

**Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative  
Board of Delegates Minutes  
November 14, 2024 12 pm WESB 308**

The Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative (PBEC) Board of Directors met on Thursday, November 14, 2024, 12 pm in the Washington Educational Services Building, PBEC Conference Room

**Roll Call:** Mike Malmberg, Dan Stifter, Kurt Stumpf, Mike Malmberg, Peter Grant, Jon Clark, Jon Ward, Sara Nagel, Cindi Hills, Ross Nelson (interim Pequot Lakes board member) Jennifer Johnson, Kim Huether. Guests: Shana Larson and Emily Museus

1. **Call to Order:** Jen Johnson called the meeting to order at 12:06 pm.
2. **Approval of the Agenda:** Dan Stifter made a motion to approve the agenda. Mike Malmberg 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 November 14, 2023 meeting.
  - b. **Policies:**
    - i. Annual Review of Policy 410-Family and Medical Leave
    - ii. Annual Review of Policy 413-Harassment and Violence
    - iii. Annual Review of Policy 522- Sex NonDiscrimination and Title IX Grievance Process

Sara Nagel made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Kurt Stumpf seconded the motion. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

**Introductions:** Those present introduced themselves and their role, including Shana Larson and Emily Museus, guest speakers to present information about the Birth - 5 year old special education programming.

**PBEC Organizational Chart:**

The organizational chart for PBEC was emailed out to the board of delegates and is also linked to the agenda. Jen clarified the difference between having the title of Executive Director for PBEC and the title of Director of Special Education for Member Districts, with the main differences being that she hires and supervises staff and makes budgetary decisions for PBEC.

**Early Childhood Special Education:**

- Early Childhood Coordinators for PBEC Shana Larson and Emily Museus presented information to the Board of Delegates to educate and inform regarding early interventions for children from birth to 5 years old.
- Topics covered included referrals, resources available, curriculum used, key practices, implementation, training, coaching and the importance of reaching children early.

- The benefits of Early Intervention services include:
  - building parent capacity, brains are the most pliable (90% by age 5),
  - provide support that won't then be needed in preschool, students who continue to need support in EC are provided explicit instruction in areas of need, sometimes resulting in dismissal prior to entering K.
- For those students who continue to need special education support EC staff can help prepare a plan to help support the child to be successful in Kindergarten - which wouldn't be possible without the ECSE team.

### **PBEC Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Jen covered the structure of the cooperative, who are members of the co-op, and the why of joining together : the PBEC is able to offer programming support that would otherwise be difficult and costly while allowing school districts to maintain their individuality.
- The leadership team consists of Jen, Director and Assistant Directors Joel Anderson (Brainerd, Discovery Woods, St. Francis, Lake Region) and Lynn Krominga (Aitkin, Crosby-Ironton, Crosslake, Pequot Lakes, Pillager, CLAS and Pine River-Backus)
- There are two K-12 Coordinators, and Coordinators for EBD, Low Incidence, ASD, and ECSE
- There are three office staff members, three physical therapists, six occupational therapists, 11 school psychologists, along with staff to fill the Physical and Health Disabilities, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Mobility, Vision, and Braille positions.

### **Free Appropriate Public Education ( FAPE):**

- FAPE guarantees that students with disabilities have the right to an education that meets their individual needs and prepares them for further education, employment, and independent living – just like every other student.
- Parent input is crucial and required
- Educator expertise is the driving factor

### **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):**

- LRE is a legal right under the Individuals with Education Act (IDEA).
- Inclusive: students with disabilities should learn alongside their non-disabled peers as much as possible. The goal is to provide an education in the general education classroom unless the disability is so significant that it wouldn't meet the child's needs.
- Individualized: meeting each student's unique needs. This might mean a child spends all day in a regular classroom with support, while another child might need some services outside the general classroom for an entire day.

### **Third Party Billing:**

- Schools bill Medical Assistance and private insurance for medical services provided in a school setting and are reimbursed when a child has a disability and is on an IEP/IFSP.
- Each district's teachers and paras does billing through Sped Forms
- PBEC has a Third Party specialist (Macanzie Heldt) that processes the billing to the Department of Human Services. She offers training to staff, sends reminders, follows up with principals, tracks all things Third Party related for the schools within the PBEC.
- The revenues received by the districts can then be used for a range of purposes that support special education and related services.

**Special Education Funding Overview:**

- Federal Funding: The federal government provides funding under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). However, this only covers a portion of the costs, typically 10-14% of total special education expenses.
- State Funding: Minnesota provides state aid to help cover the additional costs of special education. The funding is based on a combination of student needs, district expenses, and reimbursement formulas.
- Local Funding: When federal and state funds fall short, local school districts cover the remaining costs from general education funds. This is called the “cross-subsidy”, where the district uses general education funds to pay for special education services due to insufficient external funding.

**Calendar**

- Board of Delegates Meeting- May 15, 2025

**Adjournment:** Motion by Kurt Stump to adjourn the meeting at 1:24 pm. Dan Stifter seconded. All present voted in favor thereof. Motion carried.

Submitted by Kim Huether

**Attachments:**

- Agenda
- November 9, 2023 Minutes
- Policies 410,412,522
- PBEC Organizational Chart