

TAZEWELL-MASON COUNTIES SPECIAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
April 11, 2018

The Executive Committee of Tazewell-Mason Counties Special Education Association held their monthly meeting on Wednesday, April 11, 2018, at the TMCSEA Administrative Offices, Schramm Educational Center, Pekin, IL. Dr. Hellrigel called the meeting to order at 8:02am. Present at roll call were: Dr. Hellrigel, Dr. Owens, Mr. Hinman, Mrs. Greuter, Dr. Hill, Dr. Allaman and Mr. Ingold. Dr. Link was absent from this month's meeting.

Others in attendance were Kristina Neville, Leslie Fornoff, Terrie Schappaugh, Joyce Aarestad and Zina Young.

Joint Consent – Open & Closed Session Minutes of March 14, 2018, Destruction of Verbatim Records, Accounts Payable and Year to Date Expenditure Reports:

The information and materials presented outline the regular monthly business of the Association. The March 14, 2018 open and closed session minutes, monthly accounts payable, and cash flow statements were approved as presented. There were no verbatim Records (Audio Recordings) of the March 8, 2017 meeting. The monthly Expenditure Report, Schramm Activity Fund Report, and Imprest Fund Report were also available at the time of this meeting.

The motion was made by Mr. Hinman and seconded by Mr. Ingold to approve the Joint Consent items as presented. Roll call was taken and motion carried.

Audience Participation:

There were no requests for audience participation.

Old Business

A. Districts' Financial Payments:

All district financial payments are current.

B. FY18 IDEA Flow Through Grant Amendment:

The Director asks for approval to submit amendment #7 of the FY18 IDEA Flow Through grant for the cooperative to update budget detail. There is no change to the total grant amount.

The motion was made by Dr. Owens and seconded by Mrs. Greuter to approve the IDEA Flow Through Grant Amendment as presented. Roll call was taken and motion carried.

C. FY19 IDEA Grant Discussion:

ISBE has not released information on preliminary projections for FY19 IDEA grants. Information regarding the sunset of personnel reimbursement is forthcoming and will be considered in the development of the FY19 IDEA Grant. The structure of the IDEA Flow Through Grant needs to be carefully reviewed with the 5% professional development requirement, district Flow Through Sub-Grants and Preschool Grant funding to support district early childhood special education programming.

The IDEA Preschool and Flow Through Grants were restructured in FY17. Alternatives to funding early childhood special education teacher salaries were considered in an effort to maximize districts' grant dollars, given previously high federal TRS rates. Early childhood special education is now funded through the IDEA Preschool Grant by providing a flat rate for all early childhood special education teachers based on each district's FTE. Districts were encouraged to use the flat rate on non-certified early childhood special education paraprofessional salaries, benefits, and supplies/materials versus certified salaries if possible to avoid federal TRS. The \$300,000 portion of the IDEA Flow Through Grant funds previously used to support early childhood special education teacher salaries was added to increase all districts' IDEA Flow Through Sub-Grant amounts to \$2,500,000 in FY17. The FY18 IDEA Flow Through Sub-Grant amount allotted to member districts is \$2,600,000.

The Federal TRS rate significantly reduced to 10.10% in FY18, and it will decrease to 9.85% beginning on July 1, 2018 for FY19. One superintendent requested TMCSEA return to the past practice of allocating salaries for member district early childhood special education teachers given the decrease in Federal TRS. The impact of increases in sub-grant amounts and/or continued use of carryover on districts' ability to meet MOE requirements and Excess Cost thresholds remain a careful consideration for future planning purposes.

D. Maintenance of Effort (Exhibit #1):

TMCSEA has forwarded ISBE prepared Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Worksheets out to all member districts. TMCSEA used the figures from the ISBE prepared MOE worksheets to complete a cooperative composite and this number will be entered on the MOE page of the FY19 IDEA grant application. Utilizing the ISBE MOE calculations, TMCSEA's composite comparison of current to previous year special education net expenditures was negative (\$318,029) based on expenditures; however, the cooperative met MOE based on per capita increase combining district and cooperative figures. Therefore, no exceptions worksheet for the cooperative is required since there would be a cooperative-wide per capita increase. ISBE approved three districts with a negative expenditure comparison but a positive special education per capita cost. We have three districts completing individual district maintenance of effort exception reports. The approval of the TMCSEA FY19 IDEA grant is contingent upon receipt and approval of any MOE Cooperative Composite Worksheets, revised MOE District Worksheets with supporting auditor verification, and Exceptions to MOE Worksheets. The Director is working with individual districts as needed to ensure MOE exceptions are met.

