

**MID-STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Regular Board Meeting
Official Minutes
August 9, 2022**

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; Carlinsville: Dr. Becky Schuchman; Edinburg: Mr. Ben Theilen, arrived at 9:03 a.m.; Hillsboro: Mr. David Powell, arrived at 9:05 a.m.; Litchfield: Dr. Gregg Fuerstenau; Morrisonville: Mr. Patrick Murphy; Mulberry Grove: Ms. Casie Bowman; Panhandle: Mr. Aaron Hopper; Ramsey: Ms. Melissa Ritter; St. Elmo: Mr. Travis Portz; South Fork: Mr. Chris Clark; Vandalia: Dr. Jennifer Garrison,

MEMBERS ABSENT

Brownstown: Mr. Mike Shackelford,

OTHERS PRESENT

Mrs. Angela Armour, Director
Mr. Koontz, Bond CUSD #2

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- Regular Session Minutes from June 22, 2022;
- Destruction of regular session audio recordings maintained to comply with OMA related to remote meetings from 12/19/2020 and 1/20/2021 and no executive recordings;
- Semi-annual review of closed session minutes-none to review nor open;
- Financial report - The FY22 Balance Sheet and Receipt vs. Expenditures reflects the June 30, 2022 fund balance of \$1,655,311.94. For FY23, July projected revenue is \$575,284.21 and expenses are estimated at \$471,371.40. The resulting July 31st fund balance is projected at \$1,762,501.15. 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 17th bills. Payable lists approved on June 22nd prior to the end of fiscal year dated June 24th totaled \$9,838.35 and the July 20th payable totaled \$108,529.

A motion made by Dr. Schuchman and seconded by Dr. Olson to approve the Consent Agenda. Roll Call Vote. Fuerstenau, yes; Olson, yes; Portz, yes; Bowman, yes; Murphy, yes; Ritter, yes; Garrison, yes; Hopper, yes; Clark, yes; Schuchman, yes. Motion carried 10-0.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATION

Mrs. Armour welcomed new superintendents Casie Bowman, Patrick Murphy, and Travis Portz.

Mrs. Armour provided an update on the status of staff for 2022-23. She shared her gratitude to all our many returning employees and to our eight new specialists. All positions are filled except for a new part-time school psychologist serving Hillsboro which will remain posted.

Mrs. Armour reported that Mrs. Becker, Asst. Director, has been very busy this summer planning and providing supports and trainings: July 20th full day PC Boot Camp with our four newer program coordinators who serve Bond, Carlinsville, Vandalia, and Edinburg/Panhandle/South Fork; Aug. 3rd annual GoForward with PCs; Aug. 8th New Teacher Mentoring; Aug. 9th SSW/Counselor Year 1 Mentoring; and supervising our Behavior staff as they work toward additional IDFPR licensure. It was noted that the New Teacher Mentoring is the largest group ever with 18 participating. Several CPI full and refresher sessions, Discrete Trial Instruction, Universal Learning Systems, and autism training are offered in August and our Mid-State Kick-off will be held on Aug. 19th.

Mrs. Armour reported that the FY22 audit dates are set for Sept. 8th - 11th with the audit presentation expected at the Oct. 19th board meeting.

Mrs. Armour reported that the Maintenance of Effort compliance has been met through increased costs or through exceptions for all districts. The delayed FY23 IDEA grants were released on July 8th and were due July 31st. She encouraged districts to continue to reach out if there are questions or assistance is needed.

Mrs. Armour reported that since Mr. Koontz will not be focusing on special education in his new Bond #2 role, we have a vacancy on two committees: Personnel/Search (Ritter, Clark, Garrison, Schuchman) and Finance (Ritter, Clark, Hopper, Schuchman). Anyone interested in joining either committee can be added to the committees list prior to Governing Board action.

Mrs. Armour reported that Governing Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 24th at 6:30 p.m. with remote or in-person participation at the Mid-State office. She provided a copy of the list for superintendents to confirm their local elected board representative who will be attending the meeting. To date, we do not yet have a quorum with only five confirmed: CV-Martha Armour, LF-Valerie Cain, RM-Katie Hayes, SF-Wes Aymer, and SE-Shannon Moss.

Mrs. Armour reported that the Personnel & Search Committee met following the June meeting. Unofficial minutes from the June 22nd meeting were included in the advanced packet detailing recommendations. The Personnel & Search Committee will meet briefly following the board meeting to finalize direction for posting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Armour presented and recommended for approval the contract renewal for Mose, Yockey, Brown & Kull, LLC for the FY22 audit.

