

MACON PIATT SPECIAL EDUCATION DISTRICT (MPSED)
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES – THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2019
Macon-Piatt Special Education District Office
Decatur, Illinois

Chairman Vic Zimmerman called the meeting to order at 7:32 a.m. Member roll call was taken.

Members Present: Damian Jones, Sheila Greenwood, DeAnn Heck, Brett Robinson, Andy Pygott,
(9 present) Vic Zimmerman (*Chairperson*), Brian Rhoades (for Travis Roundcount), Bob
Meadows, Kristen Kendrick-Weikle
Members Absent: Paul Fregeau, Amanda Geary, John Ahlemeyer
Also Present: Kathy Horath, Travis Friedrich, Vickie Vieth (*Secretary*)
Public Participation: None

Seeing no public participation, Chairperson Zimmerman entertained the motion to approve the minutes from the 9/19/2019 meeting. Supt Jones motioned to approve the Executive Board minutes as presented, seconded by Supt Greenwood. Voice Vote: All in favor

Call to **CLOSED Session** at 7:33 a.m. by Supt Robinson's motion to discuss possible litigation, appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees, seconded by Supt Heck. Voice Vote: All in favor.

Return to Open Session at 7:53 a.m. by Supt Heck's motion, seconded by Supt Pygott. Voice Vote: All in favor.

Roll Call Action Items

A. Personnel and Administrative Appointments

With a brief summary of personnel, it was noted we are still running with a lot of positions open; we are not seeing many applicants. Supt Robinson motioned to recommend the Executive Board advise Decatur Public Schools, as administrative district for MPSED, that the employees presented be recommended as listed, seconded by Supt Jones. Chairperson Zimmerman called for a Roll Call Vote. The motion carried with (9) Ayes: Jones, Greenwood, Heck, Robinson, Pygott, Zimmerman, Rhoades, Meadows, Kendrick-Weikle. (0) Nays; (3) Absent.

Director's Report

- A. Finance Update – reference to the Treasurer's report in their packet. The cash balance is acceptable; it will increase once tuition bills start coming in.
- IDEA Grant – Periodic Reporting and Amendments. Last year's form is available for reference. Every time a quarterly report is submitted, an account of Professional Development spending must be given – they are trying to watch if the district is spending their five percent. Remember to write an amendment for utilization of your district's carryover instead of leaving it.
 - Funding Formula for FY21 – Review FY20 and determine if changes are needed. Last year the conversation about changing the billing method for administration was brought up and tabled. In fairness to those who have an interest, the subject is being brought back out for discussion in case there is further desire. For those new to the cooperative, Kathy summarized the current billing situation. Administrative support (ie psychologists, behavioral specialists) are billed on all student enrollment. SpEd Administrators are billed within the same line item as secretaries, assistant director, director, and several other employee groups – it is billed back to the district based on

special ed student enrollment. This allows your SpEd administrator to be available to the district based on need – not on days paid. That is the beauty of our structure – SEAs are available to districts when needed along with the director and assistant director. If it is the desire to move to a more structured billing, where the district elects to pay for 1 or 2 days of SEA support, then it would have to be decided how to ensure LEA support for things like IEP development. It is not Kathy's recommendation but she is open for conversation.

The district that was proposing this recommendation last year is not sure they are still interested in going down that road but may be willing to pursue it if the group decided to allow it. It is not something that has really been talked about this year with their leadership. When this subject was discussed last year, it was a concern about districts hiring their own SEA. This was due to the strong connection with Macon Piatt. It is still a concern with Kathy but it was squelched during this meeting for ease of conversation. At this point, Kathy feels she has more measure of control in the communication that proceeds to the member district with the SEA being in the liaison role – communication regarding legislative changes or rules changing the laws.

Most districts are content with the current situation and process since it works well for their district – but a willingness was displayed to be open, trying to meet other member district's needs. Both views were discussed giving advantages and disadvantages of both employment situations. If district's hire their own, clear guidelines would have to be given connecting that individual to the cooperative. Others have come from districts that have hired their own; it could work, but it would need to be structured well where that individual would need to come to cooperative meetings and follow MP rules. This method would allow the SEA to be part of the district's administrative team and would be assigned other job tasks thus giving the district more control. If there was a way to do both without completely throwing the billing into mayhem, it would be more conducive.

Disadvantages of district's hiring their own SEA was also discussed. Some feel it would be difficult and will inevitably cause conflict between the district and Macon Piatt. One advantage of having an outside person (hired through cooperative) is for difficult conversations that need to be held; having an outside person come and explain a decision seems to be received with more respect and credibility. It sounds like this is something that perhaps could be considered as we go along the way but perhaps the subject is not yet ready to be broached. If it is not something the cooperative is ready to move forward with, that is understandable, but the possibility of looking at it in the future is favorable.

