

EAST CENTRAL CENTER FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

MINUTES OF MEETING

April 19, 2022

The regular board meeting of East Central Center for Exceptional Children was held April 19, 2022.

Members Present: Jenna Helseth, Robert Toso, Avolt Baumbach, Kent Dennis, Matt Lokemoen, Kris Kuehn, Jordan Brown and Natalie Becker.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairperson Helseth and a quorum was established.

Additions/Change to Agenda: No changes.

Minutes: A motion was made by Kent Dennis, seconded by Jordan Brown, to approve the minutes of the March 14, 2022 Board Meeting. Motion carried. Kris Kuehn made the motion, seconded by Avolt Baumbach to approve the minutes of the March 29, 2022 Policy Committee Meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Financial Report and Monthly Bills: Reviewed financial report. A motion was made by Kris Kuehn, seconded by Kent Dennis, to approve the financials. Motion carried.

Bills Payable: Bills payable were presented and reviewed. A motion was made by Robert Toso, seconded by Kris Kuehn, to approve the bills as presented. Motion carried.

REPORTS TO BOARD

Directors Report

Behavioral Health Grant: The Behavioral Health Grant has been approved for the Unit in the amount of \$10,814.59 to be used for Fessenden-Bowdon(\$8,810.00), Pingree-Buchanan (\$1,667.49) and Kensal(\$336.74). The proposal consisted of yoga sessions, sensory room/supplies and Social Emotional Learning presentations for the Unit.

Vocational Rehab Grant: The Vocational Rehab Grant has been submitted for the Oct 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023 period. The total amount of this grant request was \$46,704.00 and helps to offset the cost of Transition Coordinator.

Evaluations: Teacher, Business Manager and Transition Coordinator Evaluations have been completed, signed and filed.

Staffing Updates: Staffing updates for the 2022-23 School year were presented and included the following:

- UND Resident Teachers – These teachers complete the program while working closely with a Case Manager and gaining On the Job Training. This is a very successful program.
 - Rosie Mozelle will complete a 2 Year Program in the Carrington Public Schools

- Lindsay Widicker will complete a 1 ½ Year Program while working in the Fessenden-Bowdon Public Schools.
- Lori Deal(Case Manager) is rejoining the Unit for the 2022-23 School Year and will be stationed at the Fessenden-Bowdon Public Schools.
- Kira Whitmore will continue to serve the Unit for vision impairments in Carrington and will case manage in Kensal for the 2022-23 school year, but is stepping down from the Case Manager position in Oberon while she works on 2 Masters in Vision and Deaf Education.
- McKenzie Jensen has been hired to fill the open Paraprofessional Position in the high school at New Rockford-Sheyenne. She starts May 9, 2022. She will be part-time Preschool, part-time High School for the 2022-23 school year.
- Positions needing to be filled for the 2022-23 school year include Case Managers for Carrington Elementary and Middle School, New Rockford-Sheyenne High School, Oberon Public Schools and SLP for Fessenden-Bowdon and Pingree-Buchanan.
- Director has reached out to Minot State University, VCSU, University of Mary, University of ND, MSUM and Northern State as well as advertise locally, state and nationally.
- Positions that remain unfilled will be filled by long-term subs.

Upcoming Director Meetings and Trainings: Director Wolsky will attend the Regional Director's Meeting on 4/13 via Zoom, and Directors Annual Meeting on June 6 and 7th. Director will also attend ND Safety Council training called Suspicion and the Supervisor via Zoom on June 21st.

Save the Date: Visual Phonics Training to be held at East Central on June 7th and 8th. There are 25 spots available at no cost to attendees. Spots will be offered to Unit staff, then parents or board members and the any other general educators interested and extend out to other units. ARP Funds will be used to fund this presentation.

Cafeteria Credit: Cafeteria credits are being offered to teachers and staff for Trauma Training, and Visual Phonics.

NDPHIT and Village EAP Meetings: Upcoming meetings to explore Paraprofessional benefits and Employee Assistance Program.

- NDPHIT 4/13
- Village EAP 4/20

Discretionary and ARP Grant Funds: Brief discussion on these funds included the following:

- In the past Discretionary Funds were used for student programs, but the focus has changed. The upcoming Discretionary Grant Funds need to be utilized for staff retention.
- New Rockford-Sheyenne board members expressed interest in using approximately \$7,000 for a Reading Mastery Program and asked how the process works. Director Wolsky explained that they would tell us what they want to order. We would purchase and that it would be located at their school. The Reading Mastery program would be property of East Central Center for Exceptional Children.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mediation with New Rockford-Sheyenne School

- Mediation is set for May 6, 2022 in Fargo.
- ECCEC representatives are Board members Jenna Helseth and Robert Toso, Director Ashly Wolsky, Business Manager Renae Duchscherer and past Business Manager Susette Allmarars.

