

Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative
Board of Delegates Minutes
Thursday, November 9, 2023 12 – 1:30 pm

The Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative (PBEC) Board of Delegates met on Thursday, November 9, 2023, 12 pm at the Washington Educational Services Building.

Present: Jamie Skjeveland, Mike Malmberg, Dan Stifter, Jon Clark, Nicki Linsten-Lodge Sara Nagel, Cindi Hills, Mike Domin, Kari Ross (for Heidi Hahn), Traci Wallin, Jen Johnson and Kim Huether.

Absent: Heidi Hahn, Kurt Stumpf, John Ward

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

Mike Malmberg made a motion to approve the November 9, 2023 agenda. Dan Stifter seconded the motion. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

Traci Wallin made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda including the November 23, 2022 minutes and the Policies 410, 413, 522. Mike Domin seconded the motion. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

PBEC Overview/Special Education and Related Services:

Jen presented to the BOD an overview of the Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative which included discussion on:

- Who is Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative: six member school districts, three charters and nine non-public schools. Voting authority, as stated in the Joint Powers Agreement, is equal across the six school districts (not based on student enrollment numbers)
- Benefits of Membership in the Cooperative: Financial savings, shared director, shared services providers, access to Setting IV program, many behind the scenes services/benefits
- PBEC Organizational Chart
- PBEC Responsibilities: oversight of all special education programming, dispute resolution, due process, finance, professional learning, teacher development and evaluation, other duties as assigned
- Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) guidelines are set at the federal, state and local levels with regulations, statutes, policies and procedures to follow. The state of Minnesota has very high expectations and restrictions. The PBEC has policies in place to meet FAPE and PBEC staff work with teachers to follow the practices.
- Disabilities: there are 13 disabilities students may qualify for special education. - ages birth through 22nd birthday.
- Due Process - the legal requirement that the state must respect all legal rights that are owed to a person. For schools this is giving notice and an opportunity to be heard with a Prior Written Notice given to parents in advance of implementing (or declining) the plan of action proposed.
- Professional Learning: The PBEC offers new staff onboarding (New Teacher Training), Handle With Care, Speech meetings, DCD/ASD/EBD meetings and due process paperwork evenings throughout the school year. By request, transportation training can be offered at the member districts.
- Resources: PBEC Website, Online Teacher Binder which has hundreds of resource topics for teachers to access

Legislative Updates: Jen highlighted MN legislative changes after a very busy session with lots to unpack and understand including:

- Increased Age Limit to 22 - Special education students may now attend until they reach their 22nd birthday. This will affect staffing and program space.
- Training for Paraprofessionals and Highly Qualified Requirements: minimum of 8 hours of annual paid professional learning with six of the hours prior to first day OR within 30 days of hiring. Training must be relevant to their employment and can include annual HR trainings. The PBEC will be shifting to a different format for paras to complete the para educator assessment that is required in response to federal legislation that paras must have an associate of arts degree, two years of college or passing an academic assessment. The Para Educator will now be used instead of the ParaPro. Assessments will be proctored in individual districts, resulting in no more traveling to PBEC offices.
- Safe and Inclusive Schools: the new legislation prohibits a district employee or agent from using a prone restraint. PBEC uses Handle with Care and prone restraints are not used.
- Third Party Billing for Social Workers: New law as of January 1, 2024 or upon federal approval will allow districts to bill for these services which will result in an increase in third party billing dollars back to the district.

Other:

The board was informed that the questionnaire that is sent out in connection with the annual audit will be sent to the Superintendents, not the Board of Delegates.

Next Meeting Date: May 16, 2024

Sara Nagel made a motion to adjourn at 1:15 pm. Traci Wallin second. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

Kim Huether, Secretary

Handouts:

- Agenda
- Minutes
- Power Point
- Organizational Chart
- PBEC New Staff Professional Learning August 2024