

Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative
EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES
March 6, 2023 12-2 pm Brainerd High School Conference Room

The Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative (PBEC) Executive Board met on Monday, March 6, 2023 at 12 pm, Brainerd High School in Brainerd.

Present: Jamie Skjeveland, Mike Malmberg, Kurt Stumpf, Heidi Hahn, Jon Clark, Dan Stifter, Jennifer Johnson, Kim Huether, Karla Nesheim, Wanda Lane, Kimber Doty (special guest attending for Director Intern hours)

Jen Johnson called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm

Heidi Hahn made a motion to approve the March 6, 2023 agenda. Mike Malmberg seconded the motion. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

Kurt Stumpf made a motion to approve the minutes from December 15, 2022. Heidi Hahn seconded the motion. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

Policies: Policies 515 (related to protection and privacy of school records) and 522 (related to Title IX). Mike Malmberg made a motion for PBEC to adopt the MSBA version of Policy 515 and Policy 522. Jon Clark seconded the motion. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried. The policies will be added to the website.

AAC Cohort: The Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Cohort was implemented in the fall of 2018 by PBEC staff Margaret Knebel and Lois Malepsy. We are now in year 5 and are a model in the state. Kirsten Morton-Aldous (Morty) and Karley Sykora now lead this cohort to achieve the goals of finding a voice for students unable to speak for themselves. Most common equipment used is the Core Board (low tech) to the Dynavox system (higher tech) which allows communication via eye tracking. Jen brought data to the board to show the success of the program and to celebrate this work. The number of students using an individualized system in October 2020 was 11 and now in January 2023 there are 42 users. The leads of this cohort have done amazing work in building skills and training with speech language professionals, have been leaders in the state and have presented at the Charting of the C's conference in Alexandria to the highest attended session in the conference. A note to the board is that sometimes the technology needed for these programs are outside of the district's tech support. For example, a district's technology department may not typically support I pads. In the AAC world, some apps are only designed for Apple. Also to note is that the equipment is usually paid for by insurance. The increase in AAC devices has also increased the workload (in a positive direction) for the SLPs in each district. Staffing projections will include the work the SLPs are doing in relation to AAC devices.

OSEP Memo 10.4.22: OSEP (Office of Special Education Programs) sent out a memo stating what the department believes constitutes a qualified special education teacher based on the IDEA requirements of:

- a. Have obtained a full state certification as a special education teacher,
- b. Passed the state special education teacher licensing examination and holds a license to teach in the state as a special education teacher.

MN implementing these requirements could potentially affect the ability of districts to hire special education

and related services teachers within the Tier system that the PELSB board (MN licensing board) has in place. Currently the PBEC has 17 Tier 1 sped teachers due to shortages of fully licensed teachers. These current Tier 1 teachers are provided intensive support from the PBEC staff, they are provided with training throughout the school year and additional support given through several scheduled due process evenings. Many districts in the state are not hiring Tier 1 candidates and are requiring candidates to be actively enrolled in a teacher preparation program. PELSB has responded to OSEP stating their Tier licensing program is in MN statute and will remain status quo at this point. Grow Your Own programming has been done in the past. A survey will be sent out to see if there is enough interest and to explore pairing with other districts in the region to create a program. Jen wanted the board to be aware of this information.

Mandatory CEIS: PBEC has been identified as having met the threshold for significant disproportionality for Black or African American Students identified as having Emotional or Behavioral Disorders (EBD). PBEC is now required to set aside 15% of federal funds to address this citing. A plan (CEIS - Coordinated Early Intervening Services) must be submitted by July 1, 2023. The amount to be set “aside” is approximately \$425,000.

Discussion was held on possible strategies to accomplish what needs to be done, including:

- Code portions of school psychologists time to federal and have them more integrated into buildings for MTSS.
- Hire another school psychologist. Currently, PBEC psychologists need to spend the majority of their time completing special education assessments. There is little time available for MTSS integration. PBEC's current ratio of school psychologists to students is 1 psychologist to 1140 students. Statewide ratio is 1 for every 1027. The National Association of School Psychologists recommends 1 school psychologist for every 500 students. Based on that recommendation and the fact that PBEC child count shows the number of students with disabilities are higher than the state averages, it supports interventions being implemented and the need for strong MTSS frameworks.
- Provide Professional Learning opportunities to school psychologists that focus on reducing bias in special education assessments.
- Code portions of Occupational Therapists to Federal and have them integrated into buildings for MTSS.
- Check and Connect Program - several cooperatives are using this to reduce referrals to special education.
- Better train staff to avoid over identification
- Focus on MTSS
- Broaden behavior response
- How to use the lead teachers, coordinators and behavior specialists
- Regional sped directors group will be meeting later in March where Jen will network for thoughts and ideas.
- The board would like to see changes made in the school psychologists role in the buildings to align with this required improvement plan, to become more immersed in the buildings in person, and to help develop interventions within that building. Jen will bring this information forward to the school psychologists. No motion was made to hire an additional school psychologist.
- It was mentioned that more mental health services are needed as well.
- This CEIS plan cannot interfere/overlap with ADSIS.