A question was raised when all of this would need to be decided in order to implement. The way our cooperative joint agreement is written, the funding formula is an annual vote. All changes done structurally over these last few years have been due to an annual vote. The conversation about major changes should be done early in the year so there is ample time to plan, cost it out and think about scenarios. The latest time would be in the month of January.

An additional question was discussed regarding the final outcome from SEAs salary increase and if there was any requirement for living in the district. Clarification was

given. Further insight was also given regarding the ramifications of TAs striking including affecting bus transportation/ drivers.

- B. Projected program moves for FY2021 – Enterprise and Garfield will be combining their programs and moving to the Thomas Jefferson site. Our elementary LifeSkills program and Hearing Impaired Instructional program will be affected since they are located at Enterprise. For future planning, not sure if we will be able to keep our special ed program at the Muffley site since they are combining Baum with Muffley. An additional eight classrooms will be required so they do not think there will be enough room for everyone. They are still trying to sift out where special ed will go.

Additional topics:

Concerns expressed from teachers regarding the lack of ability to import last year's IEP information into this year's IEP meeting form in Embrace; they do not like having to re-type everything. Was wondering if other districts have had the same complaint. Several district superintendents have heard similar teacher complaints about not being able to duplicate last year's information. Kathy explained Embrace does have that functionality but it is for an IEP revision. If an IEP needs revision, the IEP is duplicated thereby only a line or two would be modified. It is not really meant for an annual IEP review since the case manager is to start with new information, new present levels to develop new goals. They can cut and paste information from a word document but technically goals should be reviewed making sure they are still suitable. Kathy states cutting and pasting really should not be about the student's present level. It could be utilized in the statement on the document end "student cannot function in general education because of 'xyz' reasons". Special Education Administrators should be auditing these IEPs...making sure they see progress since that is the legal standard. If they do not see progress, they should explicitly say in the present levels...here is the reason why. If it is due to attendance, an attendance plan needs to be in place...what they are doing to get that child into school. Since we have had FileMaker for a long time and it has been treated as a working document, as soon as the case manager opened a new document, all the 'typed information' was present and available. The teacher simply erased and changed the date. Not everyone is unethical, but FileMaker tended to lend itself for an easier, unethical way to review an IEP.

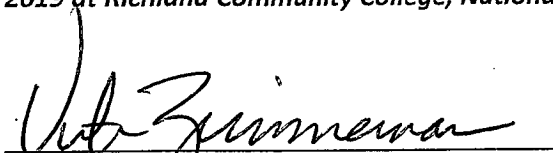
A question arose regarding DLM and the criteria needed to utilize this testing assessment. Kathy prefaced this with a history statement informing that we traditionally have an over-identified cognitive impairment in this area, especially specific to two districts. If all cognitive disability kids are to take the DLM that would roughly be 2-4% of the special ed population. DLM is capped at 1% of your total population (gen ed and special ed) so the most significant needy child is supposed to be taking the DLM. We can't go over this percentage because it does count against the district(s). The other caveat is if we go with the hard, fast rule of IQ below 55, we are still at 2% in a couple of our districts. Most of the districts have their 1% covered with students in Life- and Essential Skills programs with IEP teams that are not even in their own district buildings. The other issue is, we do not have much of a cusplate, most of our students who take DLM, do not meet. The 55 IQ is not a hard a fast rule and you may have justifiable data by giving IEP samples. The IEP team has to bring the case to me for prior consent/approval since I have to defend it with ISBE. The recommended guidelines for DLM is available on the ISBE form or they may be viewed in Embrace.

Adjournment: Hearing no further questions or discussions, Supt Jones motioned to adjourn this meeting of the Macon Piatt Special Education District Executive Board, seconded by Supt Greenwood.
Voice Vote: All in favor – Meeting adjourned at 8:27 a.m.

Handouts: Draft September Minutes

Vendor Checks (electronically sent)
Personnel Appointments
September Treasurer's Report
Current Approved Funding Formula for FY20

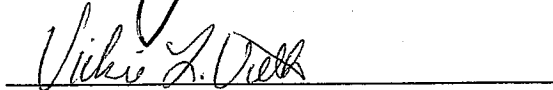
****Next Meeting of the MPSED Executive Board will take place 7:30 a.m. on Tuesday, November 19, 2019 at Richland Community College, National Sequestration Education Center – Room 121**



MPSED Cooperative Board Chairperson

11-19-2019

Date Approved



MPSED Cooperative Board Secretary

11/19/19

Date Approved