



MEEKER AND WRIGHT SPECIAL EDUCATION COOPERATIVE
Board Meeting - Joint Powers Board #0938
Tuesday, November 28, 2023 - 6:30 pm
Meeting Minutes - Official

Present: Gena Jacobson, Amy Johnson, Jessica Johnson, Julie Rae Pennertz, Cindy Miller, Kelsey Puncochar
Others Present: Melissa Hanson, Heidi Hennen, Emily Schneider, Kari Steinsbeiser, Caren Heltne
Excused: Colleen Carlson

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:27 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Approval of Meeting Agenda

A motion to approve the meeting agenda was made by Julie Rae Pennertz and seconded by Gena Jacobson. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Consent Agenda

A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Gena Jacobson and seconded by Kelsey Puncochar. The board unanimously approved the consent agenda which included:

- Minutes of Previous Board Meeting
- Bills for Payment and other financial reports
- Personnel Items as follows:

Resignation of the following staff:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Ronna Ritter	1.0 FTE Paraprofessional Eastern Wright	December 1, 2023

Recommendations for Employment:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Lisa Elfmann	Short Call Teacher Substitute	October 3, 2023



Rebecca Smith	Short Call Teacher Substitute	November 30, 2023
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Nathan Woodford	1.0 FTE Interim Program Administrator	November 2, 2023
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Leaves of Absence:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Cliff Skagen	Alternative Site Administrator Eastern Wright/ Cornerstones	January 31, 2024- June 30, 2024

V. Informational Items

A. The Fiscal Year 2023 Audit Report was presented to the board by Kari Steinsbeiser with Conway, Deuth, & Schmiesing.

A motion to accept the Fiscal Year 23 Audit Report was made by Gena Jacobson and seconded by Jessica Johnson.

B. Fund Balance Policy 714 was brought to the board for annual review.

VI. Acknowledgements

Melissa acknowledged American Education week to celebrate MAWSECO educators and the lengths they go to in order to ensure every student has the tools to learn, grow, and thrive.

VII. Reports

A. Executive Director Report

Caren Heltne gave updates on the Village Ranch Alternative Program, Wings, and Sholund School for Girls. Village Ranch has maintained 28-30 residential students and has two day students who attend full time and two who attend part time. Staff continue to work on building relationships with the students.

Sholund is currently fully staffed and off to a great start. Lisa Perovich, administrative Assistant, brings her therapy dog everyday. There are currently 14 students, most of whom are expressing that they enjoy school.

Wings is also off to a great start. There are currently 14 students with anticipation of increasing to 17 or 18 and maintaining at that level. The schedule change has been very successful for students and staff.



Caren continues to provide Support to Rebecca Atkinson, the new Program Administrator at Village Ranch, while also supporting and giving guidance to Sholund and Wings staff. The annual child count for Title I funds will be completed by the end of December which will decide Title I funding. She has been meeting with the director of the Wings program on a monthly basis. The plans for an addition to the Village Ranch Alternative Program have been approved with an anticipated start date of April.

General Updates -

Melissa Hanson reported that increasing the Behavior Analyst staffing from 2.0 FTE to 2.6 FTE is proving to still be insufficient for the needs of member districts and programs. The Executive Advisory Committee has agreed to shift to an FTE model of service. Each district will let the Executive Director know what FTE the district will purchase for the remainder of the 2023-24 school year and MAWSECO will make efforts to staff accordingly.

MAWSECO Administration -

An interim Program Administrator has been hired to cover for Cliff Skagen's leave of absence through the end of the 2023-24 school year. The Program Administrator position will be posted for the 2024-25 school year later this winter.

The Executive Advisory Committee and Executive Director have made the decision to provide a 1.0 FTE special education supervisor for each member district beginning with FY25. The Assistant Director role will move into a Special Education Supervisor role. For FY24, all districts with the exception of Maple lake, will have a 1.0 FTE Special Education Supervisor. Maple Lake will continue to receive support from the Assistant Director of Special Education who will dedicate a majority of their time to the district's needs. Rockford District will no longer pay for a small portion of a supervisor FTE to receive a full-time position in their district, instead these costs will be paid using Federal Special Education Funds.

The Executive Advisory Committee will continue to consider the organization's needs in terms of a Director of Special Education or Assistant Director of Special Education in addition to the Executive Director.

B. Business Manager Report



FY23 Fiscal Year- Heidi Hennen reported they will be finalizing the last of the SEDRA data and making their final audited UFARS submission to the state by the deadline.

Snow Blower Bid Update -
One bid was received and has been accepted.

FY24 Legislation/Funding Source Updates -
Title I Part D/Title I Part A - Neglected
No further updates at this time.

Summer Unemployment Reimbursement
MDE has requested data from all districts regarding unemployment expenditures. SMASA has indicated MDE plans to send out a metered payment totaling roughly 90% of our entitlement on November 30th.

Student Support Personnel Aid (Fin 374)
Each member district has received \$39,490.09 in Student Support Personnel Aid that is designated to flow out to Cooperatives which comes to a total of \$276,430.63 for FY24. MAWSECO plans to use any funds received to cover the cost of our school nurse and 1.5 FTE's of our school psychologist purchased service cost.

READ Act Curriculum Reimbursement
The Center for Applied Research and Education Improvement (CAREI) and MDE will generate a list of at least five approved literacy curricula and supporting materials. The list will be posted on the MDE website by January 1, 2024. CAREI and MDE will also identify literacy intervention materials for use with students in Kindergarten through grade 12.
The reimbursement process for approved evidence-based structured literacy curriculum and supporting materials, and intervention materials purchased after July 1, 2021 is still being determined by the MDE School Finance Division.

Paraprofessional Training Reimbursement Revenue (fin 314)
School districts and charter schools must provide a minimum of eight hours paid orientation or professional development relevant to the employee's position annually to all paraprofessionals providing instructional support as defined by the commissioner of education. At least 50 percent of the professional development or



orientation for paraprofessionals who provide direct support to students must be dedicated to meeting the requirements of this section.

This reimbursement aid is available in the following fiscal year to districts and cooperatives that provide paraprofessional training to applicable instructional paraprofessionals and complete the MDE certification of compliance.

State Special Education Separate Sites and Program Aid (Fin 742)

The funding provides an additional \$1,689 per ADM based on students served at special education sites for whom federal instruction setting is greater than 3. The additional funding may be used for the same purposes as are permitted for state special education aid under section 125A.76.

MAWSECO has received an allocation of \$84,095.31 for the year for its five setting IV programs: STEP, Trek, Journeys, Cornerstones, and Eastern Wright. These funds are being allocated out to the programs in accordance with the ADM's for the year and will be used to offset eligible costs inside each program.

Gender Neutral Single Use Restrooms

School districts or other cooperative units may apply for a grant for no more than \$75,000 per site.

VIII. Action Items

A. Old Business

1. A motion to approve the listed policy changes for Policy 415 - Mandated Reporting of Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults and Policy 709 - Student Transportation Safety Policy was made by Jessica Johnson and seconded by Cindy Miller. Motion carried unanimously.

IX. Future Board Meetings

- A. December 19, 2023 p.m., Regular Meeting, MAWSECO Education Center, Howard Lake
- B. January 23, 2024 p.m., Organizational Meeting, MAWSECO Education Center, Howard Lake
- C. Tentatively scheduled for February 20th, 2024 p.m., MAWSECO Education Center, Howard Lake

X. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.



Meeting Date:
Tuesday, November 28, 2023

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