

Southwest Arkansas Education Cooperative Board's Minutes

January 18, 2024

Schools Present: Prescott, Nevada, Spring Hill Proxy- Peter Maggio

Schools Present via zoom: Blevins, Hope, Genoa, Lafayette County, Texarkana Proxy-Gwen Adams

Schools not present: Fouke

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

Guest Present via zoom: Rebecca Kee

The meeting was called to order by Roy McCoy.

Robert Poole made a motion to approve the minutes from December, seconded by Peter Maggio. The minutes were approved.

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

Personnel- Ms. Bailey recommended that Ester Belshe-Anderson be hired as a member of the mental health team. She is expected to start January 28, 2024. Robert Poole made a motion that she be hired. The motion was seconded by Peter Maggio. The motion was approved.

State Technology Updates- Rebecca Kee joined us via zoom. She is a State RAMP Implementation Consultant. The information that she provides is used to better help protect against cyber security. She went over a lot of information concerning this and how their program works. Jeff Killingsworth will be coming next month to do an in person presentation over the new cyber security laws in the state.

Director Updates- Phoebe Bailey

Statement of Financial Interest- Ms. Bailey attached a form in google drive the Statement of Financial Interest. She stated that once filled out that it needs to be taken to their local county courthouse by the end of January. She asked that we be sent a copy also.

School Choice Ad- Ms. Bailey shared a school choice announcement that will be used for the newspaper and radio for all districts. She asked if any district did not wish to participate in this to please let her know.

Early Start Waiver- Ms. Bailey let the districts know we can submit as a group to be granted a waiver to start school early. She attached information for this in the google drive. She asked if any of the districts wished to participate in this to have everything to her by February 21st so she can have it submitted by the February 26th deadline.

ARP Esser Funds- The state can apply for an additional 14 months beyond the September 24, 2024 deadline. There are certain criteria that are required to qualify for this. Ms. Bailey also listed these in the google drive that was shared.

Budget Reviews- DESE is required to review all district, co-op, and charter budgets. There will be a commissioner's memo coming out about this and letters will be sent to superintendents and business managers. The letter will have a budgeted review and how to interpret it.

Maternity Leave- Ms. Bailey reminded the districts about making sure paperwork is submitted if you have this policy or you will not receive funding for it. The state is only paying for maternity, not paternity. Cycle 5 will ask how much money was spent on filling positions for certified and classified.

Ms. Bailey stated that superintendents should have received an email from Courtney on how to record closing schools in LEA Insight. Also, there is a new tool coming out about how districts are spending money during AAEA zoom when the cycle review is covered in a few weeks. It will look at how funds are being spent compared to other districts.

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The board went into executive session at 10:51 a.m. They returned from executive session at 11:04 a.m. Mr. McCoy stated that there was no action taken during this time.

A motion was made by Robert Poole to add 1 year to Ms. Bailey's existing contract. The motion was seconded by Opal Anderson. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Robert Poole to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Peter Maggio. The meeting was adjourned.

