Missoula Area Education Cooperative

Management Council Regular Meeting Minutes

Date:	October 1, 2026
Time:	9:00 a.m.
Meeting called to order by:	Dale Olinger, Board Chair

The Management Council of the Missoula Area Education Cooperative met for a regular meeting at 9:00 a.m. All motions carried unanimously unless otherwise stated.

ATTENDEES

Stacia Vaughn, Cooperative Director
Dale Olinger, Superintendent, Lolo Schools via ZOOM
Erin Lipkind, Missoula County Superintendent of Schools via ZOOM
Jason Sargent, Superintendent, St. Ignatius School via ZOOM
Jim Howard, Superintendent, Bonner School via ZOOM
Logan Labbe, Superintendent, Superior School via ZOOM
Rhonda Decker, Cooperative Business Manager

GUESTS

Emily Sallee, Principal, Potomac School via ZOOM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Erin Lipkind moved to accept the Minutes of the September 3, 2026 Management Council meeting. Jim Howard- Second.

PUBLIC COMMENT

2. None

CORRESPONDENCE

3. None

OLD BUSINESS

4. None

NEW BUSINESS

5. BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT: Information & Action
   A. Rhonda Decker, Cooperative Business Manager, reported to the Board that September year-to-date expenditures so far were $211,538.00.
   B. Rhonda reported a reconciled cash balance with the Missoula County Treasurers for August in the amount of $653,308.43.
   C. The Board approved the Business Manager to pay November claims and payroll. Jim Howard moved to approve the Business Manager's report. Erin Lipkind- Second.

PERSONNEL REPORT

A. None

GRANTS/CONTRACTS

A. None

POLICY UPDATES

A. None

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Stacia Vaughn, Cooperative Director, reported an update for the Fall 2026 Child Count and her recent email to Member District Administrators, Special Education educators and Cooperative specialists with detailed guidelines on ensuring all documentation is complete and accurate, particularly as it is crucial for special education funding.
B. OPI's Special Education Portal
C. Stacia thanked Dale Olinger and Jim Howard for hosting fall special education professional development where Cooperative School Psychologist Katie John provided training to special education teachers on academic testing. Trainings took place in September, with more upcoming in October and November. Additionally, the recent Kaleva webinar for 504 training will be made available soon.
D. Anna Grussling, the Cooperative's .50 FTE Special Education Preschool Teacher and Special Education Case Manager is currently serving two districts, one for preschool and another for case management, and will soon to be serving four districts.

NEXT BOARD MEETING

6. NEXT MANAGEMENT COUNCIL DATE: 11/5/2026 @ 9:00 a.m.

OTHER

7. Jim Howard asked for clarification on why as a Cooperative Member District, his district will be charged for Special Education Case Management and/or preschool services. Stacia explained that as Member Districts, the Cooperative's responsibility is to provide specialized services for Speech, School Psych, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy. Schools are responsible for providing special education to their students as obligated by providing FAPE and the hiring of such staff is a responsibility of schools as they receive that related funding. Further, she reminded the board of the decision and their vote to

dismantle onsite preschool services and move to a push-in model, where out of fairness to all districts, only those using the services would be charged.

ADJOURN

8. ADJOURN: Dale Olinger called the meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Rhonda Allen
Business Manager, Attest

Chairman

11/5/2026
Date

11/5/2026
Date

11/5/2026
Date Copies sent to JAB