

**Southwest Arkansas Education Cooperative Board's Minutes
September 19, 2024**

Schools Present: Texarkana, Nevada, Prescott Proxy-Jennifer Robbins, Genoa Central, Lafayette County, Spring Hill Proxy-Ronald Smead, Hope-via Zoom

Schools Not Present: Fouke, Blevins

Co-op Staff Present: Phoebe Bailey, Monica Morris, Gina Perkins, Jenny Smead, David Hampton, Shannon Puckett, Kelly Cornelius, Angie Gentry

The meeting was called to order by Phoebe Bailey.

Roy McCoy made a motion to approve the minutes from August. Lloyd Jackson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Roy McCoy made a motion to approve the financial and expenditure reports from August. The motion was seconded by Opal Anderson. The motion was approved.

2024-2025 Coop Budget- Ms. Bailey went over the 2024-2025 proposed SWAEC operating budget. Lloyd Jackson made a motion to approve the budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Roy McCoy. The motion was approved.

Continuity of Operations- SWAEC continuity of operations plan was sent in the Google Drive to all superintendents. A motion was made by Debbie Huff for approval. The motion was seconded by Opal Anderson. The motion was approved.

Fixed Assets- A handout was presented on items that needed to be removed from fixed assets. A motion was made by Roy McCoy to remove these from fixed assets. Lloyd Jackson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Personal- Ms. Bailey recommended that we hire Carina Martinez as ECH clerk. A motion was made by Debbie Huff to approve the hire. The motion was seconded by Roy McCoy. The motion was approved.

Dyslexia Updates- Kelly Cornelius, SWAEC Dyslexia specialist, discussed her goals and objectives for the year. She plans to be a big support for school interventionists and work very closely with the districts on reaching their goals for the year.

Teacher Center Updates- Monica Morris

Instructional Leaders - Ms. Morris shared a folder in the Google Drive with links for key links for instruction observation tools in science, reading, and math.

Math Intervention Plan- Ms. Morris went over rules governing math intervention. These provide an opportunity for students to have extended time on math instruction. Districts must report types of intervention being used and the number of students receiving it.

Assessment- ATLAS 3-12 scores are expected to be released by Oct 14. SWAEC is hosting two data sessions on Oct 22.

PD Rules - Ms. Morris went over the required hours needed for licensure. These were shared in the Google Drive.

Educator Licensure rules- There were new rules that were finalized September 2. These include testing out in special education and the residency model that was replaced with the residency apprenticeship.

Background checks- Subs employed by multiple districts only need one background check. They must have one every 5 years. ECH staff are no longer required to have two separate checks.

Fingerprinting machines - The current machines in districts and co-ops will be obsolete on June 30. Co-ops are getting new machines and will be able to travel with it to the districts as needed. .

Perkins - Regional meetings are being held through the month of September for feedback and revision of the current plan. There will be one at Hempstead Hall on September 19 at 1:00.

Mental Health Series Platform - SWAEC has purchased a subscription series on a variety of mental health topics. This can be accessed by the districts and parents. You can find upcoming meetings to attend or watch previously recorded meetings. There are a variety of topics to choose from. Ms. Morris stated that she would love to see each district host a meeting sometime during the year.

NOVA Training - There will be NOVA Training at SWAEC on October 15-17.

School Board Training- The next school board training will be October 3.

Director Updates- Phoebe Bailey

E-Rate update: Since last month's 5th circuit court decision which challenges the constitutionality of the funding mechanism for the universal service fund, the 5th circuit has granted the FCC its requested stay. The FCC indicated it will file its petition seeking the SCOTUS review by the end of September. The stay will expire on October 1, but if the FCC files its petition on or before September 30, the stay will remain in effect until SCOTUS hands down a decision.

Head Start: The rule updates various aspects of the Head Start Program Performance Standards, but most notably, significantly increases compensation and benefits for staff in an effort to improve retention and recruitment for the program. Ms. Bailey included these in the Google Drive.

Title IX: The U.S. The Supreme Court denied a request by the Biden administration to partially curb injunctions that are blocking its new Title IX regulation in 26 states and at least some schools in every other state.

Chronic Absenteeism: Fourteen states have taken up a challenge to significantly reduce the rate at which children miss a lot of school, responding to a recent call from a bipartisan coalition for states to prioritize school attendance. Each of the states that signed on is committing to cut chronic absenteeism, which counts the share of kids who miss 10% or more of their school year, by half over a five-year period. States will be able to choose their starting point and set goals from there.

SWAEC AEPA Update: Our team met with representatives from AEPA on September 5th to discuss our application for membership to the purchasing cooperative. Ms. Bailey stated that we had submitted our application and are waiting for final approval. She hopes to know something by the October board meeting.

Cell Phone Pouches- Ms. Bailey asked that any district that previously stated they were wanting to participate in the cell phone pouch reimbursement program, and have since changed their mind, that they let her know by Friday, September 20.

Speech Therapy- Ms. Bailey said that we now have an additional speech therapy provider. This will be Blake Hill Therapy Services out of Hope. Angie Gentry stated that it has been hard finding providers for speech therapy but she is working trying to get the best ones we can.

Ms. Bailey stated that David Hampton will now be handling all of our social media postings. She stated that he has already made several posts since taking over this new role and she is very excited with what he will add to it.

There was a brief discussion between the districts present about those who were already using the cell phone pouches and how it was working.

With no further business, a motion was made by Debbie Huff to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Opal Anderson. The meeting was adjourned.