E. Transition Specialist Succession Plan:

At the March meeting two options were proposed to the Executive Committee regarding the Transition Specialist's succession upon retirement. One option is to discontinue the Transition Specialist Grant and eliminate the Transition Specialist position at TMCSEA upon Ms. Aarestad's retirement, so these services would be provided to districts by the DHS/DRS Office. The district level special education administrators expressed concern with the level of service the DHS/DRS Office could provide. A second option is to continue the Transition Specialist Grant through TMCSEA and hire a Transition Specialist to receive mentoring and required DHS/DRS training during the 2018-2019 school year. The part-time Transition Social Worker would not be replaced in this latter scenario, and secretarial/administrative assistant support would be increased slightly (0.4 FTE) beginning next school year. The Transition Specialist would resume responsibilities upon Ms. Aarestad's retirement, and TMCSEA would hire a Transition Specialist Assistant beginning in the 2019-2020 school year. This two-year succession plan requires an increase to our current staffing pattern and is recommended by the Director to ensure uninterrupted high quality services to our students, families and districts.

The motion was made by Mr. Ingold and seconded by Dr. Allaman to approve the hiring of Transition Specialist beginning with the 2018-2019 school year. Roll call was taken and motion carried.

F. Schramm 1:1 Paraprofessional Discussion:

At the March Executive Committee meeting, the Director presented an intensive tuition rate, which would enable TMCSEA to employ 1:1 paraprofessionals for students and bill individual districts the combined cost of their salaries and benefits. Based on feedback from previous discussion with the Executive Committee and after surveying other cooperatives, the Director is proposing a second alternative, which would allow districts to contract 1:1 paraprofessional services on an individual basis for students attending Schramm Educational Center. In this scenario, districts would pay the regular tuition rate and be billed separately for a contracted service, which includes the cost of the 1:1 paraprofessional's salary and benefits. This would give districts a choice to either contract services through TMCSEA for greater convenience or hire their own 1:1 paraprofessional to retain control over employee selection and cost. The Association already has mechanisms in place for requesting and billing contracted services. The Director recommends the addition of contracted 1:1 paraprofessional services for Schramm Educational Center beginning in the 2018-2019 school year.

The motion was made by Dr. Owens and seconded by Mrs. Greuter to approve the addition of contracting 1:1 Paraprofessionals services for Schramm Educational Center. Roll call was taken and motion carried.

G: School Psychologist Intern Update:

The Director introduced a plan to hire two School Psychologist Interns beginning in the 2018-2019 school year to expand the pool of viable candidates to fill future vacant School Psychologist positions at TMCSEA and member districts. An aggressive recruitment campaign was implemented, and the Director attended ISPA, university recruitment fairs, and participated in a roundtable discussion at ISU with school psychologist graduate students. Six school psychologist intern candidates applied for our two positions. The Director interviewed and offered all six candidates positions, but none accepted. Based on feedback from candidates, TMCSEA provided a satisfactory interview process, competitive salary and diverse range of internship experiences; however, relocating to our geographic region was the major drawback. One suggestion was to offer a day for intern candidates to visit with their prospective supervisors, which will be taken under consideration. Additionally, the Director will explore strategies to build collaborative university relationships to attract intern candidates in the future, including the possibility of facilitating university faculty tours and hosting school psychologist practicum students.

H. Policy Updates – Second Reading (Exhibit #2):

This is the second reading of the following policy updates recommended by PRESS:

- 2:260 Uniform Grievance Procedure
- 4:40 Incurring Debt
- 5:20 Workplace Harassment Prohibited
- 5:170 Copyright

The motion was made by Mr. Hinman and seconded by Mr. Ingold to approve the Policy Updates as presented. Roll call was taken and motion carried.

New Business:

A. Joint Consent:

1. Approve New Part-Time School Nurse Position:

After reviewing the Needs Assessment and anticipated enrollment at Schramm Educational Center, the Director recommends the addition of a part-time school nurse position for 25 hours per week. There has been an increase in student enrollment and medical acuity of students attending Schramm Educational Center. It is anticipated that a significant increase in requests for medical reviews in our member districts will increase next school year. The new part-time school nurse would help complete medical reviews and provide RN coverage at Schramm during times of student attendance when the full-time RN is out of the building. The part-time LPN position would be eliminated through attrition.

