

**Southwest Arkansas Education Cooperative Board's Minutes
February 9, 2022**

Schools Present: Fouke, Genoa, Texarkana (Lea Metcalf-McDonald, proxy), Lafayette, Nevada, Spring Hill, Blevins, and Hope.

Schools Not Present: Prescott

Co-op Staff Present: Phoebe Bailey, Monica Morris, Eva Wood, Lynn Foster, Gina Perkins, Tanya Collins, and Vicki Jewell.

Guests Present: John Ashworth (virtually).

The meeting was called to order by Stephanie Dixon.

Robert Edwards made a motion to approve the minutes from January, seconded by Tom Wilson. The minutes were approved.

Robert Edwards made a motion to approve the financial and expenditure reports for January. The motion was seconded by Tom Wilson. Motion passed.

DIRECTOR UPDATES: Phoebe Bailey

Ms. Bailey let the superintendents know that the upcoming legislative session begins on Monday, February 14th. Budget hearings have already been held that adopted adequacy recommendations from the previous study.

Health insurance changes for state and public school plans are being discussed. All approved changes are expected to be ready for the 2023 calendar year.

Ms. Bailey reminded the superintendents that their school calendar decisions would have to be entered into Cycle 7 reporting and it must also be uploaded onto their district website by August 1st. She then handed out a checklist from DESE to help districts determine which calendar would be best for them. Ms. Bailey also reminded them that Cycle 5 is due on February 15th and will be locked by April 15th and no changes can be made after that.

There was a discussion on possible job openings in districts for the upcoming year that might be filled by staff being let go from HSU. Ms. Bailey informed the superintendents some of the cooperatives had been contacted to possibly host a virtual job fair and asked them to be on the lookout for a survey where they would list possible openings.

Further clarification was provided on the grant from the Department of Health. Districts were given a link to a FAQ document that will help answer how the funds can be spent.

TEACHER CENTER UPDATES: Monica Morris

STANDARDS & ASSESSMENT: DESE is requesting applications for SOAR grants for K-12 schools, the deadline to apply is April 1st. Ms. Morris let the superintendents know that there will be more flexibility for implementing Pre-AP requirements in schools.

TESS/LEADS: The student GPS dashboards and the ASIS system will be discontinued on June 30, 2022. Ms. Morris let the superintendents know that Shashank Avvaru would be available to assist any districts that need help downloading student data prior to June 30th. She then advised them that the School Based Health Center Grant applications must be submitted by March 31, 2022. Ms. Morris informed the board that qualified tutors are available through the Arkansas Tutoring Corps.

RECRUITMENT & RETENTION: Vicki Jewell

Ms. Jewell gave the board a sample of her “Mentors Message” that she provides for novice teachers on a weekly basis. In her handout there are words of encouragement as well as insightful hints and helpful web page links that help any novice navigate their way in teaching today. She asked the superintendents to be thinking of a day and time that she could come and talk with them to form a plan specific for their district, for their novice teachers for next school year.

VIRTUAL ARKANSAS: John Ashworth

John Ashworth of Virtual Arkansas gave a presentation to the board. He presented slides over Teacher Content and the services available with it. Slides were presented with the timeline for enrollment as well as resources and informational zoom sessions.

Director’s Contract: Executive Session

The superintendents broke into an executive session to discuss the details of the Director’s contract. After a brief discussion and calling Ms. Bailey in for a few questions, Mr. McCoy made a motion to increase Ms. Bailey’s salary to \$100,000 a year and to extend her contract for another year. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilson and the motion passed.

With no other business Robert Edwards made a motion to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Jim Buie. The meeting was adjourned.