A motion made by Dr. Fuerstenau and seconded by Dr. Garrison to recommend approval of the FY23 contract with Mose, Yockey, Brown & Kull. Roll Call Vote: Olson, yes; Portz, yes; Powell, yes; Garrison, yes; Hopper, yes; Schuchman, yes; Clark, yes; Murphy, yes; Fuerstenau, yes; Ritter, yes; Bowman, yes; Theilen, yes. Motion carried 12-0.

Mrs. Armour presented for approval the revised *Mid-State Special Education Joint Agreement Policy and Procedures for Behavioral Interventions for Special Education Eligible Students*. This required document was revised by our attorney with the recommendation for both the Executive Committee and Governing Board approval on behalf of all member districts. This document must be posted on our and district websites and will be provided to parents/guardians at least annually and at other times as required by law.

A motion made by Mr. Hopper and seconded by Mr. Powell to recommend approving the revised *Mid-State Special Education Joint Agreement Policy and Procedures for Behavioral Interventions for Special Education Eligible Students* and recommending approval by the Governing Board for use in all member districts. Roll Call Vote: Portz, yes; Schuchman, yes; Clark, yes; Olson, yes; Ritter, yes; Fuerstenau, yes; Murphy, yes; Garrison, yes; Bowman, yes; Theilen, yes; Powell, yes; Hopper, yes. Motion carried 12-0.

Related to the FY23 Mid-State Budget and the budget hearing scheduled for August 24, 2022, Mrs. Armour referred to the FY23 Budget Summary for detailed information on the budget and assessments. She noted there were only minor updates since June primarily related to changes in employees. Following review of the June 30, 2022 Cash on Hand, \$204,000, instead of the \$140,000, was able to be applied to positively impact district assessments and to bring the excess beyond 60 days cash down to the \$150,000 as set by the Finance Committee. Several FY23 Proposed Budget documents as well as the resulting FY23 Proposed Assessment Breakdown were included in the advanced packet for review; however, there were no questions nor discussion.

A motion was made by Dr. Schuchman and seconded by Dr. Garrison to recommend presenting the proposed FY23 Mid-State Budget at the budget hearing scheduled for August 24, 2022. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mrs. Armour referred to information provided in the advanced packet regarding the administrative transition including a survey of area cooperative directors as requested by the Personnel & Search Committee. With the

upcoming retirement of both herself and the Assistant Director (AD) at the close of this school year as well as the Executive Secretary likely mid-year the following year, the Personnel & Search Committee continue to plan for these transitions ensuring stability for the organization. The Committee determined a timeline and plans to post the director position September 1st and is finalizing documents. Given the ongoing discussion related to some districts not in support of employing an AD position, Mrs. Armour expressed the need for transparency as to the scope of the responsibilities of the position when posting. In order to increase potential candidates, the Committee has recommended reducing the previously required 5-years of special education administrative experience for the director position.

Dr. Schuman, chair of the Personnel and Search Committee, referred to the impact of the current climate given the educational shortages and reviewed the timeline they set in order to secure a director. She shared that much of the discussion of the Committee related to the director and AD positions and noted that previously when she met individually with superintendents some felt the AD position is not needed while others utilized this service regularly and feel it is needed. Dr. Schuchman shared that she was not sure Carlinville would vote for this position since they may not utilize it but given so many unknown factors she is not sure. She initially recommended to the Committee that we post both positions to see what candidates are available so as to not dissuade a potential quality candidate. In committee discussion, some were concerned if the AD was posted some districts may assume the position would be filled and would be upset. Dr. Schuchman suggested if posting for an AD if there is not a quality candidate they may consider an interim director and hiring an AD or to look at AD candidates who apply who may be ready to be a director.

Dr. Olson asked and Mrs. Armour confirmed that the qualifications for licensure of a director and AD are the same. Dr. Schuchman asked if we should post for the AD realizing that we may not even interview for the position. Mrs. Armour shared that she feels when candidates apply, they need to know if they are applying for and will be responsible for the job functions of both of the current positions or just one. Dr. Schuchman indicated the need to decide, post early, and not get hung up on the timeline so as to secure a quality individual. Dr. Olson stated they have no need for an AD due to having a full-time district employed coordinator/director, and he feels we should revise the job description and just post the director. Dr. Garrison added that she understands there may be internal candidates, that Vandalia has been clear for two years they won't vote for an AD, and unless the majority of the Board wants an AD we need to be clear and not lead people. Dr. Schuchman voiced the concern of the possibility of the timeline ending up being extended at a detriment if how they post does not attract quality candidates, if they offer the position and get turned down, or if later they have to repost one or both positions mid-year. Ms. Ritter asked if districts are opposed to an AD if the Board later decides based upon a lack of experience of candidates or even if things aren't going well later on and additional support is needed for success of the new director and the organization.