The motion was made by Mr. Ingold and seconded by Dr. Owens to approve the New Business Joint Consent as presented. Roll call was taken and motion carried.

B. Informational:

1. Resignation of Renee Huschen, Paraprofessional (Exhibit #3):

The Director is informing the Executive Committee of the resignation of Ms. Huschen, Paraprofessional, effective at the end of the school year.

2. Resignation of Tamme Laughlin-Dimitroff, SLP (Exhibit #4):

The Director is informing the Executive Committee of the resignation of Ms. Dimitroff, SLP, effective at the end of the school year.

C. Proposed 2018-2019 School Calendar (Exhibit #5):

The proposed 2018-2019 calendar has our staff starting on August 13, 2018 and ending on May 22, 2019. We took into account member district calendars in order to arrive at the dates on our calendar. The Association has opted to go with the April 15 through April 22, 2019 spring break. This is in line with the majority of our member districts. This is a first look at the school calendar for 2018-2019 and will be placed on the May agenda for final approval.

D. Medicaid REV Data (Exhibit #6):

The Association and member districts are in the third year of a three-year contractual agreement with Timberline Billing Service, LLC. Timberline provides Medicaid REV Data for TMCSEA and its member districts. The Exhibit includes REV counts to be used on the 4 quarters' MAC claims for the calendar year 2018 beginning with the January-March 2018 quarter due, which opens April 9, 2018. The total enrollment is the fall housing count 2016, not 2017, because ISBE has not released the fall housing as of October 1, 2017 yet. Therefore, HFS has directed us to use the most current available information when filing claims, so the REV and Total IEP/IFSP Counts are based on the 12/1/17 FACTS count while the Total Enrollment is based on 10/1/2016.

E. Timberline Service Agreement Renewal (Exhibit #7):

The Association and member districts have utilized Timberline Billing Service, LLC for processing Medicaid Fee for Service claims since July 2013. We have been pleased with the high quality of customer service and knowledgeable expertise provided by Timberline. This contract renewal is for a three-year term with no increase in service rates from the previous contract's fees. The fees are as follows: Each LEA shall pay Timberline a fee equal to 7% of the Medicaid reimbursement received by the LEA. This fee will be calculated monthly based on the paid claims for the preceding month. The master contract will again be with TMCSEA, and member districts will sign a one-page addendum that requires no board action on their part.

The motion was made by Mrs. Greuter and seconded by Dr. Owens to approve the Timberline Billing Services, LLC agreement as presented. Roll call was taken and motion carried.

F. Medicaid Administrative Outreach Revenue (Exhibit #8):

The Exhibit summarizes Medicaid Administrative Outreach revenues from FY17 and FY18 as well as technology expenses to date this school year. The FY18 Medicaid Administrative Outreach revenues remain adequate to fund technology purchases in the 2018-2019 school year.

G. 2018-2019 Technology Plan (Exhibit #9):

The Association's technology plan outlines computer replacements, iPads, Chromebooks, supplies and training needs. The new proposal contains hardware replacements for laptops/desktop computers, iPads, Chromebooks, software and supplies. TMCSEA will be providing staff training on instructional technology, Asset Tiger, and Medicaid billing programs. The Technology Committee's recommendation is to remain with PowerIEP for the Association's web-based IEP service. We will be in the second year of a two-year agreement with Wendelin and the first year of a three-year agreement with E-Rate Funding Solutions.

The motion was made by Dr. Owens and seconded by Mr. Hinman to approve the 2018-2019 Technology Plan as presented. Roll call was taken though voice vote with all parties present voting aye, motion carried.

Closed Executive Session:

There were no items for closed session.

Action Items

There were no action items.

Other Business/Information:

The Director reviewed the FYI portion of the Executive Committee material.

The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, May 9, 2018** at the TMCSEA Administrative Offices, Schramm Educational Center, Pekin, IL, at **8:00am**.

Mr. Ingold motioned and Dr. Hill seconded to adjourn the meeting with all parties in attendance voting aye. The Executive Committee meeting ended at 9:27am.

Todd Hellrigel, Chairperson
TMCSEA Executive Committee

Terrie Schappaugh, Secretary
TMCSEA Executive Committee