

Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative
EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES
Thursday, October 7, 2021 12:00 pm
Washington Education Services Building

The Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative (PBEC) Executive Board met on Thursday, October 7, 2021 at 12 pm in the Washington Education Services Building in Brainerd.

Present: Jamie Skjeveland, Mike Malmberg, Kurt Stumpf, Jennifer Johnson, Kim Huether with Jon Clark and Dan Stifter attending virtually.

Absent: Laine Larson

Jen Johnson called the meeting to order approximately 12:30 pm.

Jamie Skjeveland made a motion to approve the October 7, 2021 agenda. Mike Malmberg second. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

Mike Malmberg made a motion to approve the minutes from June 10, 2021. Jamie Skjeveland second. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

New Staff at PBEC:

- Joel Anderson was hired as the new assistant director of special education. He serves primarily in the Brainerd district.
- Two Occupational Therapists hired to replace Rose Town, retirement and Joselyn Rhein, relocation: Katie Sweney and Jaiden Wentz

Two positions remain open:

1. Mike Parry, school psychologist (accepted position with BRIC in Bemidji as Assistant Director in of Special Education in late June) There have been no applications for the position. The biggest deterrent for those interested has been the policy of the co-op to travel to several districts. The preference is to work mainly in one building/district.
2. Amy Peeters, ASD Coordinator accepted a position with Sourcewell. Kate Hurd is the only ASD Coordinator on staff currently and will be on FMLA March through the end of the school year. The position was posted with several candidates applying. The position was offered to one, but declined. Beth Kunstleben has been hired to help one day a week.

The current psychologists are covering the needs in both areas at this time. There will be another psych on FMLA January - March. Jen is exploring virtual coverage as a possibility to help fill the void.

Professional Learning for Administrators:

In February of 2020 a proposal was made to increase student independence, which included a three year plan. Then the pandemic hit and that plan had to be delayed. Jen would like to propose starting with Year 1 plan for 2022-2023, with the work beginning co-op wide beginning this summer. The Leadership Retreat that is scheduled in June at Grandview would be a good opportunity to get everyone gathered for professional learning. The dates have not been officially set yet, but when they are, Jen will send the information out for the districts to block the time for their administrators to meet. Principals will be the first to be trained along with those that train and deliver curriculum to general education. A minimum of two hours professional learning for large group presentation and small group work with breakout groups by buildings/districts is the expectation. Year 1 focus is Creating a Culture; Year 2 focus is Internal Processes; Year 3 Focus is Full Implementation

Year 1 Significant Disproportionality:

PBEC received notice that students of certain racial and ethnic groups being identified for special education at higher rates include:

- American Indian or Alaska Native identified as EBD
- Black or African American identified as EBD
- Black or African American identified as OHD

Those at Pequot Lakes district include:

- American Indian or Alaska Native as identified with disabilities.

Included in the powerpoint the rate calculation that MDE uses to determine disproportionality. The state data goes by the first race listed when looking at multi race students.

An LEA will meet the state threshold for significant disproportionality in special education and be required to set aside 15 percent of its Part B funds under IDEA if the LEA has:

- A risk ratio of 3.0 or above i.e., the LEA is three times or more likely to identify, place into restrictive settings and/or discipline students from a particular racial or ethnic group compared to all the other racial/ethnic groups within the LEA's special education programs.
- For three consecutive years of data in the same category of analysis.

The psychologists and leadership team at the PBEC is working to address this to prevent getting to Year 3. They are analyzing the process, the policy and the procedures of interventions and evaluations.

There is the possibility of correcting the PBEC status with MDE by documenting students that were evaluated in a district outside of the PBEC.

Mike Malmberg requested a breakdown based on gender.

School Psychologists:

Jen is working with the PBEC team of school psychologists, examining current practices, approaches to re-evaluations and digging into the beliefs and values as school psychologists. The team is looking at shifting

how their time is spent from testing and file review to working with staff interventions.

The board feels that their principals have not historically known how to use school psychologists in their buildings to full potential. Strategies for how to do so will be rolled into professional learning in June at Grandview.

Covid-19 Recovery Services:

MDE has stated that districts must work with families of students with disabilities to address the impact of disruptions of instruction related to the pandemic. The district must INVITE the parents to a meeting as soon as practical but no later than December 1. That doesn't mean the meeting has to HAPPEN by Dec 1, but that the invite must be extended. This mandate has caused a lot of anxiety with staff, therefore PBEC has provided a Recovery Services Guide, three additional virtual due process evenings and extra virtual office hours by request and approval.

Transportation:

A district is required to provide transportation when indicated on the IEP. When routes do not have a driver the district is responsible to have an alternative plan to deliver students to school, such as: later route, van pick up student, pay parent to transport.

Setting IV Programming:

Jen gave a quick overview, including a breakdown of numbers of students by district enrolled in the level IV program at Lincoln Education Center (LEC) in Brainerd. The expectation is to expand the program and be equitable in Region 5 and that is also the expectation of the Sourcewell funding/grant. Clarification was made that this is a co-op wide program, not just a Brainerd district program. The program is experiencing a shortage of staff at LEC. The priority is to keep students and staff safe. Discussion was held on how to engage the county to get assistance with suggestions of contacting county commissioners, setting up a meeting and getting the people that need to be involved around the table. Mike stated that he appreciates the support from Jen regarding the Level IV programming discussion.

Next Meetings:

- Board of Delegates - November 4, 2021, 12 - 1:30 pm
- Executive Board - December 16, 2021, 12-1:30 pm

Jamie Skjeveland made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:45 pm. Mike Malmberg second.. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

Submitted by Kim Huether

Handouts:

- Agenda
- Minutes from June 10, 2021
- Meeting powerpoint
- PBEC Data Sheet Significant Disproportionality