

**Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative**  
**EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES**  
**Thursday, December 16, 2021      12:00 pm**  
**Washington Education Services Building**

The Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative (PBEC) Executive Board met on Thursday, December 16, 2021 at 12 pm in the Washington Education Services Building in Brainerd.

**Present:** Jamie Skjeveland, Mike Malmberg, Kurt Stumpf, Laine Larson, Dan Stifter, Jon Clark, Jennifer Johnson, Kim Huether, Karla Nesheim, Guests: Amy Jordan, Mary Reedy and Janelle Ost (intern)

Jen Johnson called the meeting to order 12:05 pm.

Jon Clark made a motion to approve the December 16, 2021 agenda. Laine Larson second. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

Kurt Stumpf made a motion to approve the minutes from October 7, 2021. Jon Clark second. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

**Audit Report For Year 2021:**

Mary Reedy from Clifton Larson Allen, the lead principal auditor for the PBEC, reviewed the Executive Audit Summary and Financial Statements. It was a very clean audit report with no findings. There is a fund balance of \$2511, which is from interest earned.

A motion was made by Laine Larson to approve the Audit Report FY21 as presented. Mike Malmberg second. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

**Lincoln Education Center and Transition Center Presentation:**

Amy Jordan, principal of Level 4 Lincoln Education Center (LEC) and the 18-21 Transition programs gave a presentation to the board. A powerpoint handout was in the board's packet. Amy covered the following in her presentation:

- an overview of the current programs,
- enrollment numbers,
- how students are referred and enrolled into LEC (accepted from districts based on referrals through child study teams. Acceptance based on staff and classroom space. A waiting list is formed, with this year's list lower than normal. )
- Staffing issues and solutions to continue a safe environment for students and staff. (Additional staff hired with a lead teacher and Amy subbing.)
- Transition Plus is really expanding
- Anticipate needing an additional teacher for Transition Plus
- Transition Plus also understaffed
- New building is opening summer of 2022

Discussion was held regarding how to obtain candidates for positions in general. “Grow Your Own” was mentioned, which was something that was done in the past through St. Cloud. Jen will reach out to Sourcewell. Perhaps there is a way to create and facilitate the necessary training. A cohort would need to be developed and attain staff to teach it.

**American Rescue Plan Funds/Staffing Proposal/Approval of Staffing Proposal:**

PBEC received a total of \$700,441.12 of federal IDEA funds through the American Rescue Plan. PBEC is supporting member district teachers, by giving them extra paid opportunities to complete additional required paperwork. Currently PBEC has 201 K-21 teachers supported by Liz Lee and Joel Anderson, the assistant directors. Their priorities include teacher development, instructional strategies for teachers, data collection and due process. There has been an increase in educators leaving their jobs due to the working conditions of the pandemic. Jen shared a Region 5/7 comparison breakdown of student enrollment and staff numbers of the region’s co-op/ed districts as a reference. There is a need for qualified personnel to support PBEC teaching staff to increase retention.

Jen provided the board with a detailed plan and cost breakdown for proposed changes in staffing at PBEC for 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2021-25 school years:

- adding two special education coordinators for K-21 and a DCD Consultant for 2022-23. This would be funded with ARP IDEA federal funds.
- In 2023-24 adding Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator (Assistant Director of Early Childhood will have retired).

Included in the information was a breakdown of costs to member districts of proposed staffing changes FY 24 and FY 25.

The board had some discussion about what to expect and what would be different for their districts. They would also like more specific information as to what the duties will be. The board felt another meeting should be held before voting on the proposals. Jen will develop additional detail and meet individually with each superintendent prior to the next board meeting on February 10, 2022.

**Recruitment and Retention Pay:** The Brainerd district will be offering an employee support plan for those under contract with the district. PBEC staff is under Brainerd contracts because of Brainerd serving as fiscal host. All current, regular employees who worked during the 2020-21 school year and finish out the current school year will receive \$1,000. They will receive \$500 at the end of January and another \$500 in early July 2022 if they complete the school year. All current, regular employees who began working in the 2021-22 school year before Dec. 15 and finish out the school year will receive a \$500 stipend. They will receive \$250 at the end of January and another \$250 in early July 2022 if they complete the school year. The breakdown of the cost to the member districts was included in the packet. Discussion was held. Jen will bring to the February Executive Board meeting with attorney input.

**PBEC Office Construction:**

WESB will be undergoing construction updates for the next one to two years beginning this summer. Possible solutions will need to be discussed on how to handle finding office spaces for PBEC staff.

**Review of Joint Powers Agreement:**

A copy of the current Joint Powers Agreement was included in the board packet. Due to lack of time at this meeting, review of the agreement was tabled.

**Next Meetings:**

- A request to move back to Friday was submitted.
- Change the meeting time to mornings and have more time allotted.
- This year's schedule until June will remain the same
- Board of Delegates: April 21, 2022
- Executive Board February 10, 2022

Jon Clark made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dan Stifter second. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

Submitted by Kim Huether

**Handouts:**

- Agenda
- Minutes from October 7, 2021
- Meeting powerpoint
- Audit Report FY21 and Financial Statements
- LEC/Transition Powerpoint
- Staffing Proposals 2022 & 2023
- Region 5/7 Cooperative Structure
- Cost breakdown of proposed staffing changes to member districts
- Joint Powers Agreement
- Longevity Pay/Support Plan costs breakdown