

MID-STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Regular Board Meeting
Official Minutes
December 17, 2025

PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

Mr. Travis Portz at 9:01 a.m., called the meeting of the Mid-State Special Education Executive Committee to order.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mulberry Grove: Ms. Casie Bowman (arrived at 9:05am); Edinburg: Ms. Ashley Francis; Panhandle: Mr. Aaron Hopper; Brownstown: Mr. David Lund; Hillsboro: Ms. Hope McBrain; Bond: Dr. Wes Olson; St. Elmo: Mr. Travis Portz; Ramsey: Ms. Melissa Ritter

MEMBERS ABSENT

South Fork: Mr. Chris Clark; Vandalia: Dr. Jennifer Garrison; Litchfield: Dr. Kelly McClain; Morrisonville: Mr. Patrick Murphy; Carlinville: Dr. Becky Schuchman

OTHERS PRESENT

Ms. Bobbi Fisher, Director; Ms. Liz Reynolds, Business Manager; Ms. Ingrid Watkins, Executive Secretary

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- Approval of Minutes from the October 14, 2025 Regular Meeting and October 30, 2025 Special Board Meeting..
- Approval of Destruction of May 15, 2024 Executive Session Recording.
- The FY26 Balance Sheet and Receipts vs. Expenditures reflects the October expenditures totaled \$548,409.11 and the revenue totaled \$800,703.39. The October fund balance totaled \$3,105,774.92. November expenditures totaled \$543,242.03 and revenue totaled \$669,958.05. November fund balance of \$3,232,490.94. Our resulting Dec. 31st fund balance is projected at \$3,197,799.39. FY26 revenue is being received as anticipated.
- Accounts Payable Review, Approval, and Order for Immediate Payment of December 17th bills in the amount of \$202,687.35 is requested AND the January 21st payables is requested for pre-approval given the anticipated cancellation of the January Executive Board meeting. At the October board meeting, advanced payments of payables for November 19th was granted. November 19th payables totaled \$185,998.75. Notable expenses for November was for the Thrive A/C units. Other items were the EBF flow-through, travel, and other normal expenses. December expenses include the Bushue Contract routine bills, Thrive fire door (\$12,500), the Ocular systems (PECT/STEP contract) (\$15,000), SMASE invoices (they have been behind on invoicing us), EBF flow-through to districts, professional development, materials/assessments/mileage, legal, and contractual therapies.

ACTION ITEMS

A motion made by Mr. Hopper and seconded by Ms. Ritter to approve the Consent Agenda. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Francis, yes; Mr. Hopper, yes; Mr. Lund, yes; Ms. McBrain, yes; Dr. Olson, yes; Mr. Portz, yes; Ms. Ritter, yes; Motion carried 7 yea, 0 nay.

Ms. Bowman arrived at 9:05am

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATION

Mrs. Fisher provided the following updates.

Legal Updates and Reminders

- PA 104-147 (effective January 1)- The IEP notice shall inform the parent/guardian's right to invite other individuals to the meeting. This does request the district to be notified before the

- meeting. The notice will also include a one-page document on the process of how to request IEP facilitation. ISBE is developing this form.
- PA 104-263 (effective January 1)- Mental Health Records can be accessed by the parent or guardian of a minor, regardless of the minor's age, if the student receives special education services. This can only be done for the purpose of inspecting and copying a record of the specific mental health or developmental services that the parent or guardian consented to on the recipient's behalf for special education services; or the designated representative of a student over the age of 18 involved in special education.
 - PA 104-314- (effective January 1) ABLE ACCOUNT- Beginning in the 26-j27 school year, school districts shall provide informational material on the ABLE account program on their school district websites.
 - PA 104-368 (effective January 1)- Independent Evaluations- The timeline for filing due process if a district elects to challenge a parental request for an IEE is increased from 5 calendar days to 7 school days. Also, the timeline for completing the IEE is increased from 30 calendar days to 60 school days.
 - Section 226.220(a) requires that a copy of the IEP be given "immediately" to the parent "unless a later date is agreed upon by the parent and documented in the IEP"
 - Section 22.300 was amended related to homebound services in a few ways, including removing the ability of the IEP team to consider the need for home or hospital services, and replacing it with merely determining the "type and amount" of the services. Also, it notes that instruction may be delivered in-person or via an online platform, as determined by the IEP team.
 - Section 226.180 now allows a parental request for an IEE to be submitted to the Superintendent or to a district special education administrator.
 - Section 226.401.20 were amended to require residential placements to convene an IEP meeting to discuss the situation before providing notice of dismissal from the program, except in cases where the health and safety of any student are endangered.
 - Section 226.520 was amended to change the timeline for Prior Written Notice from 10 calendar days to 10 school days. That means a change of placement, etc. is not effective until 10 school days, effectively expanding the time period during which a parent can request due process or mediation to invoke stay put.

