

**BITTERROOT VALLEY EDUCATION COOPERATIVE
MANAGEMENT BOARD**

Monday, April 4, 2022
1:00 PM– Cooperative Office/Zoom

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order** – Dr. Moore called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM. Board members in attendance: Dr. Moore, Dr. DoBell, Mr. Toynbee, Ms. Woodard, and Brian Rayburn. BVEC staff in attendance: Ms. Rammell and Mr. Hughes. Staff in attendance: Tammy Olds (via Zoom).
2. **Consent Agenda** – Approved by unanimous consent.
 - A. Minutes
 - B. Warrants
 - C. Financial Report
 - D. Resignations
 1. Sarah Jeske, CSCT Behavioral Consultant
 - E. New Hires
 1. John Wood, CSCT Mental Health Therapist, Stevensville Elementary
 2. Bradley Armour, CSCT Behavioral Consultant, Stevensville Elementary
 - F. Next Meeting – April 26, 2022
3. **Public Comment** – None.
4. **Correspondence** – Terese Athman, retirement incentive proposal. Jenny explained the Board has until October 2022 to decide if there will be a retirement plan and the details of said plan. Dr. Moore recommends CBA negotiations take priority and this item be tabled until then. Remaining Board members agreed. Ms. Rammell will continue to include this in Board agendas as old business until it is addressed.
5. **Board Action**
 - A. **Sarah Jeske Resignation** – Ms. Rammell and Mr. Hughes explained the details of the resignation. The employee resigned to prioritize health and family and did give two weeks' notice. The co-op was in the process of reassigning the employee to a new site and felt that the two weeks would not be in the best interest of the site. Details regarding the health and family were not discussed with the employee. Ms. Rammell recommends the early resignation of \$500 be assessed.

Dr. Moore made the motion to approve the recommendation and assess the penalty with an invoice in the amount of \$500 since the employees last check had been paid in March. The motion was seconded by Dr. DoBell. Motion carries 5-0.

There was further discussion on what to do going forward when the timing of a resignation is such that their final check is due to them before the next Board meeting to approve the resignation and penalty if recommended. Board agreed that going forward the cooperative will deduct the penalty as recommended by the Director on final checks. If the Board does not approve at the following Board meeting, the employee will be reimbursed for the penalty in the amount approved by the Board.

B. Sign On Bonus John Wood – New CSCT Therapist at Stevensville Elementary School

Ms. Rammell explained the critical personnel shortages that exist CSCT positions. Per the current BVEC Collective Bargaining Agreement, management may offer a sign-on bonus up to \$2,500.00 if necessary to fill a critical employment contract. Recruitment and advertisement for positions have included language indicating the potential of a sign-on-bonus with dollar amount decided on a case-by-case basis. While the decision to offer a sign-on bonus is reserved strictly for management, such offers are subject to bargaining unit notification and board approval. Bargaining unit was notified on 3/14/22. The recommendation is to approve the \$3500 sign on bonus for Mr. Wood.

Dr. DoBell made a motion to approve the sign on bonus of \$2500 for Mr. Wood as recommended. Ms. Woodard seconded the motion. Mr. Toynbee asked if the cooperative would offer this to others and Mr. Hughes answered that yes, we would offer them as needed. Dr. DoBell asked what response had been received by the Union and Ms. Rammell explained she had not received any response. Dr. Moore called for the vote. Motion carries 5-0.

C. Sign On Bonus Bradley Armour – New CSCT Behavior Consultant at Stevensville Elementary School

Same narrative for Mr. Armour as with Mr. Wood. Ms. Rammell recommends a \$1000 sign on bonus for Mr. Armour. Mr. Toynbee made the motion to approve the \$1000 sign on bonus for Mr. Armour. Second by Mr. Rayburn. No discussion. Motion carries 5-0.

D. Retention Premium

Ms. Rammell explained the cooperative would like to pay a \$1000 retention premium in June for employees completing current contract year and signing contract for 2022-2023. This would help us with retaining CSCT employees for summer programs and other employees for the next school year. The retention would be paid using ESSER 1 or IDEA ARP funds and some CSCT supplemental funds that had been given the cooperative. These funds had been designated for retention of employees.

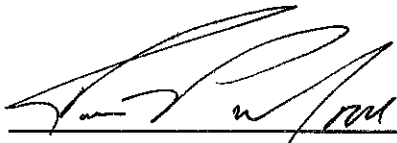
There was Board discussion on the retention premium approved in November and paid in December. Dr. DoBell had question regarding the scope of finances, the union response to the retention premium. Ms. Rammell replied finance situation and using ESSER 1 funds, IDEA ARP funds and CSCT supplemental funds. The Union had not been approached yet, that would be done upon Board approval. Mr. Hughes explained how this could help us retain employees that might otherwise leave to work for other providers who have been able to raise their starting pay. They can do this more quickly than we can because we are tied to our bargaining agreement. Mr. Rayburn explained this was a big ask for him and he did not support the retention premium payment. Ms. Woodard explained that she was alarmed when she saw the discrepancy in current cooperative salary matrixes for Specialist and CSCT Therapist when they both had the same level of education. Ms. Woodard explained that addressing these discrepancies was a critical situation. There was more discussion on the financial situation of the cooperative, the historically high inflation rates, and the critical situation we are in with CSCT employees with our current salary matrix. The current salary matrix will impede our ability to hire quality employees and sustain the CSCT program. There was discussion regarding using the funding to support increasing the base pay on salary matrix would be more advantageous than one time retention premiums. Dr. DoBell made the motion to table this item until we have more information from bargaining. Mr. Toynbee seconded the motion. Motion carries 5-0. Item will be tabled and included in future agendas as old business.

6. Information and Discussion

- A. Financial Audit-Denning, Downey & Associates, P.C. Conclusion of Governance Letter – Ms. Rammell explained we had received the audit conclusions and would be receiving an unmodified opinion on our 2020-2021 audit and there were no significant findings.

- B. CSCT Update – Mr. Hughes explained the new IGT process was working better than expected. The cooperative has now filled all positions except the Darby Secondary Behavior Consultant. The cooperative is working with the CSCT teams to adapt to the new regulations, and we are seeing progress. The cooperative will be looking at future sustainability of three person teams versus two person teams. Ms. Reynolds explained that financially the program is doing well, and most recent forecast shows the program may cover cost this year, versus the significant loss that had been expected. This is driven by the three months of \$96/per unit reimbursement we received in the fall of 2021.

7. Adjourn – Dr. Moore adjourned the meeting at 2:02 PM.



Board Chair Signature

5-19-2022

Date



Board Clerk

5/20/22

Date