



EAST CENTRAL CENTER FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

September 18, 2024

The board meeting of East Central Center for Exceptional Children was held on 9.18.24.

Members Present: Board President, Jenna Helseth-Carrington, Janelle Helm- Carrington, Natalie Becker- New Rockford-Sheyenne, Matt Lokemoen- Kensal, Jordon Brown-Oberon, Amber Krapp- Pingree- Buchanan.

Zoom: Jordan Brown, Oberon.

Absent: Stacy Benz- Fessenden, Laura Hager- New Rockford-Sheyenne.

Others Present: Ashly Wolsky- East Central Director, Melanie Quinton- East Central Business Manager, Teacher representative Kelly Rosenau (Zoom).

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 am by Board President Mrs. Helseth, and a quorum was established.

Additions/ amendments:

A motion was made by Amber Krapp and seconded by Janelle Helm to approve the August 12, 2024, board minutes. With no further discussion, the motion carried.

A motion was made by Janelle Helm and seconded by Jordan Brown to approve the September 2024 Financial Report as presented. Natalie Becker inquired about speech costs. These costs are listed on page 1 of the Expenditure Report by Program in the board financials, under 2160 SPEECH PATHOLOGY. The 9th row down in this grouping lists the purchased services which refers to Presence Learning and Full Circle. Director Wolsky mentioned that we are compiling information from other units with what they pay for costs for contracted services for a comparison. With no further discussion, the motion carried.

Natalie Becker asked about one of the bills from Sheyenne Valley Education. Director Wolsky stated that high costs students are shared costs and that a residential student is a shared cost. It has been referenced in the past from a previous board member this is almost like an insurance policy for future in case of multiple high costs students. Natalie asked how shared costs versus district costs are determined within the Unit, what services are shared and direct. Director Wolsky explained what a

shared cost vs. direct cost is. Shared cost: director, business manager, transition coordinator, preschool teacher, OT, PT, vision, paraprofessionals, and high cost students placed out of district in a residential setting. Direct costs: teachers and speech. Director Wolsky discussed for a district that would leave the Unit and potentially start their own department would be responsible for paying for any high cost students in their district. Director Wolsky will provide the breakdown of the services (shared vs. direct) for the next meeting. A motion was made by Natalie Becker and seconded by Matt Lokemoen to approve August and September 2024 bills payable. With no further discussion, the motion carried.

Case managers have completed the back-to-school checklist that included: Verification of policies, safety care, welcome back letter to families, schedules and caseload, IEP snap shots, communication log and positive connection home to encourage positive communication.

Director Wolsky attended the fall leadership at ND DPI Tuesday, September 10th in Bismarck, N.D. Some of the takeaways from this conference were: teacher recruitment and retention (there was 93 Visas in Special Education last year to fill empty positions add new teachers and unfilled positions), the shortage across the State in PT/OT many districts/Units using telehealth, and the Educator pathway will end in 2027. Director Wolsky discussed potential changes in licensures and course codes.

Indicators 9, 10, and 13 were met. Director Wolsky stated that when she started at East Central these indicators were not always met, and staff have worked hard to make the needed improvements to be in compliance.

Emotionally disturbed and hearing impairment disability categories may see a name change in the near future, Director Wolsky will keep the board up to date when this has been implemented.

North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA) and North Dakota Alternative Assessment (AA) was discussed because the State Guidelines for the AA assessment remove should be used for 1% of students, to keep in mind who would be considered the '1 percent', would be students who could not hold a job, attend college or receive a training certificate. Opting out should not be discussed with parents as an option, because it is required by ND DPI that students take the state assessment. Keep in mind, if parents/teams are opting out at state testing and are attending a separate school such as ACC that score comes back to our district. Most times families opt out due to a medical reason, if this is the case then a medical waiver should be filled out and submitted to the district as this would be excused.

Director Wolsky discussed applied topics as these classes are being used across the Unit and are for students who are performing significantly below their peers (emotionally and/or academically) and are unable to attend/participate in a regular education class/subject. There was discussion at Fall Leadership stating that applied topics should be being offered to those that would be considered the 1%. Director Wolsky disagrees and thinks this would cause a higher drop out rate and Applied Topics courses are used as a last resort for students that are unable to participate in regular education and require a specialized curriculum in order to be successful.

Alternative Choice Ready has given the recommendation from ND DPI, that the school counselors and district administrators should be communicating with the special education teachers before marking this selection as many students may being marked 'no, alternatively choice ready,' are in fact the student is alternatively choice ready based on their IEP and roadmap to graduation.

Student contracts have had an ongoing conversation that employee costs vary throughout the state, and ND DPI is looking at using the Unit's fiscal information that is already submitted to the department to complete student contracts.

The State is recommending moving forward with the pilot program Goalbook statewide, which could potentially provide additional license stated Director Wolsky.

Laura Booth- special ed lawyer is speaking today at the Directors meeting. If there are any questions that the board would like to ask, please contact Ashly and/or feel free to join the monthly special ed law discussion.

Indicator 8 is the parent survey that is done annually to solicit parent input on their experience with the special education process. Having our teachers work with the parents to have them fill the surveys out gives our unit a better response rate that if it was sent out through a 3rd party.

Tienet has had a few updates, they are looking for feedback to help with compliance. Indicator 13 has been updated in Tienet to help compliance also.

Self-Evaluations have been sent to the teachers, and Ashly plans on going into the classrooms to evaluate staff in the upcoming months.

Director Wolsky noted that there has been a lot of re-evaluations on students. Natalie Becker asked about students who receive services under the age of 3 and the unit process when students are enrolling or leaving the unit. Director Wolsky discussed parents and how they notify the schools or don't notify when they leave (exiting the program/transferring to another school). Kelly Rosneau, SLP/teacher representative mentioned how the school secretaries have been keeping track to improve the process of students in and out of special education.

Health Insurance open enrollment ended Monday, September 9, with the cost to the unit being just over \$26,000 a month. Director Wolsky discussed that the fund balance will reflect a higher amount because money has been budgeted for to cover for all employee benefits, while some chose to opt out.

Melanie Quinton has completed and submitted the STARS reports, they include: MIS01-02-03, LEA Financial Reports, Compensation Report and Enrollment report to ND DPI. The LEA financial report needs to be approved by the board to submit to the department. Amber Krapp made a motion to approve the LEA Financial report, Janelle Helm seconded. With no further discussion, motion carried.

The Policy committee meeting date: November 7th, 10:00am.

The Next Board Meeting date: October 15th, 2024, 10:00am.

The meeting adjourned at 10:58am



Mrs. Helseth, Board President

10-15-24

Date Approved



Melanie Quinton, Business Manager