

BITTERROOT VALLEY EDUCATION COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Tuesday, October 28, 2025
10:00 AM – Cooperative Office/Zoom

MINUTES – FINAL

1. **Call to Order** - Mr. Fiske, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM. Board members in attendance: Mr. Fiske, Mr. Konen. Via Zoom: Ms. Weems, Mr. Biesiot. Board members not in attendance: Mr. Stiegler. BVEC administrators in attendance: Jenny Rammell, Director, and Ashley Gillespie, MH Program Supervisor. Staff in attendance: Paula Lampi, Liz Pepion (via Zoom). Board Clerk: Jill Reynolds.
2. **Staff Representative** - Paula Lampi, School Psychologist, Stevensville. Ms. Lampi shared things that are going well in Stevensville Schools this year. She feels there is a lot of momentum, change, and moving forward with the new Superintendent and new curriculum. One thing she sees is a higher level of anxiety for staff as well as students. After attending NASP conference this summer, there is a new focus on how to help students control levels of anxiety while staying in class, versus the old model of removing them from calls.
3. **Consent Agenda** – Motion to approve the consent agenda by Mr. Biesiot, second by Mr. Konen. There was discussion regarding the surprise resignation from Ms. Rodgers. Motion carried by unanimous consent, 4-0.
 - a. Minutes
 - b. Warrants
 - c. Resignations
 - i. Alyssa Larson, Occupational Therapist, Darby/Lone Rock/Victor
 - ii. Karen Rodgers, Preschool Paraprofessional-Classified
 - d. New Hires - None
 - e. Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 25, 2025
4. **Public Comment** - None
5. **Correspondence/Communications** - None
6. **Board Action** -
 - a. **Consideration of Penalty Regarding Early Resignation** - Alyssa Larson. Ms. Rammell explained that Alyssa is having her second child and has requested longer leave than she has accrued for sick and personal leave. Due to the length of time, she will be in unpaid status, she is resigning with the intention of returning for the 26-27 school year. Ms. Rammell explained Alyssa is an exceptional Occupational Therapist, with good or better performance appraisals each year. Mr. Biesiot made a motion to accept the resignation without penalty for not completing her contract. Mr. Konen seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

7. Information and Discussion

- a. Special Education Related Services and Outside Providers – Ms. Rammell explained current trend of increases in Speech, Occupational, and Physical Therapist wanting to come in to school and provide services to students during school hours with no charge to schools. These providers would bill the family's insurance carrier, including Medicaid, for the services provided. There has been advertising from some the providers, which is unethical.

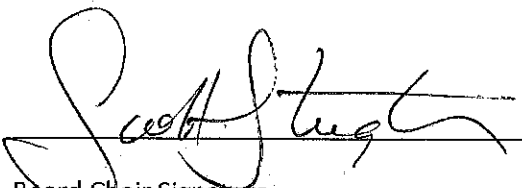
It is recommended that outside providers not be allowed to provide services in the schools as it could be construed as the school not being able to cover FAPE. In addition, if the family's coverage lapses the schools could be liable for the cost of the services. There is also a financial risk to the cooperative as there is a limit of one unit of service per day for these services. If the outside provider bills Medicaid and is paid for day that we also provide services, Medicaid would not reimburse us. There is also an issue if the outside provider is not going through the district's vetting process and background checks.


Parents may sign a Release of Information to allow collaboration between district and private providers. Parents may invite outside providers to attend IEP meetings to share input. The IEP team determines if strategies align with the district's offer of FAPE.

Ms. Rammell will send Board members a summary regarding the potential issues and what a collaborative model would look like.

- b. Memorandum of Understanding from Montana School of Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) – Ms. Rammell explained that each district currently leveraging MSDB services should sign the MOU. The memorandum clarifies that MSDB will not provide direct services to any students, only consultation. This agreement was vetted by both Kaleva Law and the attorney for MSDB. Ms. Rammell is looking into which of our member districts are currently leveraging MSDB for consultation and if they are not currently using MSDB should they sign the MOU now or wait until the need arises.
- c. Ms. Rammell added an update of the Child Find schedule for each district.

8. Adjourn – Mr. Fiske adjourned the meeting at 10:33 AM.


Board Chair Signature

 11/25/25
Date


Board Clerk Signature

11/25/25
Date