ITEMS RECOMMENDED FOR BOARD ACTION

Director Contract for School Year 2022-23: The Director's contract was discussed. Salary of \$95,500, increase National Conference expenses every two years to cap at \$3000.00, Continuing Education Credit Reimbursement of \$150 and listing Pingree-Buchanan as home school were the highlighted changes from the 2021-22 contract. Discussion followed. Matthew Lokemoen made a motion to approve the Director's contract as presented. Robert Toso seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Business Manager Work Agreement: The work agreement for the Business Manager was discussed. The only change from the was the hourly payrate of \$26.50. Discussion followed. Robert Toso made the motion to approve the work agreement. Kent Dennis seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Lori Richter Resignation: Lori has resigned her Teaching position at the end of the 2021-22 school year. Discussion followed. Kris Kuehn made the motion to accept the resignation. Matthew Lokemoen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Paraprofessional Wages: During negotiations Paraprofessional wages were not negotiated for the 2 years. Duchscherer noted that the average wage increase for teacher's with their contracts will be approximately 1.7% in the 2022-23 school year. With the percentage raise a starting Paraprofessional with no experience would make \$14.27. After much discussion about the Unit's needs for Paras to return and being able to hire quality new Paras and retain them, a motion was made by Robert Toso to give a 3.35% raise to ECCEC Paraprofessional wages. This would bring the starting wage to \$14.50 from \$14.03. Avolt Baumbach seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Paraprofessional Benefits: The Board discussed the possibility of adding health insurance or some types of benefits to help retain and higher Paraprofessionals. Many scenarios were discussed including a stipend for health insurance, as well as offering Paras a health plan. Because we are already in a negotiated agreement with teacher through the school year ending 2023, no changes to health can be made at this time. Duchscherer was directed to get more information from NDPHIT for options for the 2023-24 school and plan year. For now no changes can be made. No motion made regarding this item.

Social Worker: It was requested by a board member to discuss the possibility and feasibility of adding a Social Worker. Discussion included if this was a need or a want. It was pointed out that ECCEC does not have to legally provide a Social Worker. It was also discussed that one Social Worker could not cover all the needs of the whole Unit. The needs are currently being met by Case Managers, School Counselors and

Clinical Counselors that are available through the schools. It was decided that it currently would not be fiscally responsible right now. A better use of funds would be health insurance for Paraprofessionals. No motions made regarding this item.

2nd Reading Policy BA-School Board Ethics: Members were given the chance to review and comment. Kris Kuehn made the motion to approve the 2nd reading, seconded by Avolt Baumbach. Motion carried.

2nd Reading Policy BA-BR1-School Board Ethics Regulation: Members were given the chance to review and comment. Kent Dennis made the motion to approve the 2nd reading, seconded by Kris Kuehn. Motion carried.

2nd Reading Policy ACF- Whistleblower Protections Policy: Members were given the chance to review and comment. Robert Toso made the motion to approve the 2nd reading, seconded by Kent Dennis. Motion carried.

2nd Reading Policy HEBC: Fraud Prevention & Investigation: Members were given the chance to review and comment. Kris Kuehn made the motion to approve the 2nd reading, seconded by Jordan Brown. Motion carried.

2nd Reading Policy HEBD: Audits: Members were given the chance to review and comment. Robert Toso made the motion to approve the 2nd reading, seconded by Kent Dennis. Motion carried.

Removal of Policy B-490: Recommending removal of current policy B-490 from Unit policy manual as it was replaced by NDSBA recommended policy BDA, which was adopted on 4/17/21. Members were given the chance to read policy and ask questions. Kris Kuehn made the motion to remove policy B-490 from the Unit's policy manual. Kent Dennis seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Removal of Policy B-600 Fraud Prevention and Investigation: Recommending removing this policy from the Unit's policy manual, as it has been replaced by NDSBA recommended policy HEBC adopted above. Members were given the opportunity to read the old policy and ask questions. Kent Dennis made the motion to remove policy B-600 from the Unit's policy manual. Kris Kuehn seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Adjournment: With no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting date: May 18, 2022 at 10:00am.

Jenna Helseth, Board President

Rena Duchscherer, Business Manager

Date approved

