

MID-STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
Regular Board Meeting  
Official Minutes  
April 19, 2023

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

**Brownstown:** Mr. Mike Shackelford; **Carlenville:** Dr. Becky Schuchman; **Edinburg:** Ms. Ashley Francis; **Litchfield:** Dr. Gregg Fuerstenau; **Mulberry Grove:** Ms. Casie Bowman; **Panhandle:** Mr. Aaron Hopper; **Ramsey:** Ms. Melissa Ritter; **South Fork:** Mr. Chris Clark; **St. Elmo:** Mr. Travis Portz (remote); **Vandalia:** Dr. Jennifer Garrison (remote)

MEMBERS ABSENT

**Bond:** Dr. Wes Olson; **Hillsboro:** David Powell; **Morrisonville:** Mr. Patrick Murphy

OTHERS PRESENT

Mrs. Angela Armour, Director; Mrs. Lyn Becker, Assistant Director; Bobbie Fisher, Director Elect; 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 Session Minutes from March 15, 2023
- Destruction of regular session audio recordings maintained to comply with OMA related to remote meetings from 8/18/2021 with no Executive Session Recordings.
- Financial Report - The FY23 Balance Sheet and Receipts vs. Expenditures reflects the March fund balance of \$2,382,650.94 including the receipts of \$573,458.24 and expenditures of \$441,534.48. FY23 revenue is being received as anticipated. Regular assessments are complete and the final invoiced costs are being sent later this month. For April, both revenue and expenses are routine. The resulting April 30<sup>th</sup> fund balance is projected at \$2,238,196.32.
- Accounts Payable Review, Approval, and Order for Immediate Payment of April 19<sup>th</sup> bills in the amount of \$171,427.30. Expenses include routine bills, GSA/EBF flow-through to districts, professional development, materials/assessments/mileage, legal, and contractual therapies.

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

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATION

Mrs. Armour reported that throughout the month of April, we celebrate Occupational Therapy Month and our TheraKids OTRs and COTAs. They provide excellent therapy and supports to our students, families, and school staff!

Also later in April, we will celebrate the Administrative Professionals at Mid-State and in our member districts. Mrs. Armour thanked to Liz, Vickie, Tammy, Shera, and Ingrid for the professional and quality supports that they provide which allow us to complete our educational mission as local districts and the cooperative.

Mrs. Armour reported that the first week of May we will celebrate our teachers, transition specialists, behavior specialist, and program coordinators. We will culminate the week on Friday May 5<sup>th</sup> with our annual staff recognition and end-of-year professional development.

Related to the STEP contract, we recently completed a second amendment in the amount of \$40,000 for surpassing the number of student outcomes...again! This brings the FY23 total regular contract to \$300,000 which supports the work of the transition specialists and transition-aged students.

Mrs. Armour reminded superintendents that any additional IDEA amendments are due by May 31<sup>st</sup>. Maintenance of Effort comparing FY22 costs to FY21 costs were received Saturday. Five districts, Edinburg, Morrisonville, Mulberry Grove, St. Elmo, South Fork did not meet. We're seeing ARP funds are having a considerable impact in a couple district to the extent we are not sure there are enough allowable exceptions to find. Mrs. Armour expects that the extra ARP will continue to play a part in the two upcoming years. We will work with these bookkeepers and include superintendents and PCs if needed in hope of finding enough "allowable expenses" to explain the shortfall in local and state special education spending. Mrs. Armour reported that Monday, five superintendents, Bond, Carlinville, Litchfield, St. Elmo, and South Fork, received notice of the districts' selection to complete the State Performance Plan Indicator 14 Post-School Survey for graduates and those who left school in 21-22. Transition Specialists were anticipating this and will take the lead working with district staff, as needed, in locating these young adults. All survey data is entered through I-STAR by August 31<sup>st</sup>, but we plan to have surveys completed by early June.

Mrs. Armour included two summaries, one from Kriha Boucek and one from our insurance provider PSIC, regarding the late March U.S. Supreme Court ruling. Mrs. Armour noted that we will continue to focus our efforts on the provision of quality educational services that are clearly documented in IEPs as well as collaborative relationships that allow for consideration of family input in decision-making.

Mrs. Armour reported that we have completed the required Special Educator Workload Summary for MSSE and districts. The district summaries were emailed to all districts on April 4<sup>th</sup>.

At the start of our May 17<sup>th</sup> board meeting, TMC Meetings will be held at 9:00 a.m. The posting has been submitted to newspapers, and we have mailed the required notification letter to families.

Mrs. Becker reported that the Illinois Medicaid Expansion should be approved very soon. Changes to the PGC Time Study requirements are being implemented to include all regular staff who work prior to October 1<sup>st</sup>. Anyone who is providing health services to a student whether it be a regular education student or a student with an IEP and the parent has signed the Medicaid consent and the student is eligible, staff will be able to bill for counseling, administering medication, medical needs, so we will need to get more staff on the PCG cost pool. Illinois has also been forced to adopt the federal definition of "Special Education Transportation" in order for the Illinois plan to be approved which impacts district claims and reimbursement in this area immediately. There are changes to the Random Moment Time Study notification and response window which has been lessened. As a district and a cooperative, we must have 85% response rate or we will lose our reimbursement. Therefore, it is very important that staff understand they need to report timely. The positive to this expansion is that we will be able to bill for more services licensed clinical professional counselors, licensed marriage and family therapist, orientation & mobility specialist, licensed clinical psychologist, and registered behavior technician. We

have been working to get the correct documentation into the IEP's of students that our RBT is currently serving as we anticipate being allowed to back bill for services. Related to billing for non-IEP students, we have given program coordinators the requirements of what they have to place in order to be able to bill. Embrace informed us that they are going to have a specific form in Embrace that we can use to help us track the data for regular education students. If we have a regular education student who is needing some type of qualifying medical services, we have to have documentation of medical necessity, scope, frequency, and duration. This is very minimal, but it has to be documented and kept on file. Related to the change in transportation, Mrs. Becker reached out to the districts that will be impacted. We used to bill special transportation if we only had special education students on the bus who needed aide support or other needs. Now we can only bill if there is a specially adapted vehicle required to transport a student such as a ramp, some type of special harness, or special car seat. It has to be put in a special bus/van, it cannot be a person, health aide.

