

BITTERROOT VALLEY EDUCATION COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Tuesday, April 28, 2026
10:00 AM – Cooperative Office/Zoom

MINUTES - FINAL

1. **Call to Order** - Mr. Stiegler called the meeting to order at 10:04 AM. Board members in attendance: Mr. Stiegler, Ms. Weems, Mr. Konen, Mr. Fiske. Board members not in attendance: Mr. Biesiot. BVEC administration in attendance: Ms. Rammell, Director, and Ms. Gillespie, MH Program Manager. Staff in attendance via Zoom: Liz Pepion and Heather Berry.
2. **Staff Representative** - Liz Pepion, CSCT Mental Health Therapist, Victor Elementary. Ms. Pepion spoke to the group about the busy year the CSCT team is having in Victor Elementary since they have had a full caseload all year. The team, consisting of Ms. Pepion and Peter Goodwin, have been able to provide classroom support and crisis management. Some of the students have expressed their appreciation for the CSCT program and having a space to regroup when needed. Teachers have also expressed their appreciation for the program and the services provided that allow the students to be more mindful about how to handle stressful situations. The team is looking forward to the summer program that has some exciting plans with a special year end celebration for those who attend 80% of the summer days where they will go to Splash Montana and Chinna Buffett. Mr. Stiegler added that they did have a robust and challenging caseload. Ms. Rammell thanked Liz for all she does for our students, her expertise, and meaningful relationships.
3. **Consent Agenda** – Mr. Fiske made a motion to approve the consent agenda, and Mr. Konen seconded the motion. The consent agenda was approved, 4-0.
 - A. Minutes
 - B. Warrants
 - C. Resignations-
 - a. McKenzie Pearson, SBMH Outpatient Therapist, Lone Rock School District
 - b. Michelle Parisi, BVEC Pre-School Para Professional
 - D. New Hires-
 - a. Kimberly Waggener, BVEC Business Manager
 - E. Next Meeting: May 26, 2026
4. **Public Comment** – None.
5. **Correspondence/Communications** – Ms. Rammell shared she had received the Association's approval of the proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement.

6. Board Action

A. Collective Bargaining Agreement (July 1, 2026-June 30, 2028)

Ms. Rammell updated the Board on the proposed agreement for 2026-2028. Bargaining was completed in five meetings and there will be a two-year agreement. Ms. Rammell then highlighted the bargained items with fiscal impact.

- The maximum annual number of accumulated sick days will change from eighty-seven days to one hundred days.
- The year end payouts for excess sick days over one hundred days and any unused personal leave will be paid at \$100 per day, previously paid at \$75 per day. The personal leave pay is prorated based on hours.
- The annual maximum salary stipend for employees whose annual salary exceeds the last step salary in their matrix will receive a stipend based on the percentage increase for the last step multiplied by their salary. This will be an increase over prior years where the annual stipend was a set amount equal to the last step increase.
- There will be a base salary increase of 1.75% in year one, 1.25% in year two. In addition, employees will receive their step increase.
- The Teacher salary matrix was updated to reflect the starting base salary required by the STARS act. Lanes and steps were adjusted to match the Specialist and Mental Health Therapist schedules step increases and to reflect the same salaries by step for the Masters +45 dollar amounts.
- The pre-licensed step increases for Steps 1 and 2 were corrected due to a formula error. The corrections resulted in increased in only those two steps and only impacted one employee. Ms. Rammell will follow up with the Association for approval on these changes.
- Mr. Fiske made a motion to approve the bargaining agreement as presented with the correction to the pre-licensed steps. Ms. Weems seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

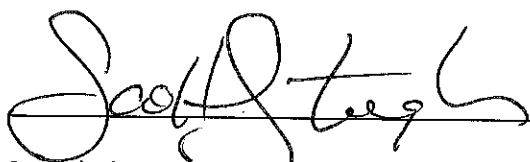
B. Contract Renewals for 2026-2027 Certified Staff – Mr. Fiske made a motion to approve the Certified Staff renewals as presented with the addition of Katie Lewis. Mr. Konen seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

C. Contract Renewals for 2026-2027 Classified Staff – Mr. Fiske made a motion to approve the Classified Staff as presented. Mr. Konen seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

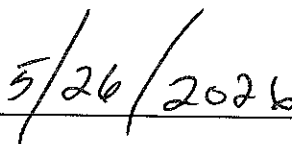
7. Information and Discussion

A. Upcoming Changes to CSCT Reimbursement Model – Ms. Gillespie updated the Board on the timing of Medicaid billing changes where reimbursement will be per fifteen-minute unit versus a daily rate. The effective date of the change is now May 9, 2026. Ms. Gillespie held a training session for CSCT staff on Friday, April 17th, because this will mean a change in paperwork process for the staff. Ms. Gillespie also explained that the billing changes will require changes to the CSCT IGT contracts the district's signed. The revised contracts will be emailed for signatures when revisions are completed.

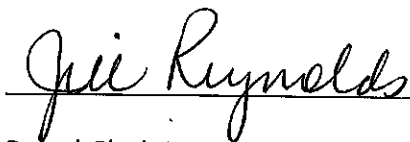
- B. Mr. Stiegler asked for a review of the CSCT forecast. There was group discussion on the forecast, where reserves would be, and the possibility of adding additional mental health services in Victor and Florence, as well as adding services to schools that previously discontinued services due to financial constraints. Further information is required to determine any costs to the districts and what those costs would be. No formal agreement was made, but all agreed if it can be done at a cost the Board agrees to, it is something that would be considered at a later date.
8. Adjourn – Mr. Stiegler adjourned the meeting at 11:10 AM.



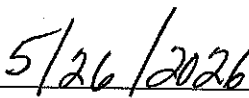
Board Chair Signature



Date



Board Clerk Signature



Date

