



Management Council Regular Meeting Minutes

Date: September 30, 2025
Time: 2:00 p.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 the MAEC Conference Room located at 2825 Stockyard Rd, Suite I-2. All motions carried unanimously unless otherwise stated.

ATTENDEES

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

ABSENT

Erin Lipkind, Missoula County Superintendent of Schools

GUESTS

Jim Baldwin, Superintendent, Charlo Schools via ZOOM
Amanda Cyr, Superintendent, Alberton Schools via ZOOM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Jim Howard moved to accept the Minutes of the August 18, 2025, Management Council meeting.
Jason Sargent- 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 were \$196,660.
- B. Treasurer's Financial Statement Fund Balance for June, which includes revenue due from OPI, was \$605,866.83. We still have not received Missoula County Treasurer financial reports for July and August, so are unable to report a reconciled balance since June.
- C. The Board approved the Business Manager to pay October claims and payroll. Jason Sargent moved to approve the Business Manager's report. Jim Howard- Second.

PERSONNEL REPORT

6. PERSONNEL HIRES & UPDATES: Information & Action

- A. The Director reported that she accepted the resignation of Yvonne Field on August 18, 2025.
- B. The Director recommends the hire of Anna Grussling as a .50 FTE Special Education Preschool Teacher. Jim Howard moved to hire Anna Grussling for the 2025-2026 school year. Logan Labbe- Second.

GRANTS/CONTRACTS: NONE

7. None

POLICY

8. None

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

9. DIRECTOR'S UPDATES: INFORMATION

- A.
 - a. Stacia reminded the board that the Sped Webinars for MAEC and member districts are available for viewing until November 21, 2025, and encouraged them to have their sped staff watch them.
 - b. Five out of MAEC's 15 member districts are impacted by the latest information from the Office of Public Instruction that school districts in Montana must provide special education services to students through age 22.
 - c. Three achievement testing trainings were provided by MAEC School Psychologist, Katie John throughout the month of September at Desmet School; 9 Special Education Teachers from MAEC member districts participated.
 - d. Child Find preschool screenings are underway; these are intentionally scheduled to be completed in the fall so that Cooperative and member districts do not end up with an excessive number of referrals and initial evaluations concurrently in the spring and which push the end of the year calendar and completion of IDEA activities within in designated timelines. The Director reminded the Board that Child Find (ages 3-22) is a year-round obligation. If districts receive

IDEA referrals and inquiries, and they are unsure of the district's obligation, they should gather the parents' / individual's contact information and then reach out to Stacia before responding.
e. Stacia reminded administrators of the OPI Sped Portal and explained that only Superintendents are authorized to add access for staff who can then help complete sped reports such as the OPI sped post-school survey and Child Count.

f. Stacia sent an email dated 9/29/25 detailing specific instructions for all member district administrators and special educators to help them accurately process annual fall Child Count which takes place on October 6, 2025, and opportunity to fix errors until October 31, 2025.

- B. Stacia has provided on-site visits to nine of our member districts and will be scheduling visits with the other six districts in November and December.
- C. Stacia informed the Board that the annual OPI Sped Parent Involvement Survey is available for distribution between now and June 30, 2026. She recommends that the annual OPI Sped Parent Involvement Surveys be sent out each January to families who have children with IEPs. She provided administrators with the 2025-26 survey and instructions and cautioned that whatever method of delivery/distribution the district chooses to use to send out the survey, they be sure to protect and maintain confidentiality.
- D. Stacia advised administrators to wait before responding to OPI's email for completion of fiscal requirements, risk assessments and program narrative pertaining to special education, explaining that she would be assisting with this process and will provide more information in the coming weeks.
- E. OPI's IDEA E-grant Applications are available and have been created/opened for all member districts, and Stacia is assisting member districts with theirs; once district applications have been submitted and reviewed, Stacia can submit the Cooperative's IDEA Consolidated Application in October.
- F. OPI has a no-cost to districts resource available to schools that apply with the Montana Autism Education Project (MAEP). MAEP provides consulting and coaching clinics which are proving to be an invaluable resource. Stacia encourages member districts to take advantage of this professional development for special educators who are working with students on the autism spectrum.

NEXT BOARD MEETING

10. NEXT MANAGEMENT COUNCIL DATE: Meeting Scheduled for October 22, 2025 @ 1:00 p.m.

OTHER

11. None

ADJOURN

12. ADJOURN: Dale Olinger called the meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Rhonda We
Business Manager, Attest

10/22/2025
Date

10/22/2025
Date Copies sent to JAB

Sped
Chair

10/22/25
Date