Mrs. Becker reported that the ISBE Student Care Department recently changed the RTO Reduction plan. For the RTO meetings that have already been held, we were able to add the additional information, add the additional goals they are requiring, and then transfer out action plan that was already developed. For those meetings that we have not held yet we are using the new format that ISBE is requesting we use. So far, we have completed seven RTO Reduction plan meetings with three more scheduled in April and three districts that are still looking for a date that works.

Mrs. Armour reported that the end of year "RtI Plan Revision & Effective Interventions" workshop is held on June 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>. We are finalizing team registrations and working with them on data that will be used during the training. We've received team registrations from Bond, Brownstown, Hillsboro, St. Elmo, South Fork, and Vandalia.

Mrs. Armour reported that the Finance Committees met following the March meeting. Unofficial meeting minutes were included and details will be discussed during New Business. The Finance Committee does not anticipate a need to meet in April. The Building and Facilities Committee (Hopper, Powell, Fuerstenau, Shackelford) is re-scheduled to meet after the May meeting.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

#### NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Armour provided in the advanced packet a copy of the policy updates from PRESS 111 for review and first reading, a copy of the membership, contracts, and service agreements for Embrace DS, Embrace Eval, Embrace IEP, Embrace 504, Farmers Environmental, Garella Pest Services, Greenville Hearing Center, Infinitec/UCP Sequin of Greater Chicago, Region III Education Cooperative, Schmedeke Lawn, SMASE, Steve Sheedy, and Therakids. Mrs. Armour reported that all of the contracts are the same except the Therakids has an increase of 8% for the tow-year contract as there has been no increase since FY22. Mrs. Armour noted a contract for Dr. Samantha Sullivan was added for approval due to one of the psych interns needing a PysD supervisor as required by her university program.

Mrs. Armour also provided in the advanced packet the recommendations of the Finance Committee. Mrs. Ritter reported that the Finance Committee met after the last board meeting. Mr. Clark and Mrs. Ritter reached out to all of the superintendents individually and discussed the Finance Committee's recommendation of a 5% pay increase for MSSE staff and discussed setting the salary for the BCBA position receiving no concerns from anyone. Mrs. Armour reported that the Finance Committee also made some minor wording changes on the billing structure for FY24 and provided input into the FY24 Preliminary Budget.

Related to the FY24 Preliminary Budget, Mrs. Armour reported that the Finance Committee reviewed the preliminary revenues and expenses at the meeting last month. Having spent down the fund balance over the past three years, the offsets to assessments are decreased for FY24. The FY24 Preliminary Revenue, FY24 Preliminary Expenditure, and FY24 Preliminary Assessment documents were provided in advance and contain detailed information relative to your district as well as comparisons since our reorganization. The Committee recommends displaying the FY24 Preliminary Budget and providing notice of the Budget Hearing in August.

A motion made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Ms. Bowman to note the first reading of policy updates, approving memberships, contracts, and service agreements; establishing the starting salary for the BCBA position; approving the FY24 Billing Structure and the FY24 salary increase of 5% for employees; placing the FY24 Preliminary MSSE Budget on display and also posting notice of the budget hearing to be held by the Governing Board on August 23, 2023, all as presented. Roll Call Vote. Portz, yes; Garrison, yes; Shackelford, yes; Hopper, yes; Schuchman, yes; Clark, yes; Fuerstenau, yes; Ritter, yes; Bowman, yes; Francis, yes. Motion carried 10-0

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ACTION ITEMS

A motion made by Dr. Schuchman and seconded by Mr. Hopper to approve the employment of Amy Toberman as a School Psychology Intern and Jeanne Winkler, SLP part-time substitute, both as presented for the 2023-24 school year. Roll Call Vote. Shackelford, yes; Hopper, yes; Francis, yes; Garrison, yes; Fuerstenau, yes; Schuchman, yes; Clark, yes; Ritter, yes; Bowman, yes; Portz, yes. Motion carried 10-0.

DISCUSSION

The next Executive Committee Board scheduled for Wednesday, May 17, 2023. Timely and Meaningful Consultations will be held at 9:00 a.m. with the regular board meeting following. Mrs. Armour reported that after discussion with Mrs. Ritter, it is agreed that there will not be a need for Executive Committee Board meetings in June and July.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion made by Dr. Fuerstenau and seconded by Mr. Hopper to adjourn the meeting at 9:26 a.m. Roll Call Vote: Hopper, yes; Portz, yes; Garrison, yes; Fuerstenau, yes; Schuchman, yes; Shackelford, yes; Clark, yes; Ritter, yes; Francis, yes; Bowman, yes. Motion carried 10-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Vickie Throne, Secretary of the Board

Melissa Ritter  
Chairperson

5/17/23  
Date

Vickie Throne  
Secretary of the Board

5/17/2023  
Date