**Southwest Arkansas Education Cooperative Board’s Minutes**

**August 15, 2024**

**Schools Present**: Prescott, Spring Hill Proxy- Peter Maggio, Blevins, Hope Proxy - Portia Jones, Texarkana Proxy - Gwen Adams, Genoa - Debbie Huff (via zoom), Nevada

**Schools Not Present**: Lafayette, Fouke

**Co-op Staff Presen**t: Phoebe Bailey, Monica Morris, Gina Perkins, Vicki Jewell, David Hampton, Shannon Puckett, Angie Gentry

The meeting was called to order by President Stephanie Dixon.

Robert Poole made a motion to approve minutes from the June regular meeting and the June special called meeting. Roy McCoy seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Peter Maggio made a motion to approve the financial and expenditure reports from June and July. Roy McCoy seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

**Personnel-**  Ms. Bailey recommended two new hires for the 24/25 school year: August Huff as paraprofessional in the Fouke classroom, and Sharon Poole as State Mentoring Specialist at DESE. She also presented one resignation letter from Emily Powell Carpenter at DESE, effective July 31, 2024. Peter Maggio made a motion to approve the hires and resignation. Robert Poole seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**Mentoring Update-** Vicki Jewell shared updates from the Mentoring Program, including: the Mentoring Manual for 24/25, a recap of the Executive Order 23-08, 3e, SIS Cycle reporting years of experience, code of ethics training requirements, The New Teacher Academy, and the SWAEC Mentoring Plan for 24/25.

**Kevin Beaumont, Impact Arkansas-** Mr. Beaumont joined via zoom and presented information on the

Impact Arkansas Fellowship Program (IAF). Their mission is to develop high impact leaders in Arkansas,focusing on more participation in the southwest region, and high poverty schools. This is an 18 month program, all online, with no requirements to travel. All PD takes place during the summer and on weekends and is taught by tenured professors and adjunct professors/superintendents. IAF can be used as a retention tool with teachers signing an agreement to stay with the district for 2 years during the program, plus 2 years following graduation of the program. The Program covers all costs-- except $3,000. There are multiple ways for teachers to pay the remaining cost. Districts also have the option to pay for the program in order to invest in those teachers. Mr. Beaumont shared the eligibility requirements, and the application process. He asks that the board members share the program with their district principals, and to really pinpoint educators that would be ideal candidates.

**Nick Newbold, Cook Center-** Mr. Newbold from the Cook Center spoke about Mental Health Services offered to families by the non-profit agency. He shared statistics on depression rates, dropout rates, and uninsured rates and ways families can struggle to get mental health care services. He shared an online link with modules that can help parents address concerns about their child’s mental health. The Cook Center offers a Mental Health Seminar Subscription Series, starting July 1. He shared the many topics that this series covers including Your Child’s Anxiety and other mental health topics. Parents have 24/7 access to these resources. He shared a spreadsheet showing prices per district for participation.

Mrs. Morris followed up the conversation on pricing. She and Ms. Bailey are going to look into grant funding that can possibly be used to purchase the subscription for each district.

**Teacher Center Updates- Monica Morris**

**Assessment -** There was a webinar held August 13th on the K-2 and Grade 3 Screener Assessment System. Mrs. Morris linked that webinar recording in her notes. All K-3 students will participate in a universal screener for literacy and all K-2 for math. Blueprints for ELA and Math are available and outline the standards that will be assessed. The screener will be available on August 28 and must be completed by September 27.

Screener data will be accessible to schools by October 14th. Testlets will be available in the ATLAS portal at the same time that the initial screening data is available. Testlets will meet the requirements of a level one dyslexia screener. Math testlets will also be available based on screener results to guide instruction. IRPs are required for at-risk students in grade K- 3 literacy (use end-of-year data until screener data is available) IRPs will populate in the ATLAS portal once the data is available.

**Educator Effectiveness and Licensure-** Each beginning administrator must be enrolled in the Beginning Administrator program and receive support for the first three years of employment. Mrs. Morris shared more information on that program.

EES training and self-guided modules are available, in addition to an 8 minute recording that explains the differences between a summative and an annual rating. These are linked in her notes.

**Mentoring Grant-**  Mrs. Morris shared this year’s Mentoring Grant Priorities that include: Building Capacity for Master/Lead Designations, Coaching Training, and Registered Apprenticeship.

**Background Checks** - Subs employed by multiple districts only need one background check.

Check AELS for the last background check date. They must have a background check every 5 years. ECH staff are no longer required to have 2 separate checks. Be sure to select Early Childhood ECE when completing the background check paperwork.

**Fingerprinting Machines**- Current fingerprinting machines in districts and co-ops will be obsolete on September 1st. Co-ops are getting new machines and will be able to travel with those machines.

**Master Designation and Student Placement-**  Students not meeting the reading standard/numeracy established by the state board by the end of 3rd grade must be assigned to a teacher with a VAM

score in the top quartile statewide in ELA/Math, OR a highly-effective rating in EES, OR must be deemed a high-performing teacher as defined by a Master Professional Educator Designation (does not require coaching training).

**Master/Lead Designation for Experienced Mentor** - Yearlong residency, registered apprenticeship aspiring teacher permit will be in full implementation in the 2026-2027 school year. Credentials required: 3 yrs experience, effective or higher on a current summative rating and coaching training. Master/Lead must be on license.

**Ethic Violations**- Mrs. Morris shared information on the LEA insights portal and showed the board how they can search for ethics violations in the system.

**ArPEP** - Mrs. Morris gave an update on the number of participants in each cohort and the progress of these participants.

**Director Updates- Phoebe Bailey**

**Proxy Forms-**  Ms. Bailey handed proxy forms for each district. She asked they all get those turned in before the next board meeting.

**Federal Updates** - Ms. Bailey gave a brief overview of the updates from a federal level that included The Senate Appropriation Committee proposal and possible E-Rate changes.

**AAEA Legislative Committees** - The board recommends Dr. Lloyd Jackson to serve on the curriculum committee. Dr Crossley and Mr. Poole will continue working on their current committees.

**Early Childhood Program** - Ms. Bailey shared the overall budget for the program and the cost per child. She will send each district individual numbers on their passthrough amounts.

**Merit Pay** - She shared a one-pager explaining components of merit pay that includes VAM scores, Shortage areas, and mentors.

**Other Information**

On September 11th a meeting will take place at Dawson Cooperative to discuss Cozart’s school funding proposal.

The next SWAEC board meeting will be held September 19th.

With no further business, a motion was made by Robert Poole to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Roy McCoy. The meeting was adjourned.