsboro: Mr. David Powell, arrived at 9:04 a.m.; Litchfield: Dr. Gregg Fuerstenau; Morrisonville: Mr. Patrick Murphy; Mulberry Grove: Ms. Casie Bowman arrived at 9:05 am; Panhandle: Mr. Aaron Hopper; Ramsey: Ms. Melissa Ritter; St. Elmo: Mr. Travis Portz; Vandalia: Dr. Jennifer Garrison,

MEMBERS ABSENT

Carlinsville: Dr. Becky Schuchman; South Fork: Mr. Chris Clark

OTHERS PRESENT

Mrs. Bobbi Fisher, Director; Liz Holcomb, Business Manager; Vickie Throne, Executive Secretary

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- Regular Session Minutes from May 17, 2023;
- Destruction of regular session audio recordings maintained to comply with OMA related to remote meetings from 11/3/2021, 12/15/2021, and 1/19/2022 and no executive recordings;
- Semi-annual review of closed session minutes-none to review nor open;
- Financial report - The FY23 Balance Sheet and Receipt vs. Expenditures reflects the June 30, 2023 fund balance of \$1,608,301.93. For FY24, July projected revenue is \$595,441.34 and expenses are estimated at \$398,725.97. The resulting July 31st fund balance is projected at \$1,807,451.38. Due to the board meeting being so early this month the July actuals will be provided at the September meeting;
- Request for Accounts Payable approval and order for immediate payment for the August 16th bills. Payable lists approved on May 17th for June 22nd payables totaled \$282,999.55 and July 19th totaled \$101,428.78 are included for review. We did get approval from the finance committee to pay the down payment for the new office phones through CTI, totaling \$2,132.84 which is half of the initial cost. The upgrade will save the cooperative money on the monthly bill and will provide a much-needed phone upgrade. The other half of the initial cost will be due upon install of the phones, which we are hoping will happen mid-August.

A motion made by Dr. Garrison and seconded by Mr. Hopper to approve the Consent Agenda. Roll Call Vote. Fuerstenau, yes; Shackelford, yes; Portz, yes; Murphy, yes; Ritter, yes; Garrison, yes; Hopper, yes. Motion carried 7-0.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATION

Mrs. Fisher reported that we are grateful to all of our returning employees and to our new Program Coordinator Ms. Amy Knodle, School Psychologist Interns Ms. Amy Toberman and Ms. Kristen White, and we are pleased to be covering an SLP maternity leave with a combined effort of in-district SLPs and the help of TheraKids. We still have a vacant Speech Language Pathologist Assistant position in Vandalia and we have two Speech Language Pathologist maternity leaves to cover for second semester.

Mrs. Fisher would like to take some time to share how her transition as the new director has been going. As soon as school closed in May, Ms. Fisher spent several weeks in the Mid-State office to continue the valuable mentoring sessions that Angie provided. Angie spent a large amount of time with Ms. Fisher in her final year as director, and that will play a major factor in Ms. Fisher's success. Ms. Fisher used time in June to prepare for her start, including preparing for several staff meetings and training scheduled for

July and August. Mrs. Fisher attended the Director's Conference where she heard Dr. Tony Sanders speak, and she attended breakout sessions (on IDEA allocations, IDEA updates, Dispute Resolution, I-Star Data Collections, and Mentoring for new Directors). Mrs. Fisher also attended several trainings including OMA and FOIA, Budget Basics, and on-going legal webinars made available to me. Mrs. Fisher and Angie worked on grant periodic reports, prepped IDEA grants for districts, approved contracts, paid bills, and took care of the formality of switching all accounts over to Mrs. Fisher (bank, ISBE, GATA, DHS, SDS, Embrace, website, etc.). Mrs. Fisher has taken advantage of the board providing her with a membership to CEC, IASA, and IAASE. Organization goals, director goals, Action Plan, and employee handbook were all updated as well. Employment procedures were updated with the help of Bushue, to meet the requirements associated with Faith's Law. The employee evaluation schedule was updated, ensuring all employees due for an evaluation has one completed this school year. Mrs. Fisher reported that the staff in the MSSE office all knew her prior to starting this new role, but we have spent time together and discussed procedures and how some can be simplified for efficiency. We took time during lunch once a week this summer to stay connected and to discuss progress on summer tasks. CTI and Mrs. Fisher have worked together to get a new phone system for the office, which was much overdue. The existing phones were over 20 years old and it will save the organization money in the long run to make the switch. Mrs. Fisher also continued working with Embrace on creating a new Behavior Intervention Plan template for IEPs. Lyn Becker, Brandy Buske, Emma Reichert Campbell, and Angie Armour were working on updating this form previously. Staff feel that the new form will be more user-friendly to follow. The organization has initiated a Facebook page for recruitment and general celebration purposes. In July, we offered a bootcamp for 1st/2nd year Program Coordinators (Terry Swalley, Keri Buscher, Barb Daugherty, and Amy Knodle all attended). In August, we hosted GoForward with PCs where we heard legal updates and answers to questions from Brandon Wright and we also discussed beginning of year business. Our book study this year with PCs will be "Your Life is Your Message" by Nancy Stanford Blair, focusing on administration remembering that their life is their message and they should make it inspiring! We made a visual for them to keep in their offices where they listed words to remind them of what they want their message to say this year. We have offered Year 1 mentoring for 1st year staff, Emma Reichert Campbell hosted ULS and DTI trainings. We will also provide 5 different CPI trainings by the end of the month along with us having our whole-staff back to school meeting that will include another visit from Brandon Wright.