Mrs. Fisher noted that National School Psychology Week took place in November and Mid-State Special Education would like to thank our School Psychologist for their hard work. Mid-State has the best of the best with Tricia Kelley, Kristy Haston, Amanda Cunningham, Lisa Murfee, Kassi Charles, Lucas Altenberger, Kristen Davies, Larry Emerick, Megan McDowell, and Jessica Torbeck. Mrs. Fisher also noted the Mid-State Action Plan updates.

Mrs. Fisher provided an update on insurance. After working with the insurance agent Brady, Mid-State decided to stay with the current insurance carriers. There was an increase of 8.41% for the primary and 15% increase for the secondary, but it was still the best plan at the best price.

In December, despite the snow, the staff meeting was held on December 12th. Mid-State awarded four employees the Making a Difference Award; Tammy Burney, Brianna Taylor, Shawna Thole, and Nichole Robbins for their continuous work for the organization, Litchfield District, and for Thrive. Brandon Wright presented legal updates for continuing education. Prior to the meeting, the psychologist met to discuss the new IEP forms and SCISHA held a meeting as well.

Mrs. Fisher provided a reminder that IDEA Part B grant can now be amended to budget for the final 10% allotment. She also provided the following update on DLM.

- a. DLM 1%- Districts will be notified January 16, 2026 regarding what Tier they fall in under the new DLM tier system.
 - i. Tier 1- Universal Support (Complete Justification and Assurances Survey- these will be added to IWAS and will be approved by the Special Education Director)
 1. LEAs between 0%-1.99% for SY25 and/or
 2. LEAs with less than 5 students tested in each subject area in SY25.

- ii. Tier 2- Targeted Support (Complete Justification and Assurances Survey and complete the self-assessment)
 1. LEAs above 1% for two consecutive years and have an increase of 0.5 percentage points or higher between SY24 and SY25 and/or;
 2. LEAs above 2% for SY25
- iii. Tier 3: Intensive Support (Complete Justification and Assurances Survey, Complete an LEA Action Plan and submit it to ISBE for approval, attend required/recorded trainings and submit verification of the completion of the trainings to ISBE, and complete IEP review forms)
 1. LEAs above 3% for 2 or more consecutive years between SY24 and SY25 and/or;
 2. LEAs with 3 consecutive years above 1% and the rate increased by 0.25 percentage points or greater over the 3-year timeline of SY23 vs SY25

Mrs. Fisher noted that Excess Cost is due January 15th. Three districts have been completed. Ingrid is waiting on the remaining districts AFR's from ISBE. As soon as they are available and Excess Cost has been completed, the superintendents will be notified. Mrs. Fisher also provided information on Cartwheel, a medical practice in Illinois that partner exclusively with K-12 schools. Cartwheel provides the following services:

- providing students with evidence based 1:1 therapy, intensive outpatient program, school avoidance program, psychiatric evaluations, and ongoing medication management with **no waitlist** via telehealth in multiple languages
- supporting families with dedicated care coordinators, family therapy, and 1:1 parent guidance sessions
- supporting schools with a dedicated clinical program manager that is your clinical subject matter expert who can consult on individual student cases, consult on crisis, and provide culturally relevant parent psychoeducation
- providing services at a convenient time - during school, after school, evenings, weekends, school breaks, and summer
- accepting all insurance, including Medicaid
- including a HIPPA compliant portal that is one place to easily refer students, track progress, and view the data on our impact and efficacy
- creating a more financially sustainable model

It was decided to invite Polly Thomas from Cartwheel to the next meeting to provide more information and answer any questions.

Mrs. Fisher provided committee reports. The Thrive committee met October 14th, November 18th, and December 10th. The committee discussed timely Items and made the following motions for the executive board to act on:

- October 14, 2025 motion: A motion to recommend increasing a sub's daily rate from \$125 to \$150 if they are filling an assignment for more than 10 days, Shelby Nash was also approved to be paid \$24 per hour when filling the role of teaching (she is a para), and hired long-term subs that have a teacher's license will be paid at step 1 of the teacher salary schedule, all as presented.
- November 18th motion: A motion to recommend Alicia Gonzales to be hired as a paraprofessional, hire Robert Osborne as a long-term teacher substitute, pending CTE certification, through the remainder of the 25-26 school year on step one of the salary scale, and approve the food service agreement, all as presented.
- December 10th motion: Motion to recommend approval to purchase one more surveillance camera for Thrive and to approve the Shared Programs Operations Agreement 12-10-2025 edit.

