

**MACON PIATT SPECIAL EDUCATION DISTRICT (MPSED)**  
**BOARD MEETING MINUTES – THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2020**  
Richland Community College – National Sequestration Education Center (NSEC) Room 121  
Decatur IL 62521

Vice-Chair Damian Jones called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. Member roll call was taken.

**Members Present:** Damian Jones (Vice-Chair), Shella Greenwood, DeAnn Heck, Paul Fregeau,  
(10 present) Amanda Geary, Andy Pygott, Vic Zimmerman (Chairperson), Travis  
Roundcount, Bob Meadows, Cheryl Warner  
**Members Absent:** Brett Robinson, John Ahlemeyer (*arrived at meeting 7:52 a.m.*)  
**Also Present:** Kathy Horath, Vickie Vieth (Secretary), Matt Snyder, Bret Hitchings  
**Public Participation:** None

Chairperson Zimmerman entertained a motion to approve the minutes.

**Motion** by Supt Jones to approve the Executive Board minutes from the 9/17/2020 meeting as presented, seconded by Supt Greenwood. Voice Vote: All in favor.

Call to **CLOSED Session** at 7:31 a.m. by Supt Pygott's **motion** to discuss possible litigation, appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees, seconded by Supt Geary. Voice Vote: All in favor.

Return to **Open Session** at 8:20 a.m. by Supt Pygott's **motion**, seconded by Supt Heck. Voice Vote: All in favor.

**Roll Call Action Items**

**A. Personnel and Administrative Appointments**

Attention was briefly drawn to resignations and request for retirement. No further questions. **Motion** by Supt Jones to recommend the Executive Board advise Decatur Public Schools, as administrative district for the Macon-Piatt Special Education District, that the employees presented be recommended as listed, seconded by Supt Fregeau. Chairperson Zimmerman called for a Roll Call Vote. The motion carried with (11) Ayes: Jones, Greenwood, Heck, Fregeau, Geary, Ahlemeyer, Pygott, Zimmerman, Roundcount, Meadows, Warner; (0) Nay; (1) Absent.

**B. Administrative Agent**

For clear understanding, Chairperson Zimmerman recapped the timeline of events leading to this decision. In February, MPSED was made aware that DPS#61 could potentially submit a letter of intent - no longer serving as administrative agent for the cooperative. MPSED sent DPS#61 BOE a letter on 3/19/20, referring to what had been heard regarding their intentions. In this letter, MPSED stated we felt DPS#61 should stay as the cooperative's administrative agent since it was in the best interest of students with special needs and the employees working in special education positions. It was also stated, MPSED was willing to discuss modifications to the Joint Agreement in order to keep the cooperative as it is currently. There was no response to our letter from DPS BOE. On 6/24/20, a letter was received from DPS#61 giving proper one-year notice officially informing us of their intent to no longer serve as administrative agent effective 7/1/21. Meetings were scheduled with members of MPSED board and Decatur's administration to discuss their concerns with being the administrative agent. Through that meeting, Decatur presented concerns along with possible modifications to the Joint Agreement

that could potentially lead Decatur to withdraw their letter of resignation as administrative agent. The most significant issue was weighted voting in the cooperative.

At this point during the recap, Chairperson Zimmerman defined the word 'cooperative' as a group of organizations that ban together or work together to do what is in the best interest of another party. In our case, MPSED cooperative is 12 districts banning together to provide special education services to the SpEd students that are in and around Decatur area. All members, in a cooperative, have equal voting. This model is consistent with MPSED cooperative. Decatur's main issue was to change the voting structure where they would have at least half or more of the weight in all votes related to MPSED. MPSED made a counter proposal which would not give Decatur full control, but would require DPS to have 4 or 5 other districts voting with them for a vote or motion to carry. On 10/7/20, a letter was received from DPS Board President Nolan stating Decatur still necessitated having fifty percent weighted vote. Decatur agreed that continuing the cooperative is in the best interest of Macon and Piatt county special education students but they must continue to represent the district's tax payers and all the students DPS serves.

From the beginning, MPSED has tried to keep the cooperative together as it is currently. Since Decatur is not going to withdraw their letter of resignation as administrative agent, this creates a need for our cooperative to name a new administrative agent. Once a new administrative agent is named, it will start a progression of new issues that will need to be addressed. MPSED has about 300 employees that are members of Decatur's unions (DEA, DFTA, DESPA); they can no longer be members of those organizations and work for MPSED. Discussion must happen about how we are going to offer transfers to employees since those employees are still needed to run MPSED programs.

