

Southwest Arkansas Education Cooperative Board's Minutes December 14, 2023

Schools Present: Genoa, Lafayette , Prescott Proxy- Angie Bryant, Spring Hill Proxy- Peter Maggio, Texarkana Proxy- Gwen Adams, Hope Proxy- Joselyn Wiley

Schools not present: Blevins, Fouke, Nevada

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

Guest Present: Courtney Jackson- Bailey Group

The meeting was called to order by Director Phoebe Bailey.

Debbie Huff made a motion to approve the minutes from November, seconded by Peter Maggio. The minutes were approved.

Peter Maggio made a motion to approve the financial and expenditure report from November Gwen Adams seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Bailey ED Group- Courtney Jackson, from the Bailey Group, was in attendance to give updates on their work with the schools participating in the Communities of Practice Grant. She said they are currently serving 4 districts, 8 schools, 9 building leaders, and 21 teachers. She stated there would be upcoming workshops for HQIM. The trainings will be on January 29 and April 29 at SWAEC.

AI and Technology Resource Policy- David Hampton presented three policies that needed to be adopted. The first was the Technology Resources Policy. This is basically the do's and don'ts allowed with state resources. He stated that training was provided to co-op staff to go over this information. The second was the Wireless Security Policy. SWAEC technology department uses an enterprise wireless solution (Aruba) to provide management and an additional level of security to the wireless network. Third, the AI Acceptable Use Policy. SWAEC is not banning the educational use of AI (artificial intelligence), but each stakeholder will need to be aware of the limitations and guidelines of its usage. Mr. Hampton also stated that Jeff Killingsworth, from our Little Rock office, will be here in January to discuss this policy further. After discussion, Angie Bryant made a motion to adopt these three policies. The motion was seconded by Peter Maggio. The motion passed.

Mentoring Updates- Vickie Jewell reminded the districts of the mentoring folders that they have access to and how to use them in supporting their novice teachers. She stated that SWAEC would be hosting Cognitive Coaching workshops in the Spring. This training consists of eight different sessions over four months. She highly encouraged this for Superintendents, Principals, and Instructional Facilitators. Mrs. Jewell said that there will be guidance coming out in January concerning Merit Pay for mentors. She also discussed information that had been sent out by Secretary Oliva concerning novice teachers that are not licensed. She said he was really wanting to see what steps are still needed for them to be licensed. She stated that this information will be coming from the cycle reports so make sure your information is up to date concerning your novice teachers. Mrs. Jewell also wanted to encourage all districts to make sure they are following the mentor programs that she helped set up.

Director Updates- Phoebe Bailey

- **Third Floor Construction Bid Updates**- Ms. Bailey went over questions and concerns that were brought up during the November board meeting. She said the project would cost a total of \$85,000 and possibly be completed in 90 days. A motion was made by Peter Maggio to accept this bid. It was seconded by Debbie Huff. The motion was approved.
- **Federal and State Updates**- Ms. Bailey went over some information that she received from the ESA conference that she attended focusing on federal education funding.
- **Medicaid School Based Claiming Guide**- This guide was shared with superintendents and encourages every state to expand medicaid students without an IEP and makes it easier for districts to access Medicaid reimbursement and bill for services.
- **Head Start Proposed Rule**- The proposed rules would require Head Start education staff, who work directly with children, to be paid comparable to a preschool teacher in a public school setting. This would be effective till 2031. There is a webinar for this linked in google drive.

After we returned from break, Ms. Bailey stated that she would be sending out her evaluation form that needs to be completed by all districts. She said that it will be sent out in a google form and it can be filled out as is and will automatically be sent to the board president or it can be printed and mailed to him directly.

Teacher Center Updates- Monica Morris

Professional Development Needs Survey- this survey is different from years past as it is an open-ended survey. Principals need to complete the survey.

New Assessment: ATLAS- On January 17, 2024 from 8:30-3:30 there will be required training for all DTCs. Each DTC may bring 1 additional person. The focus will be on administering the ATLAS assessment.

Career Readiness Feedback Sessions- Informational meeting will be held on January 23 from 2:00-4:00. Share and receive stakeholder feedback on the career-ready pathways to diploma and early career awareness activities drafted by the LEARNS working groups. This is encouraged for District Administrators and Counselors.

Varsity Tutors for Schools- an email was sent by Mallory Dubus that is attached in the google drive. All schools have access until the 2026-27 school year. See the notes for forms that need to be completed.

Educational Freedom Accounts- There will be a public comment hearing on December 18 at 9:00. If approved, the rules will go into effect on January 1, 2024

Impact Arkansas Fellowship- This information needs to be shared with your teachers who aspire to become leaders. Scholarship pays for 80% tuition and fees. Fellow responsible for 20%. (roughly \$3000)

THRIVE Cohort Applications- The application is now open and the deadline to apply is January 12 at 4:30. Participants will receive a \$2500 stipend.

School Calendars- There are four options for the 24-25 school year. Districts will select their option in Cycle 7: Traditional school calendar, Alternate school calendar, 4 Day week school calendar, or 12 Month/Year Round school calendar.

21st Century Grant Opportunity- Intent to apply is due January 31 and applications will be due by February 29.

With no further business, Peter Maggio made a motion to adjourn. Angie Bryant seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.