

MID-STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Regular Board Meeting
Official Minutes
December 14, 2022

PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

The regular meeting of the Mid-State Special Education Executive Committee was called to order by Chairman, Ms. Melissa Ritter at 9:01 a.m. with remote participation as allowed during the current public health emergency, current Disaster Declaration, and Open Meetings Act. In-person attendance at this meeting was deemed not practical, prudent, or feasible. In complying with our revised policy related to Open Meetings Act, the Board Secretary completed the following requirements: kept a verbatim record of the complete meeting for no less than 18 months; ensured that any interested member of the public can hear discussion; verified that each Board Member could hear one another; verified the Board Members present and that a quorum was met; conducted all votes by roll call and recorded each Board Member's vote so that it is identified; and reported to the public following the Board's meeting with no physical presence of quorum.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Bond: Dr. Wes Olson (remote); **Carlinsville:** Dr. Becky Schuchman; **Hillsboro:** Mr. David Powell; **Morrisonville:** Mr. Patrick Murphy; **Panhandle:** Mr. Aaron Hopper; **Ramsey:** Ms. Melissa Ritter; **St. Elmo:** Mr. Travis Portz; **Vandalia:** Dr. Jennifer Garrison (remote)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Brownstown: Mr. Mike Shackelford; **Edinburg:** Vacant; **Litchfield:** Dr. Gregg Fuerstenau; **Mulberry Grove:** Ms. Casie Bowman; **South Fork:** Mr. Chris Clark

OTHERS PRESENT

Mrs. Angela Armour, Director; Mrs. Lyn Becker, Assistant Director; Mrs. Vickie Throne, Executive Board Secretary; Mrs. Liz Holcomb, Business Manager

Recognition of Visitors: None

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- Regular and Special Meeting Session Minutes from November 16, 2022
- Destruction of regular session audio recordings maintained to comply with OMA related to remote meetings from 5/19/2021 with no Executive Session Recordings.
- Financial Report - The FY23 Balance Sheet and Receipts vs. Expenditures reflects the November fund balance of \$3,051,954.78. The receipts of \$885,316.00 and expenditures of \$459,596.48. FY23 revenue is being received as anticipated. For December, projected revenue is down to \$199,278.90 since five of the six assessments have been received with anticipated expenses of \$438,256.27. The resulting December 31st fund balance is projected at \$2,815,614.80.
- Accounts Payable Review, Approval, and Order for Immediate Payment of December 14th bills in the amount of \$154,887.87 and the January 18th payables is requested. Expenses include routine bills, GSA/EBF flow-through to districts, professional development, materials/assessments/mileage, legal, and contractual therapies. The annual contractual payment to Bushue Human Resources is a notable expense.

A motion made by Mr. Powell and seconded by Dr. Schuchman to approve the Consent Agenda. Roll Call Vote. Dr. Olson, yes; Powell, yes; Portz, yes; Murphy, yes; Ritter, yes; Garrison, yes; Hopper, yes; Schuchman, yes. Motion carried 8-0.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATION

Mrs. Armour extended sympathy and condolences to Mr. Theilen's family, friends, and school community. She shared we have also lost a current and a former student in the past week, all far too soon.

Mrs. Armour reported that we held our Staff Professional Development on Dec. 2nd with Brandon Wright. The legal presentation focused on 20-plus real-life questions we have experienced and been challenged by in the past semester. Topics ranged from meeting IEP minutes and FAPE given staff shortages to grade placement and services for homeschooled or COVID impacted students returning to school, to intricate eligibility and placement topics, MDRs, discipline, and more. Many of the questions surrounded RtI, MTSS, Specific Learning Disability eligibility, and the increasing district eligibility rates far surpassing the federal average of 13.2% and IL average of 16.5% with our districts ranging 16.1% to 25.8%. We discussed implementation of a strong Tier 1 curriculum and instruction along with effective RtI services directly impacts those requiring specialized instruction, or an IEP, in your district. Mrs. Armour asked superintendents to think about and talk with district administrators if a district or school team would find it beneficial to learn more about the legal requirements and work on revising the 2009 RtI Plan and services. We would be happy to facilitate this opportunity near the end of the school year or early summer with Mr. Wright working with teams including a principal, school psychologist, RtI interventionist, and program coordinator. Mr. Wright also provided recommendations based upon three new relevant documents: the July Office of Special Education Programs Dear Colleague Letter, Q & A document, and the *Positive, Proactive Approaches to Supporting the Needs of Children with Disabilities: Guide for Stakeholders 2022*. A summary from the three entitled, "IDEA Discipline Provisions," was included in the advance packet as a future reference. Implementation of this guidance and requirements along with upcoming amendments to strengthen Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act which have remained unchanged since 1977, are the focus of school attorneys and your cooperative administrators. Mr. Wright recommends that every school administrator should read through and be aware of the Questions and Answers: Addressing the Needs of Children with Disabilities and IDEA's Discipline Provision. Also, during the professional development, staff honored the Haston family that day by wearing Team Brody shirts and were surprised that Kristy was able to be with us following Brody's surgery earlier that week. In the afternoon, area SLPs gathered for a SCISHA meeting and training, *Finding the Right Words: Linking Communication and Behavior*, provided by Samantha Conklin, AT Facilitator with Infinitic and Emma Reichert, MSSE Behavior Specialist.