Kathy's recommendation to the Executive Board is to name Macon Piatt Regional Office of Education #39 as MPSED's administrative agent. We have met with ROE#39 and they are interested and willing to serve as our administrative agent. No further questions or comments. **Motion** by Supt Roundcount to designate the Regional Office of Education #39 as the administrative agent for MPSED beginning July 1, 2021, seconded by Supt Pygott. Chairperson Zimmerman called for a Roll Call Vote. The motion carried with (10) Ayes: Jones, Greenwood, Heck, Geary, Ahlemeyer, Pygott, Zimmerman, Roundcount, Meadows, Warner; (0) Nay; (1) Abstain: Freageau; (1) Absent.

## **Director's Report**

- A. Cooperative Next Steps for Transition – A press release will go out after this meeting stating ROE has been named as our administrative agent effective 7/1/2021. Next steps will involve discussions with our MPSED attorney in regard to looking at offering potential transfers of current SpEd related employees (under the three contracts) over to MPSED. Meetings will need to be scheduled with employee groups once it has been decided what our basic benefit package will be as the new employer. We are going to be working with ROE's business office trying to get our payroll system information transferred instead of uploading employees' sick leave and personal leave directly to TRS or IMRF banks. We will need to start looking at insurance brokers and at ROE's insurance/ broker to decide what will be our best insurance package. Kathy continues working on getting the IRS tax number for MPSED – it has been 45 days since first requested. After receipt, all employees will be eventually transferred. Still attempting to acquire a building. A meeting is scheduled with a realtor from Vieweg to start looking at

commercial property. There has been some conversation with ROE regarding the availability of finding a building large enough to house both MPSED and ROE at the same location.

#### B. Finance Update


- The fund balance is currently at a decent amount since payroll has been running without assessing tuition. Once tuition payments start and the revenue cycles begin, the fund balance will increase. This should be healthy enough to lease/purchase and renovate a building up to \$1.5m. Two million will need to be kept in the reserves at all times to cover the number of employees and run payroll.
- There was discussion among the group regarding paying program costs for MPSED programs even though DPS is on remote learning. Decatur will be making an announcement 10/30 regarding their decision. Currently they are considering all different types of in-person models. MPSED has started in-person appointments for some of our students – up to 1-2 hours a session as many as 2 times a week. This opportunity is not offered to everybody, it is based upon hierarchy of student need. It was mentioned that others are upset since they have not been involved in this opportunity. MPSED does not want to be inequitable in our offer – this can be a topic of further discussion. Hope Academy is finally online. They are the last program to start in-person appointments due to Essential Skills students not being able to wear masks.
- Another subject to talk more about at the next meeting is if Decatur decides not to bring any students in person after the 10/30 announcement. Kathy would like to have the districts start a yellow bus service and run small groups for in-person appointments on a scheduled routine – perhaps run a route 1 day a week into Decatur. All SpEd program students of specific districts on a consistent day. Kathy would need to work with all the programs to make sure that would work. District Superintendents were in grand agreement and were willing to commit to providing transportation for their students as many days as available – bringing students in to Decatur for SpEd programs. Concern was brought up regarding having enough Decatur staff available in the DPS buildings – MPSED would need to work on that issue.
- The last topic of discussion was regarding grants. All district grants have received final approval. Your carryover money has been allocated. Districts may start spending and submitting their expenditure reports for reimbursement.

C. IEP Duplication Survey Results – Since Travis Friedrich is home today, this topic will be discussed next month.


Hearing no further questions or comments. Chairperson Zimmerman entertained a motion to adjourn. **Motion** by Supt Geary to adjourn this meeting of the Macon-Piatt Special Education District Executive Board, seconded by Supt Roundcount. Voice Vote: All in favor – Meeting adjourned at 8:46 a.m.

*Handouts:*      *Draft September 17, 2020 Minutes*  
                      *Personnel Appointments*  
                      *Letter from Vic Zimmerman dated March 19, 2020*  
                      *Letter from Paul Fregeau dated June 24, 2020*  
                      *Letter from Beth Nolan dated October 7, 2020*  
                      *Vendor Checks (Electronically Sent)*  
                      *Treasurer's Report*

**\*\*Next Meeting of the MPSED Executive Board will take place 7:30 a.m., Thursday, 11/19/20 at the Richland Community College – National Sequestration Education Center – Room 121 – 1 College Park, Decatur IL.**

  
MPSED Cooperative Board Chairperson

11-18-20  
Date Approved

  
MPSED Cooperative Board Secretary

11/19/2020  
Date Approved