Budget: Karla Nesheim, PBEC Business Manager, reviewed the projected budget that was approved last June 2022 as well as reviewed the revised budget which is proposed for approval at this meeting. Karla shared with the board the following:

- revenues always match the expenditures
- there is a carryover including a small amount of interest earned and donations.
- A summary of the federal programs and carryover estimate
- Federal final allocations historical data from 2009-2023 (estimated) was shared with the board showing not much change over the years.
- A carryover history report from 2010 to 2022 was included. The carryover is higher because of the American Rescue Plan funds, which will no longer be part of the budget in 2024.
- EQIP is in year 5 of the grant cycle with the final amount of \$3560 revenue allocated
- ARP funds balance will be spent this year
- The higher carryover amount is due mainly to having the ARP funds and having unfilled PBEC positions for a time. This carryover will be a cushion to work with in regards to the CEIS plan and it is anticipated the carryover will go down in next year's budget plan.

Jamie Skjeveland made a motion to approve the budget as presented. Kurt Stumpf seconded the motion. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

PBEC New Teacher Training: The PBEC will provide professional learning to new special education teachers across that cooperative. PBEC is expanding this training from two days to four. There is a need to provide training on the basics of special education services and programming. Program development will be an enhanced part of this training to include expectations, classroom schedules, visuals and lesson plans, along with individualized support in classroom set up.

Paraprofessional Institute 2024: PBEC is proposing a professional learning day for paraprofessionals cooperative-wide, similar to a professional learning day that Brainerd had for their paras. The team is looking at August of 2024 to prepare sessions, keynote speakers, topics and to get a date in August that will work for the districts.

PBEC Child Count Information: Child Count 2022 data for each district was shared with the board. The numbers reflected those students "in seats" in each district. Percentages of sped students by grade with and without speech by district was presented.

Third Party Billing: Wanda Lane reviewed Third Party procedures from the educator's lens. Included in the meeting packet was MA data for each district from MN Department of Human Services showing interim rates. Also included in the packet for each individual district was a summary sheet showing 3rd Party Revenue FY18-present and PCA rates. Wanda's goal is to capture all PCA minutes. One way to accomplish this is to have all new paraprofessionals complete the DHS PCA/CFSS certification when hired. Other factors that can be controlled that lower revenue include late billing and/or not doing the billing because of lack of time. It is, however, required by law. The board felt that the test the paras need to take could be built into the Welcome Back week. Wanda will communicate with the superintendents regarding the testing details.

Professional Learning: PBEC hosts virtual due process evenings for cooperative staff to attend throughout the year. A handout was given to the board reflecting the number of attendees, total hours and total payment by district.

Handle with Care 2023-2024: Handle with Care will be offered cooperative-wide for districts to certify and

re-certify staff in restrictive procedures. A schedule will be sent out to administrators at a later date. The "Train the Trainer" workshop will be offered again in June. Heidi Hahn would like to identify Brainerd staff to be certified as a trainer for several Brainerd school buildings.

Superintendent Agenda Items:

- Article from Dr. Skjeveland - discussion to be held after adjournment
- Executive Director Job Performance Evaluation Process - discussion to be held after adjournment
- Northern Pines Contracts - Dr. Stumpf - Discussed policy on tracking services and fees
- School Psychologist Positions - Dr. Hahn - Reiterated the desire to see school psychologists' time in the buildings increased.

Discussion to be held after the meeting adjourns regarding the article and executive director job performance. Motion by Kurt Stumpf to adjourn. Dan Stifter seconded the motion. All present voted in favor thereof.

Next Meetings:

- Board of Delegates May 18, 2023
- Executive Board June 8, 2023

Submitted by Kim Huether

Attachments:

- Agenda
- December 15, 2022 Minutes
- AAC Cohort
- OSEP Memo
- CEIS Handout
- Budget FY2023
- New Teacher Training Info
- Paraprofessional Institute 2024
- Child Count Information
- Third Party Billing Documents
- Due Process Training Summary
- Article from Dr. Skjeveland