Dr. Schuchman summarized that we need consensus on the job description, timeline, and posting one or both of the positions asking if there are any questions or concerns. Dr. Fuerstenau indicated support of the timeline and stated that Litchfield would not support an AD. Discussion continued and it was asked if the AD cost is a Central, not a-la-carte option, which was confirmed by Dr. Schuchman unless the Finance Committee changes this in the assessment structure. Dr. Schuchman noted that there may be a small group of districts who would want to share in the cost of an AD and that for them although the cost would be increased it may be economical in order to have adequate special education administrative support if they only have a day or two of Program Coordinator (PC) service. Mr. Clark added that it may be a consideration to use the funding to increase PC services in the district. Dr. Schuchman shared that any savings is unknown as they have not yet set a salary although they are aware of salaries of experienced directors in our area. She indicated that with so many unknowns and the current job market, she is remaining open to possibilities in order to make a good choice and secure a good candidate. Dr. Schuchman summarized by emphasizing that the decisions made may have unintended consequences and result in an extended timeline, reposting, or revisiting the issue for which they will all be responsible.

Dr. Garrison asked how long the posting will be open and the timeline. Dr. Schuchman reviewed the committee recommendations included in the advanced packet and minutes: to post September 1, accept applications through October 14; review applications following the October 19th Board meeting; interview early November and recommend employment at the December or January Board meeting. Dr. Garrison stated that the posting is for a long time. Those on the Committee shared the reasoning of the timeline. After discussion, the timeline was moved up to close applications on October 4th, review applications October 6th, interview after the Board meeting

on October 19th, and recommend employment at the November or December meeting. Mr. Hopper stated that if this is a serious matter for districts, a special meeting could be called for the purpose of employment.

Mr. Hopper suggested that the AD position responsibilities could be revised and even called something else to which Ms. Ritter concurred. Dr. Olson agreed stating that this would allow for input of the potential director regarding their needs and indicated to also be open about the needs of the organization which have changed along with needs of districts. He feels that since they have a full-time coordinator/director in district there is a duplication of services on the surface that are not needed although there may be things on the back end that are. Mr. Powell recalled awhile back when a committee dug into the responsibilities of the AD position that there was a lot that was being done on the backside to support the overall work. He stated it's likely over-simplifying to think a key position can be eliminated and I'll continue to get the level of service I have and the organization will continue to function smoothly. Dr. Schuchman agreed and noted that Mrs. Throne's upcoming retirement will also have an impact on the support of a new director during the first year. Dr. Olson added that while it is important to put things in place for the transition and success of the person, someone from the outside may come in and with a different set of eyes figure out quickly what is needed. Ms. Ritter asked those opposed if in the future needs exist and there is a clear "why," if they would be open to and supportive at that time. Dr. Fuerstenau indicated that would be fair and would allow the new director to be involved. Ms. Ritter reiterated that the goal is for the person to be successful for him or herself as well as for the organization.

Dr. Schuchman confirmed that the group wishes to move the timeline up, hold a special meeting, discuss the candidates, and be open to a revised plan based upon the information. She noted that based upon the discussion and review of the job descriptions provided, they will approve the combined Director Job Description.

A motion made by Dr. Fuerstenau and seconded by Dr. Garrison to post the Director position on the updated timeline with the combined Director Job Description. Roll Call Vote: Olson, yes; Portz, yes; Clark, yes; Garrison, yes; Ritter, yes; Hopper, no; Fuerstenau, yes; Murphy, present; Schuchman, no; Bowman, yes; Theilen, yes; Powell, no. Motion carried 8-3 with 1 present.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ACTION ITEMS

A motion made by Dr. Schuchman and seconded by Dr. Garrison to recommend accepting the resignation of Kacy Dunham, Speech-Language Pathologist, effective June 28, 2022 and employment for the 2022-23 school year of Madalyn Whittington, full-time Speech-Language Pathologist, and Joan Saatkamp, part-time Transition Specialist, all as presented pending completion of all state and local employment requirements. Roll Call Vote. Murphy, yes; Hopper, yes; Theilen, yes; Garrison, yes; Fuerstenau, yes; Schuchman, yes; Clark, yes; Powell, yes; Ritter, yes; Olson, yes; Bowman, yes; Portz, yes. Motion carried 12-0.

DISCUSSION

The FY23 Budget Hearing and Governing Board are scheduled for Wednesday, August 24, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at the Mid-State office in Morrisonville. The Executive Committee Board will meet next on Wednesday, September 21st at 9:00 a.m. in Morrisonville.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion made by Mr. Powell and seconded by Mr. Hopper to adjourn the meeting at 9:46 a.m. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Angela K. Armour, Director

Melissa Ritter
Chairperson

9/21/22
Date

Vicki Throne
Secretary of the Board

9/21/22
Date