



MEEKER AND WRIGHT SPECIAL EDUCATION COOPERATIVE

Board Meeting - Joint Powers Board #0938

Tuesday, May 27, 2025 - 5:00 pm

Meeting Minutes - Official

Present: Sarah Baker, Alex Carlson, Jessica Johnson, Jen Rasset

Absent: Gena Jacobson, Cindy Miller, Kelsey Puncochar

Others Present: Melissa Hanson, Caren Heltne

I. Call to Order

The Regular meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Approval of Meeting Agenda

Board Chair, Jessica Johnson, proposed striking Item IV. Tour of Wings Alternative Program from the agenda. A motion was made by Alex Carlson to approve the agenda with the removal of Item IV. The motion was seconded by Jen Rasset.

A roll call vote was conducted.:

Sarah Baker: Yes

Alex Carlson: Yes

Jessica Johnson: Yes

Jen Rasset: Yes

The motion passed with 4 votes in favor, 0 against, and 0 abstentions.

The agenda was approved as amended. Item IV. Tour of Wings Alternative Program was struck from the agenda.

IV. Consent Agenda

A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Sarah Baker and seconded by Jen Rasset. The board unanimously approved the consent agenda which included:

- Minutes of Previous Board Meeting
- Bills for Payment and other financial reports as attached



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- Personnel Items

- *Resignation/Retirement of the following staff:*

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Gail Bergstrom	Paraprofessional	May 23, 2025
Matt Barron	Lead Teacher Ed Center Programs	June 6, 2025
Cassidy Hollon	Behavior Analyst	June 9, 2025
Angie Lauderbaugh	Special Education Supervisor	June 30, 2025
Kelly Lhotka	Speech/Language Pathologist	May 30, 2025
Kaylee Petersen-Wurzbarger	Paraprofessional Eastern Wright	June 6, 2025

- *Employment of the following staff:*

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Chad Johnson	1.0 FTE Program Administrator Sholund/Wings	July 1, 2025
Olivia Kenning	1.0 FTE Audiologist	August 11, 2025
Angie Lauderbaugh	0.2 FTE Speech/Language Pathologist	July 1, 2025
Katie Thelen	0.8 FTE Occupational Therapist	August 11, 2025
Marissa Warren	1.0 FTE School Psychologist	August 11, 2025

- *At-Will Agreements*

2025-2026, Caren Heltne, 0.7 FTE Assistant Director of Care and Treatment Programs

- *Interim Contracts and At-Will Agreements*



V. Acknowledgments

The board acknowledged the following staff for their contributions and continuous years of service to MAWSECO:

25 Years

Mary Krokstrom, Teacher of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing
Hope Sykora, Special Education Teacher

20 Years

Liz Karels, Teacher of the Blind/Visually Impaired

15 Years

Judy Jacques, Paraprofessional
Shawna Moe, PHD/Assistive Technology Consultant

10 Years

Emily Hilbelink, Behavior Analyst
Amber Michels, Mental Health Professional
Michelle Montgomery, Administrative Support Specialist
Nicole Sigler, Administrative Assistant
Rob Sohler, Special Education Teacher
Kevin Vig, Special Education Teacher

5 Years

Olivia Engel, Special Education Teacher
Alicia Fergen, Teacher of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing
Stephanie Harbulak-Barron, Curriculum Instruction and Assessment Specialist
Meera Lyver, Teacher of the Blind/Visually Impaired
Michelle Nybo, Paraprofessional
Savannah Walsh, Special Education Supervisor

Retirements

Britta Barth, Special Education Teacher
Patty Diers, Special Education Teacher
Gervase (Spike) Kappel, Custodian
Sue Miller, Occupational Therapist
Ruth Schaefer, Audiologist



VI. Reports

Executive Director Report

Executive Director Annual Goals - Final Report

The Executive Director presented her final report and reflection on her 2025-2026 professional goals.

Financial Update

The Director of Finance is exploring short-term borrowing this summer to manage anticipated cash flow gaps. This is due to the cooperative typically incurring costs before receiving revenue, particularly at fiscal year-end, until tuition billing and other funds are received.

General Updates

The HLWW District has hired Dr. Daniel Edwards, formerly of Prior Lake-Savage Public Schools, as their new superintendent.

