

Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative
EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES
August 16, 2023 12-1:30 pm Brainerd High School Room A217

The Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative (PBE) Executive Board met on Wednesday, August 16, 2023 at 12 pm, Brainerd High School in Brainerd.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call:

Present: Mike Malmberg, Dan Stifter, Jamie Skjeveland, Kurt Stumpf, Heidi Hahn, Jennifer Johnson, Kim Huether

Absent: Jon Clark.

Jen Johnson called the meeting to order at 12:25 pm

2. **Approval of the Agenda:** Kurt Stumpf made a motion to approve the August 16, 2023 agenda. Dan Stifter seconded the motion. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.
3. **Approval of the Consent Agenda:** The consent agenda is used for those items on the agenda that usually do not require discussion or explanation as to the reason for board action. At the request of any Executive Board Member, an item shall be removed from the consent agenda and placed on the regular agenda for discussion.
 - a. **Minutes**
 - i. Approval of previous meetings minutes: Minutes from the June 8, 2023 meeting.
 - b. **Policy**
 - i. Policy 515 has been updated to reflect clarification and correction.
 - c. **Donation(s)**
 - i. Brainerd Area Noon Sertoma Club donated \$500 to the Cooperative for “accessories to help keep hearing devices on children”. The Cooperative is thankful for their generous donation. Kurt Stumpf made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Heidi Hahn seconded the motion. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

4. Discussion/Action Items:

- a. **Board Organization:** Jen asked for nominations for the Chair and Vice Chair positions. Upon nominations duly made and seconded by Heidi Hahn and Kurt Stumpf, Jamie Skjeveland will serve as Chair and Mike Malmberg will serve as Vice Chair for 2023-2024.
- b. **Legislative Updates:**
 - i. OSEP Memo and MDE CAP - Information was shared regarding the approved plan from MDE regarding Tier 1 special education teachers for SY 2023-2024 and SY 2024-25. Tier 1 teachers can only provide services for three years or less before moving to Tier 2 or discontinuing. Discussion was held regarding alternate routes for special educator teacher certification.
 - ii. Increase Age Limit for Students with disabilities from 21 to 22 - Allows students to generate ADM until 22nd birthday; previously provided through June 30 after age 21. Staffing and

program space may need to be adjusted. Expenses related to overhead, admin, facilities or other Gen Ed costs will need to be absorbed by the district as the district will generate less ADM and thus less Gen Ed Revenue. If the specific expenditure is eligible for Sped reimbursement, funding will not be affected. Jen plans to meet with the counties. One to one paras that are hired for a student that will be discontinued within the school year is a situation that will need some problem solving.

- iii. Training for Paraprofessionals/Highly Qualified Paraprofessional clarification - Minimum of 8 hours of annual paid professional development. Six of those hours must be prior to the first instructional day; or within 30 days of hiring. Training must be relevant to their employment. Annual HR training such as blood borne pathogens, bullying, can be included. Next August (2024) PBEC will be offering professional development for paras. Sourcewell does have some trainings. Infinitec with online learning would be another option. New hire paras would need to get this training prior to being hired. Paraprofessionals must be Highly Qualified to be eligible for reimbursement by either: 1) obtaining the voluntary lifetime credential through PELSB, 2) pass approved paraprofessional exam 3) AA degree. MN has two approved exams: The ParaPro from the ETS or the Paraeducator Online ASsessment from The Master Teacher. PBEC offers ParaPro testing on an individual basis as needed for paras to complete at a cost of \$55. Districts will need to adopt a system for determining who is and who isn't highly qualified and create a pathway toward obtaining highly qualified staff. It is up to the districts to track, which would include having paras sign into any training they participate in.
 - iv. Safe and Inclusive Schools - What is NED? (NonExclusionary Discipline) Alternatives to dismissal from school, to be used before beginning dismissal proceedings or pupil withdrawal agreements, except when immediate or substantial threat, to be implemented starting in SY23-24. There will be further clarification coming from MDE on details including what needs to be communicated to parents and reported to MDE. Districts will need to establish NED policies and update discipline policies to include procedures for complaints. Districts will need to provide alternative education services for a student that is suspended more than five consecutive school days. The new law limits use of recess and lunch detention. Prone restraints may not be used. School boards need to adopt a policy prohibiting malicious and sadistic conduct, have active shooter drills and issue ID's that have suicide prevention and crisis information on the cards.
 - v. Third Party Billing for Social Workers - New law as of January 1, 2024 upon Federal approval. Eventually LEAs should be able to seek reimbursement for Social Workers services as Speech, OT, PT, Psych and Nursing already do. More updates coming from DHS, MDE.
- c. **PBEC Staff in Member Districts** - Jen informed the board that PBEC staff will identify themselves as representing whatever district that they happen to be meeting about/with, instead of saying they are "the co-op". They will refer to themselves as "the _____ of Special Education for Pillager" for example. This will show that our staff is representing each district, not the cooperative.
 - d. **PBEC Staff updates:** Emily Museus was hired as an Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator to mainly work with the Brainerd school district. The DCD Coordinator position was posted and not filled. Pam Stock will continue supporting on a limited basis working one to two days per week in all DCD programs in the cooperative. The position will be posted again in December.

5. Director's Report: Jen shared two personal goals she has set for herself for 2023-24. They are: 1) Presenting at a National Conference. 2) Third Party Billing - increase timely completion of billing monthly from

30% of staff doing so to 75% of staff.

6. Calendar:

Next Executive Board Meeting - October 5, 2023

7. Adjournment:

Motion made and second to adjourn the meeting at 1:30 pm. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

Submitted by Kim Huether

Attachments:

- Agenda
- June 8, 2023 Minutes
- Special Education Assistant Highly Qualified Requirements
- Para Pro Assessment Testing Information