Mrs. Armour congratulated Lyn Becker for receiving the IAASE Region 5 Leadership Award! Lyn received several nominations and was the candidate selected by our Region and honored at the Region 5 meeting held on Dec. 2nd in Hillsboro. Mrs. Becker has so many highly developed skills and wonderful characteristics, but her history of outstanding service dedicated to children with special needs is clearly her passion and daily motivation. A variety of stakeholders including parents, special education support specialists, teachers, principals, superintendents, and especially our team of coordinators and Mrs. Armour, rely regularly on Lyn's advice and guidance. Educators and leaders across our 13 school districts count on Lyn to provide accurate and timely information to inform their decisions and assist in serving all students. Lyn is truly an exceptional educator. She has made a tremendous impact in so many lives in central Illinois. Her expertise, work ethic, professionalism, and dedication to Mid-State Special Education and those we serve has been consistent and steadfast throughout a couple decades. Lyn and her contributions will certainly be missed in the years ahead following her retirement later this year.

Mrs. Armour reported that the IDEA Carryover amounts and final IDEA allocations have been published. She reminded superintendents that the initial grant amount was estimated at 90% and to reach out if assistance is needed when amending. Mrs. Armour stated that we are awaiting notification and AFR data to begin work on all district Excess Cost calculations for submission in January or February.

Mrs. Armour reported that the Health, Dental, Vision, and Life Insurance transition is going well. Before Thanksgiving break, employees received the enrollment forms and a short video overview. Prior to the start of our staff professional development on Dec. 2nd, employees had the opportunity to meet with our representative to obtain more information and ask questions. On Monday, Ms. Holcomb submitted the required elections and paperwork to both carriers and was preparing to update payrolls for Jan. 1st.

Mrs. Armour reported that before Thanksgiving she reposted the current FY23 School Psychologist position and for FY24 School Psychologist, SSW, SLP, and Interns in any of these areas. Mrs. Armour asked that any inquiries a district receives to please be forwarded. Mrs. Armour will be posting the anticipated Program Coordinator position this week, and will send a summary document for posting on district websites to increase visibility for potential local candidates.

On behalf of our Mid-State family, Mrs. Armour wished everyone a joyous Christmas surrounded with family and connections with all those you love as well as good health and peace in the new year.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Armour reported that the Continuous Service/Seniority Lists were distributed to employees for input and are in final form documenting service through the 2021-22 school year.

Mrs. Armour reported that the First Reading of Policies from PRESS 110 were included in the packet and recommends noting the first reading.

Mrs. Armour reported that in the interest of the valuable time of everyone and historically little business for the Executive Committee in January, she discussed with Mrs. Ritter that we amend the board meeting schedule and cancel the January 18th meeting noting the approval to release January payables was included as part of the Consent Agenda.

A motion made by Dr. Schuchman and seconded by Mr. Powell to approve the Mid-State continuous Service Lists for Certified and Non-Certified Staff, noting for the record the first reading of policy updates, and amending the MSSE Executive Committee schedule cancelling the January 18, 2023 meeting. Roll Call Vote. Olson, yes; Portz, yes; Powell, yes; Garrison, yes; Hopper, yes; Schuchman, yes; Murphy, yes; Ritter, yes; . Motion carried 8-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion made by Mr. Hopper and seconded by Mr. Murphy to enter into executive session at 9:20 a.m. Roll Call Vote. Olson, yes; Schuchman, yes; Murphy, yes; Hopper, yes; Garrison, yes; Powell, yes; Ritter, yes; Portz, yes. Motion carried 8-0.

A motion made by Mr. Powell and seconded by Mr. Hopper to return to open session at 9:28 a.m. Roll Call Votes. Schuchman, yes; Olson, yes; Ports, yes; Hopper, yes; Murphy, yes; Ritter, yes; Garrison, yes; Powell, yes. Motion carried 8-0.

ACTION ITEMS

A motion made by Dr. Schuchman and seconded by Mr. Portz that the MSSE Executive Board resolves to recommend that the Governing Board of the MSSE Joint Agreement employ Bobbi Fisher as the Director under a two-year contract beginning July 1, 2023, the terms of such employment have been negotiated and agreed upon between all parties and formalized in an employment agreement approved by the Governing Board. Roll Call Vote. Murphy, yes; Hopper, yes; Garrison, yes; Schuchman, yes; Powell, yes; Ritter, yes; Olson, yes; Portz, yes. Motion carried 8-0.

DISCUSSION

The Executive Committee Board scheduled for Wednesday, January 18, 2023 has been canceled. The February 15th Executive Committee meeting will be followed by a Finance Committee meeting. A reminder to secure a local board member representative to attend the Governing Board Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, March 22, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. as it will require a quorum to be able to employ the new Director.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion made by Dr. Schuchman and seconded by Mr. Powell to adjourn the meeting at 9:32 a.m. Roll Call
Vote: Hopper, yes; Olson, yes; Portz, yes; Garrison, yes; Schuchman, yes; Murphy, yes; Ritter, yes; Powell, yes.
Motion carried 8-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Vickie Throne, Secretary of the Board

Melissa Ritter

Chairperson

02/15/2023
Date

Vickie Throne

Secretary of the Board

02/15/2023
Date