Mrs. Fisher reported that we have a couple of celebrations to start the year. Mrs Emma Reichert Campbell passed her BCBA test so she is officially a BCBA. We congratulate Emma on her hard work towards this certificate as it was a hard and long road for her. Another celebration is that we received \$10,623 from PSIC for the Equity Return and it was deposited July 19th.

Mrs. Fisher reported that the FY23 Audit dates are set for September 5th-8th with the audit presentation being presented at the Oct. 18th board meeting. We have been providing and sharing information with the auditor's since mid-June.

Mrs. Fisher reported that the Maintenance of Effort compliance has been met through increased costs or through exceptions for all districts. The delayed IDEA grants were released on June 23rd and were due July 31st. Please continue to reach out if you have questions or need any assistance.

Mrs. Fisher reported that Ms. Francis will be joining the Policy Committee for the FY24 school year.

Mrs. Fisher report that Angie Armour asked her to see if there would be any interest in changing the Assessment Structure. If your district has any interest in making changes, please contact Mrs. Fisher or a member of the finance committee to voice your request.

Mrs. Fisher reported that all Special Education Claims were submitted for FY23 school year. Vickie has emailed the estimated reimbursement reports for both Youth in Care and Private Facilities to district book keepers and copied all superintendents on the email.

Mrs. Fisher reported that Brandon Wright met with our PC's and provided a legal update. Mrs. Fisher reported that the following bills are in the works and coming:

- SB 2039- Required to have one designated employee in each district that is trained to provide PUNS support to families. Also, students with developmental disabilities, the IEP team is to speak on the PUNS status.
- HB 1123- Requires school report card to include % of special education student graduations
- SB 2390- Allowing employees to register their children in the district they are employed by- Brandon cautions that it does not remove the resident district's responsibility when it comes to IEP compliance/other responsibilities.
- HB 3224- CTE required to be provided to parents now, not just students
- HB 3680- IEPs must account for accommodations in emergency situations

Mrs. Fisher reminded the board that the Governing Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 23rd at 6:30 p.m. at the Mid-State office. In-person participation will be important as the emergency declaration has ended. A meal will be provided so we encourage attendance above what is required for the quorum. Please notify us who will be attending, if not already done so. To date we have the following attending: Carlinsville, Ramsey, and Vandalia.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Fisher presented and recommended for approval the first reading of PRESS 122, approval of contracts and service agreement renewal for Hottenrott & Associates, LLC, Region III Special Education and TheraKids for SLP substitute coverage.

A motion made by Dr. Fuerstenau and seconded by Mr. Shackelford to recommend approval of FY24 contract with Hottenrott & Associates, Region III Cooperative, and Therakids. Roll Call Vote: Olson, yes; Portz, yes; Powell, yes; Garrison, yes; Shackelford, yes; Hopper, yes; Murphy, yes; Fuerstenau, yes; Ritter, yes; Bowman, yes. Motion carried 10-0.

A Motion made by Mr. Hopper and seconded by Dr. Garrison to recommend approval of the first reading of PRESS 112. Roll Call VOTE: Hopper, yes; Olson, yes; Portz, yes; Garrison, yes; Fuerstenau, yes; Murphy, yes; Shackelford, yes; Ritter, yes; Powell, yes; Bowman, yes. Motion carried 10-0.

Related to the FY24 Mid-State Budget and the budget hearing scheduled for August 23, 2023, Mrs. Fisher referred to the FY24 Budget Summary for detailed information on the budget and assessments. She noted the main changes from the preliminary to the proposed budget were: O & M services, reduced workers compensation across the board, STEP changes given Joan Saatkamp will work 20 more days and STEP plans to purchase more curriculum, TheraKids rate increase, SLP substitute potential costs communications cost for new phones, BDS 5% fee charge for reimbursements, a custom designed IEP form, and the Medicaid flow-thru. Several FY24 Proposed Budget documents as well as the resulting FY24 Proposed Assessment Breakdown were included in the advanced packet. Please let Mrs. Fisher know if you have an questions or concerns.

A motion was made by Ms. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Powell to recommend presenting the proposed FY24 Mid-State Budget at the budget hearing scheduled for August 23, 2023. Roll Call Vote: Portz, yes; Olson, yes; Ritter, yes; Fuerstenau, yes; Murphy, yes; Garrison, yes; Bowman, yes; Shackelford, Powell, yes; Hopper, yes. Motion carried 10-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ACTION ITEMS

A motion made by Ms. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Powell to recommend accepting the resignation of Jeanne Winkler, Speech Language Pathologist substitute effective July 10, 2023. Roll Call Vote. Hopper, yes; Olson, yes; Portz, yes; Garrison, yes; Fuerstenau, yes; Murphy, yes; Shackelford, yes; Ritter, yes; Powell, yes; Bowman, yes. Motion carried 10-0.

DISCUSSION

The FY24 Budget Hearing and Governing Board are scheduled for Wednesday, August 23, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at the Mid-State office in Morrisonville. The Executive Committee Board will meet next on Wednesday, September 20th at 9:00 a.m. in Morrisonville.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion made by Dr. Olson and seconded by Mr. Powell to adjourn the meeting at 9:18 a.m. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs: Bobbi Fisher, Director

Melissa Ritter
Chairperson

9/20/23
Date

Rickie Shuman
Secretary of the Board

9/20/23
Date