

BITTERROOT VALLEY EDUCATION COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

Cooperative Office/Zoon

MINUTES - DRAFT

1. **Call to Order** – Dr. DoBell called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. Board members in attendance: Dr. DoBell, Mr. Fiske, and Mr. Thennis. Via Zoom: Ms. Woodard. Board members not in attendance: Mr. Biesiot. BVEC administration staff in attendance: Director, Ms. Rammell; Mental Health Program Manager, Mr. Hughes, and Clinical Supervisor, Ms. Gillespie. BVEC staff in attendance: Cami Hildebrand. Other in attendance: Mr. Stiegler, Victor Superintendent effective July 1, 2024. Board Clerk – Jill Reynolds.
2. **Introduce Staff Representative**-Cami Hildebrand, School Psychologist, Florence-Carlton
3. **Consent Agenda** – No changes requested, no discussion. Consent agenda passed by unanimous vote 4-0.
 - A. Minutes
 - B. Warrants
 - C. Financial Report
 - D. Resignations-none
 - E. New Hires-none
 - F. Next Meeting: April 23, 2024
4. **Public Comment** – None.
 - A. **Correspondence/Communications** - Denning, Downey & Associates, P.C. Audit Report (attached) showing the 22-23 fiscal year had an unmodified result for both Financial Statements and Federal Awards.
6. **Board Action** – None.
7. **Information and Discussion**
 - A. **Collective Bargaining** – Ms. Rammell updated the Board on the bargaining process stating we had multiple sessions planned with an extended session on 4/15/24. We hope to have completed the process at that meeting but are not sure the agreement will be ratified in time for the Board meeting on 4/23/24. If it is not, we would need to call a Special Meeting for Board ratification of the CBA.
 - B. **Special Education Parent Involvement Survey** – Ms. Rammell explained that there is a Special Education Parent Involvement Survey that all Districts will be required to distribute within their Districts. This had previously been required every five years and this has been changed to an annual requirement by OSEP. Ms. Rammell will forward the details to the Superintendent's, and she will follow up on how the results will be shared with the Districts, and when they will be shared. There were questions on how the Districts distribute the surveys to parents, Ms. Rammell will include that in the information she sends them. There were also concerns there could be crossover between the Civil Rights survey the Districts had just completed and this survey.

- C. CPI Training Planning – Ms. Hildebrand will be emailing Superintendents after the Board meeting requesting lead contacts, August PIR days and Alternate PIR days, and if they prefer CPI training on PIR days or Alternate PIR days. Ms. Hildebrand confirmed renewal is required annually. She also explained renewal training and training for new hires is kept separate. They will try to do renewal training on site in Districts and might do a North and South Valley training for new hires. New hire training is one full day, plus the online training. Ms. Hildebrand said they try to keep training attendance to fifteen because one trainer can handle that class size. Plus fifteen requires two trainers.
- D. CSCT – Ms. Rammell explained that the current CSCT structure with Medicaid reimbursement rates and our current Medicaid caseload were no longer sustainable. Our Medicaid caseload has dropped to 67% since the COVID medical emergency expired and Medicaid renewals were required. This in addition to staff vacancies, staff absences, and student absences requires the Cooperative to look at changes to enable us to continue to provide Mental Health services in our schools.

Mr. Hughes and Ms. Gillespie reviewed the Mental Health Program Sustainability Plan for the remainder of this year and what it might look like next year. The Co-op will look at pivoting from only CSCT services to a combination of CSCT, HSS, IOP, OP and CBPRS. These other services have higher reimbursement rates than CSCT services. There were questions regarding the financial forecast for Mental Health this year, what are we budgeting for 2024-25, what amount might the Co-op request from District's if additional funds are needed, and what other providers that provide CSCT services are doing to cover costs.

Mr. Hughes explained that in the recent Coalition call with other providers and DPHHS, there did seem to be a renewed interest from DPHHS in possible CSCT changes. Providers were asked to prepare a three-year financial analysis of CSCT program gains/losses. The Co-op has supplied this information. Currently it is not known when or if the reimbursement rates for CSCT would change. Mr. Hughes also explained that other providers have other services they provide the can cover losses in CSCT programs. He also explained that there are currently nine CSCT providers in the State, down from twenty providers prior to the IGT Program and reimbursement rate changes. Mr. Hughes and Jill explained the current forecast loss is \$288K. This would leave the program with approximately \$350K in reserves. If you assume we have the same financial forecast for 24-25, the reserves could cover costs for the year.

Dr. DoBell stated he would advocate for our kids and if CSCT were to go away he feels we have to find a way to maintain this program. He appreciates the work done by Ms. Rammell, Mr. Hughes and Ms. Gillespie to find ways to keep the program sustainable. Mr. Fiske and Dr. DoBell asked if the Co-op had an estimate of what they would require from schools to assist in maintaining the program. Based on the limited understanding of what the new structure might provide financially, Jill replied it could be \$200K in total, an average of \$40K per District. Mr. Fiske and Mr. Thennis expressed grave concern about their ability to find the funds to meet this request. There was more discussion on ways to possibly find the funds, but no definitive plan was discussed.

8. Adjourn – Dr. DoBell adjourned the meeting at 10:37 AM.