OLD BUSINESS

None

ACTION ITEMS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Fisher noted the following new business:

- A. Approval of Continuous Service/Seniority Lists – Lists were distributed to employees for input and are in final form documenting service.
- B. First Reading of Press Policies 120 and other additions/edits
 - a. Press 120-The Policy Committee previewed the proposed changes to policies; no concerns from them to meet or to discuss further.
 - b. Other additions/edits also presented to the Policy Committee with no concerns
 - i. 2-250 E2 (for office use)
 - ii. 3-60 and 3-60E (added as we have a Principal now)
 - iii. 4-60 AP1 and AP5 (additions needed for the School Nutrition Program)
 - iv. 4-120 (addition needed for the School Nutrition Program)
 - v. 4-170 AP1 (added for Thrive)
 - vi. 4-190 AP1 and AP2 (added for Thrive)
 - vii. 5-120 AP2, E (added for Thrive)
 - viii. 5-125 E (added for Thrive)
 - ix. 6-50 (added for the School Nutrition Program)
 - x. 7-190 AP3 (added for Thrive)
- C. The Executive Board was notified that it is time for the Director’s evaluation. Mr. Clark will complete the evaluation.
- D. Edit to Mid-State Special Education’s Articles of Joint Agreement-
 - a. PA 104-0218- It extends the withdrawal time frame from 12 to 18 months. It also changes the requirements for the member district wishing to withdraw, it outlines the requirements with the ROE, and discusses how and when proportionate share of any debts or liabilities incurred (edits are on pages 12-15).
 - b. Effective January 1, 2026, Joint Agreements will now have changes to the withdrawal requirements. The changes to the document were provided in your advanced packet. These edits were provided by Brandon Wright. It is the job of the Governing Board to approve changes to the Articles of Joint Agreement. It will need approval to present this edited version to the Governing Board for their approval.
- E. Purchase additional surveillance camera at Thrive
- F. Approve edits to the Shared Programs Operations Agreement for the Vandalia shared programs and for the Thrive MSSE Public Day School.
- G. Presentation and Approval of Membership, Contract, and Service Agreements for SIEU Affiliation Agreement, Bradley University Affiliation Agreement, and Vandalia Food Service Agreement.

ACTION ITEMS

A motion made by Ms. Bowman and seconded by Mr. Hopper to approve the Seniority List, first reading of Press 120 plus additions, recommend the edits to the Articles of Joint Agreement to the Governing Board, approve the purchase of the additional camera, the edits to the Shared Programs Agreement, the SIUE and Bradley University affiliation agreement and the Vandalia Food Service Agreement, all as presented. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Bowman, yes; Ms. Francis, yes; Mr. Hopper, yes; Mr. Lund, yes; Ms. McBrain, yes; Dr. Olson, yes; Mr. Portz, yes; Ms. Ritter, yes; Motion carried 8 yea, 0 nay.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ACTION ITEMS

A motion made by Ms. Ritter and seconded by Dr. Olson to hire Alicia Gonzales as a Paraprofessional, pending all legal requirements met, hiring Robert Osborne for the remainder of the 25-26 school year, pending licensure and all legal requirements are met, approving Tammy Burney’s intent to retire effective June 30, 2028, to approve paying subs in a position for more than 10 days \$150/day, pay Shelby Nash \$24/hr when subbing, and paying long-term hired licensed teacher substitutes step 1 of the teacher salary schedule, all as presented. Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Bowman, yes; Ms. Francis, yes; Mr. Hopper, yes; Mr. Lund, yes; Ms. McBrain, yes; Dr. Olson, yes; Mr. Portz, yes; Ms. Ritter, yes; Motion carried 8 yea, 0 nay.

DISCUSSION

The next Executive Committee Board scheduled for Wednesday, January 21th is anticipated to be cancelled.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion made by Dr. Olson and seconded by Ms. Bowman to adjourn the meeting at 9:27 a.m. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote: Ms. Bowman, yes; Ms. Francis, yes; Mr. Hopper, yes; Mr. Lund, yes; Ms. McBrain, yes; Dr. Olson, yes; Mr. Portz, yes; Ms. Ritter, yes; Motion carried 8 yea, 0 nay.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Bobbi Fisher, Director


Chairperson

2-18-26
Date


Secretary of the Board

2-18-26
Date