

MID-STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Special Board Meeting
Official Minutes
December 6, 2018

PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

The special meeting of the Mid-State Special Education Executive Committee was called to order by Chairman Mr. Aaron Hopper at 9:04 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Fred Lamkey, Edinburg; Mr. Ron Graham, South Fork; Dr. Scott Doerr, Nokomis; Dr. Gregg Fuerstenau, Taylorville; Ms. Heather DeNeve, Carlinville; Mr. Aaron Hopper, Panhandle; Mr. Jason Bauer, Pana; Mr. Dave Meister, Morrisonville; Mr. John Mullett, Litchfield; Mr. Steve Phillips, Mulberry Grove; Mr. David Powell, Hillsboro; Dr. Jennifer Garrison, Vandalia

OTHERS PRESENT

Mrs. Angela Armour, Director; Mrs. Lyn Becker, Administrator of Special Education Services; Mrs. Brandy Buske, Administrator of Special Education Services; Mrs. Michelle Rexroad, Business Manager; Mrs. Vickie Throne (exited at 9:07 a.m.), Executive Secretary

Recognition of Visitors: None

MEMBERS ABSENT

Dr. Wes Olson, Bond County; Mr. Mike Shackelford, Brownstown; Ms. Melissa Ritter, Ramsey; Ms. Julie Healy, St. Elmo

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. Armour provided a brief historical overview of Mid-State Special Education. She shared information specific to finances, the budget process, and a review of the FY19 Mid-State Central and Region budgets. Detailed information was provided on the revenue funding sources including IDEA, IDEA Pre-School, DHS STEP contract, Assessments, and GSA/EBF. Mrs. Armour revisited the IDEA grant providing each district with information from ISBE related to how IDEA is calculated. The FY19 IDEA allocation for each district, as well as the FY20 changes that ISBE is implementing related to grant writing and the flow of these funds directly to districts. She also revisited Assessments sharing that historically each district's contribution toward the many shared services has been based upon the percent of IDEA generated in the cooperative in the current year. Mrs. Armour noted that there are other methods to determine district assessments for services and suggested that consideration be given to exploring other methods of calculation since this has not been adjusted in recent years and over time there may be a more equitable method. She shared examples of some other ways to calculate assessments and noted that often different methods are used for different types of services based upon a district's need. A comparison of Assessments based upon percent of IDEA generated compared the December 1st Child Count was provided and reviewed. Estimates using other methods can also be calculated. Mrs. Armour noted that no recommendation is being made at this time. This information is being provided for everyone to review as input will be needed as we explore restructuring of Mid-State. Mrs. Armour noted that difficult discussions need to occur in order to consider suggestions and move forward with an equitable system for meeting individual district needs.

Mr. Hopper provided an update on behalf of the Steering Committee. Mr. Hopper reported that the committee has been reviewing what the impact would be to students with all of the structural changes within Mid-State. They have also looked at what the impact would be on personnel and the financial impact that it will have on each district and Mid-State. Mr. Hopper reported that the committee has concluded that the best Mid-State is a 16 member Mid-State. Mr. Hopper stated that they feel there are still structural changes that would need to be made even if we continue on with 16 districts. One possible structural change would be to dissolve all Regions and create one Mid-State, which would provide some cost savings to all districts. We could also dissolve some regions and keep others, decentralize all, decentralize some or decentralize none. A copy of the Mid-State Expenditure Budget Comparison was provided to all districts. The budget compares the FY19 expenditures with all 16 districts included and the 2019-2020 figures with only 13 of the districts included. Adjustments were made in the FY20 budget to account for reductions in staff, materials, and IDEA. Mr. Hopper reported that the petition for Taylorville, Pana and Nokomis to withdraw will have to be approved by the Board of Trustees or by all 16 member districts. The reason for this meeting today was to provide everyone with information to take back to their board so that they can make a decision to either oppose or not oppose withdraw of Taylorville, Nokomis and Pana.

Following information shared from the Steering Committee, discussion occurred, participants raised questions, and superintendents shared their perspectives. Mr. Meister shared his thoughts and noted that communication has been lacking from both sides. Discussion regarding the purpose of the Regional Board of School Trustees meeting took place. Mr. Hopper commented and stated that we need to do what is best for kids. Mr. Graham clarified with Dr. Doerr that the input of each school board is not a necessary process. Dr. Garrison stated that the focus should be on how the remaining 13 districts would restructure so that it is economic. Mr. Lamkey noted that districts withdrawing from the cooperative are not best for students collectively. Dr. Fuerstenau stated that his district has considered going on their own for several years and that the time is right with the EBF and the grants coming to the districts. He wants to have the ownership do things collectively for his students. His concern is not for the students in the cooperative and noted it is not his problem. He indicated that his board knows that it will cost more money and being able to provide increased salaries will secure the best teachers for his district and is good for kids. He noted that the economy of scale is in play since his district is big and already housing most services. Dr. Doerr asked if the Steering Committee has looked at what the reorganization looks like with both 13 and 16 districts. Mr. Powell, Mr. Lamkey, and Mr. Hopper each commented to why these decisions are down the road for all to have input into noting that there are so many decisions to be made. The Steering Committee is focused on the immediate next steps. Dr. Garrison summarized and she and Mr. Graham commented as to the impact and decisions for their own districts. Ms. DeNeve asked a question related to the FY20 projections which Mrs. Rexroad replied. Hearing no further discussion, Mr. Hopper asked for a motion to adjourn.

DISCUSSION

The next Executive Committee Board meeting is rescheduled for Wednesday, December 12th at 10:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion made by Mr. Graham and seconded by Mr. Mullett to adjourn the meeting at 10:26 a.m., carried by a voice vote of 12 yeas, 0 nays.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Vickie Throne, Executive Secretary

Chairperson

Date

Executive Secretary

Date