PAWN Special Education
P.O. Box 193
Park Rapids, MN 56470
(218) 237-6540

Eva Pohl – Director of Special Education
Kevin Wellen – Walker·Hackensack·Akeley
Ranae Seykora – Nevis Superintendent
Lance Bagstad – Park Rapids Superintendent
Kevin Wellen – Up North Learning Center Superintendent
Chris Schulz - Pine Point Superintendent

PAWN Executive Council
Linsey McMurrin – District #113
Jennifer McNamee – District #308
Sherry Safratowich – District #309
Sherry Safratowich – District #6099

PAWN Special Education Council
Minutes
February 10, 2026
1:00 p.m.
Up North Learning Center

1. Call to Order at 1:04 by Lance Bagstad
    a. Members present: Lance Bagstad, Renae Seykora, Dawn Casteel, Sherry Safratowich, Jen McNamee, Eva Pohl, Jennifer Clements
    b. Virtually attending: Kevin Wellen and Linsey McMurrin
2. Additions to the Agenda and Approval
    a. Motion by Safratowich/seconded by McNamee to approve agenda, motion carried
3. Review and Approve Minutes for August 12, 2025
    a. Motion by Safratowich/seconded by McNamee to approve minutes as presented, motion carried
4. Old Business
    a. FY26 Staffing Updates
        i. Reduction in Occupational Therapy services in Park Rapids
        ii. Adjusted Developmental Adaptive Physical Education (DAPE) services in January for staff leave of absence
        iii. DAPE service in Nevis will be covered by district licensed staff the remainder of the school year, billing will be adjusted to reflect change
5. New Business
    a. Budgets
        i. FY26 – budgets will be adjusted to reflect updated salaries after negotiations and will evaluate in spring regarding using federal funds for tuition
    b. Child Count – reviewed the Resident and Serving District spreadsheet 5-year trends noting that total enrollment is decreasing in most districts
    c. Service needs alignment
        i. **Autism Spectrum Disorder** – staff requested to be reduced to 3 days a week for 26-27
        ii. **Physically Impaired/Homebound** – adjusted to 4 days per week
        iii. **Blind/Visually Impaired** – student needs decreased in Park Rapids but increased in Walker

iv. **Developmental Adaptive Physical Education** – Nevis, Walker and UNLC have licensed staff that can provide DAPE services, itinerant DAPE teacher services will be aligned to reflect this

v. **Deaf/Hard of Hearing** – student needs are increasing in most districts along with needs in sign language

vi. **Deaf Blind** – Park Rapids has an intervener for a deaf-blind student, this may be needed in Walker in the future

vii. **Occupational Therapy-** needs and service are being reviewed and will be aligned as deemed necessary

viii. **Speech** - there is an increase in speech needs, Eva is meeting with staff on how treatment is provided, and offering training on using AI for efficiency

ix. **School Psychologist** – we do not have any district hired school psychologist's this year

Park Rapids – hybrid model
Walker – online
Nevis – online
Pine Point – in person
UNLC – in person

d. Director Retirement

i. Superintendents are looking at the future of special education to remain fiscally responsible, provide efficient and high-quality services to students through economies of scale, and continue to prioritize and support our staff.

ii. Superintendents will have conversations with staff from BRIC and Freshwater for potential partnership.

iii. Motion by Safratowich/seconded by McNamee to continue discussions on potential partnership with BRIC and Freshwater by April 14, 2026, motion carried

e. Special Education Professional Development

i. New Teacher In-Service Day – potentially August 25, 2026

ii. Due Process Training Day – potentially August 27, 2026

iii. Will clarify dates in April once a decision has been made regarding the future of PAWN

6. Directors Report

a. Locally – meeting with lead staff in each district, reviewing the workload analysis with principals and superintendents, continue work on interventions prior to special education referrals, reviewing the needs for next year

b. Regionally – low incidence, community of practices with Region 1 & 2, professional development with Sourcewell, regional tuition support and pathways grant

c. Statewide – SLICE, MASE, Special Education Director's Forum, ECSE monthly meetings

7. Addition: the board would like to recognize that Eva Pohl was recognized by MASE with the Legacy Award

8. PAWN Special Education Council Meeting Dates & Time

a. April 14, 2026, at 1:00

9. Adjournment

a. Motion by McNamee/seconded by Safratowich to adjourn at 1:50, motion carried