MAWSECO will celebrate its 50th Anniversary during the All Staff Inservice on June 6th. This milestone highlights 50 years of dedicated service to students, families, and member districts. The event will provide an opportunity to honor the cooperative's history, celebrate current successes, and look ahead to the future of special education across the region.

On May 23rd, 14 STEP students were honored at a graduation ceremony held at the Education Center, recognizing their academic achievements, growth, and resilience. Superintendent Matt Shoen served as the commencement speaker..

Staffing Updates

A team of MAWSECO and Delano administrators and staff will interview candidates in early to mid-June for the special education supervisor position serving the Delano District.

After discussions with the executive director of Wright Technical Center, it was determined that sharing a School Resource Officer would not meet the needs of either WTC or MAWSECO. Therefore, this option will not be pursued for FY26.

MAWSECO is making progress in filling vacant positions for the 2025–2026 school year and remains confident that many will be filled before the year begins. Several key



specialty roles have been successfully hired, including an Audiologist, Occupational Therapist, School Psychologist, Program Administrator, and Special Education Supervisor. Some teacher positions, including in the Birth–3 program, remain open.

Program Administrator Report

Village Ranch Alternative Programs

Caren Heltne shared a positive reflection on the past year at Village Ranch and expressed anticipation for the 2025–2026 school year. She commended Laura for her strong leadership and for fostering a collaborative and positive culture. Currently, there are two teacher vacancies, and contingency plans are being explored if those positions remain unfilled. Summer school will proceed as planned, with two VRAP teachers providing instruction to the 80% of residents who qualify.

Sholund School for Girls

Sholund’s enrollment has remained steady at 12 students, with plans to add 2–3 more before the end of the school year. The spring play, *A Not So Stormy Night*, directed by Jessica, was a success and well-received. All staff will return for the 2025–2026 school year, and Chad Johnson will join as the shared program administrator. Caren will work with him in August to support his onboarding. Summer school will be offered again, with one teacher and one paraprofessional, and seven students have qualified to participate.

WINGS Alternative Program

WINGs enrollment decreased to 12–13 students in March and April due to residential staffing challenges but has since increased to 16. The program has had a successful year, supported by the addition of a teacher who improved structure and consistency. Moving forward, consistent administrative support will be added with Chad Johnson’s involvement. Discussions are underway with the WINGs Residential Director to establish a dedicated on-site space for MAWSECO administrators next year.

Additional Updates

Implementation of Infinite Campus as the new Student Information System is underway, with the site live and three training sessions completed; two more are planned for June. The setup remains time-intensive, with continued work through summer. Administrative Assistants have engaged positively, and dedicated workdays are scheduled for collaborative training.

VII. Action Items

A. Old Business



1. Policy Review [Second Reading]

A motion to approve the listed policies with changes as recommended was made by Alex Carlson and seconded by Jessica Johnson. Motion carried unanimously.

Policy 423 - Employee-Student Relationships

Policy 516 - Student Medication (being renamed Student Medication and Telehealth)

Policy 527 - Student Use and Parking of Motor Vehicles; Patrols, Inspections and Searches

Policy 609 - Religion

Policy 610 - Field Trips

Policy 712 - Video Surveillance Other Than on Buses

Policy 722 - Public Data and Data Subject Requests

2. Policy Rescission [Second Reading]

A motion to approve the listed policies for rescission was made by Alex Carlson and seconded by Sarah Baker. Motion carried unanimously.

Policy 533 - Photographing Students

Policy 557 - Use of Household Eligibility Information for School Meals

Policy 624 - Development Delay for Early Childhood Special Education

B. New Business

1. Fiscal Year 25 Preliminary Budget [First Reading]

Scott LeSage, Director of Business Services brought the Fiscal Year (FY) 26 Preliminary Budget to the board for a first reading. No action was taken.

2. Summer Services

A motion to approve the 2025 Summer Services listing and authorize any additional Part C evaluations and services that would be required in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was made by Alex Carlson and seconded by Jen Rasset. Motion carried unanimously.

VIII. Future Board Meetings

A. June 24, 2025, 5:00 p.m., MAWSECO Education Center, Howard Lake

B. July 22, 2025, 5:00 p.m., MAWSECO Education Center, Howard Lake

C. August 26, 2025, 5:00 p.m., MAWSECO Education Center, Howard Lake



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IX. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:14 p.m. was made by Alex Carlson and seconded by Sarah Baker. Motion carried unanimously.

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