

**BITTERROOT VALLEY EDUCATION COOPERATIVE
MANAGEMENT BOARD**

**Sep 22, 2020
09:00 AM**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82396429230?pwd=bysxaHZtTTNKVXphRXN6THJpQmVhdz09>

**Meeting ID: 823 9642 9230
Passcode: 947499**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

2. Consent Agenda

- A. Minutes
- B. Warrants
- C. Financial Report
- D. Resignations
 - 1. Heather Schrauth
- E. New Hires
 - 1. None
- F. Next Meeting – October 27, 2020

3. Public Comment-

4. Correspondence -

- A. Revocation for Request for Leave of Absence -see action item C
- B. Request for Retirement Incentive-see action item D

5. Board Action

- A. Back to Work MOA

The Cooperative Employees' Bargaining Unit initiated consideration of the Return to Work for Employees Memorandum of Agreement that was proposed by MTSBA and MFPE. Based on the proposed MOA, Kaleva Law generated a template specific to cooperatives which was in turn reviewed and accepted by the Union. Given the extraordinary circumstances and challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, this MOA delineates the agreement of actions that align with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and the Emergency Family Medical Leave (EFMLA). Agreement will take effect upon signature and shall remain in effect until June 30, 2021.

Recommendation: Approve Back to Work MOA

B. Heather Schrauth Resignation

Heather submitted a letter of resignation to resign from her contract as a Behavior Consultant assigned to Darby Elementary indicating last day to be September 18, 2020. Heather did offer flexibility with final day if it would help with coverage of student services.

If an employee is released from his/her contract or breaks contract, the Board may withhold up to \$500.00 from your final paycheck to help defray costs incurred for substitute pay or locating and replacement of personnel.

Recommendation: Accept Resignation with penalty

C. Revocation of Leave of Absence

Due to current circumstances, Erin submitted a request for a leave of absence. Most recently, Erin submitted a written request to revoke that request to take a leave of absence for the 2020-2021 school year. Per Board action, that request could only be granted if proper replacement could be obtained. Since the last board meeting, there has been one response to the vacant position posting on OPI and BVEC Website. Outsourcing teletherapy services has been researched and options for Erin moving forward have been discussed. Erin, knowing the difficulty in procuring a replacement is going to be quite difficult she is revoking her request at this time.

I will be working closely with Erin along in conjunction other SLP team members during regular team meetings to offer continued and systematic support moving forward.

Recommendation: Accept revocation of request for leave of absence

D. Request for Retirement Incentive

March of 2020, Terese Athman submitted a request for a retirement proposal which was tabled at the March Board meeting. Terese resubmitted retirement incentive proposal which was received September 14, 2020. The initial request was received by the deadline of April 1st for retirement in 2021.

Retirement Incentive: Employees may initiate the process by presenting a proposed retirement incentive request to management for consideration no later than April 1 of the contract year prior to the prospective retirement. No later than October 1st in any year an early retirement incentive plan may be offered and uniform to all employees in the bargaining agreement.

After thoughtful consideration of the employee retirement proposal and careful review of the BVEC budget and projected costs of filling vacant position after retirement, a retirement incentive plan that

aligns with the fiscal responsibilities of the cooperative may be considered.

If a retirement incentive is offered, management will, at its sole discretion, announce details, which will be uniform to all employees in the bargaining unit.

Recommendation: Approve management retirement incentive plan

6. Information and Discussion

A. Homeschool and Service Plans initiated by Districts and BVEC

Considering current situation there may be an increase in the number of homeschool students. There are specifics on how to initiate the process of providing a Service Plan to students but there is some flexibility as to when to initiate service.

B. Budget Review

It has been suggested that it might be beneficial for BVEC to host an informational meeting to discuss and review the cooperative budget for new superintendents on the Board.

C. CSCT Relief Fund Checks

7. Adjourn

Friday, September 4, 2020

Dear Chris, Steve, and Jenny,

It is with deepest sadness that I write to you this letter of resignation for my position of behavior consultant with the Darby Elementary. My boyfriend had received a great opportunity in Flathead County and we will be moving there. I have sincerely enjoyed all my time at the Coop and will greatly miss everyone that I have had the pleasure of working with. Thank you for all the opportunities you have given me and all the support. I am sorry for any inconvenience this is causing you and I will be willing to stay a little longer to help train my replacement if that would be helpful. My tentative last day would be September 18th, unless you would like me to stay an additional week.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather Schrauth". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Heather Schrauth

Jenny Rammell

From: Erin Bauer <Bauer.E@stevensville.k12.md.us>
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2020 10:54 AM
To: Jenny Rammell
Subject: Revocation?? Let me know if you need more!

Dear Members of the Board,

Thank you for your support and consideration of my request for a leave of absence during this unique time. I would like to revoke my request for a leave as it appears that finding another speech-language pathologist to take my position is a near impossible task.

Thank you again for your understanding and support,

Erin Bauer, M.S

September 12, 2020

Dear Director Rammell and Board of the Bitterroot Valley Education Cooperative:

A Retirement Incentive was submitted to the Co-op last March, 2020, and brought before the Board in April, 2020. Due to unforeseen events, the Pandemic of COVID-19 became the necessary priority. At that time Mr. Miller indicated in an e-mail that *"the board did not reject the idea of reconsidering an option next school year, albeit it would require an MOU to change the deadline dates for one year only. Melanie Charleson said the union would be interested in looking at an MOU (if the board is willing)."* This consideration would be *"depending on available funding and reserves."*

At this time, I am initiating a retirement incentive if the board is willing and an MOU to change deadlines for one year is agreed upon.

The Retirement Incentive would be available to any licensed employee who has 15 years or more of employment with the Bitterroot Valley Education Cooperative and would apply to retirement at the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

A Retirement Incentive in the amount of \$18,000.00 would be applied in one of the following manners as chosen by qualifying candidates electing to utilize the retirement incentive:

(a) Full amount of retirement incentive to be included in the retirement as *termination pay*, paid at the time of the employee's date of termination and paid as a stand-alone cash payment, paid in total to the candidate's TRS at the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

(b) Full amount of retirement incentive to be paid as a cash payment to the employee at the time of the employee's date of termination.

According to the 2019-2021 bargaining agreement, a decision and response regarding an early retirement incentive is to be made by the BVEC Board no later than October 1, 2020. However, deadlines may be changed if the board is willing and an MOU to adjust deadlines for one year is agreed upon. An adjusted timeline should be early enough to allow employee candidates adequate time to complete the required forms and to allow the Bitterroot Valley Education Cooperative adequate time to search for and hire a replacement.

Please contact me if further information or clarification is desired.

Terese M. Athman

Terese Athman, MS/CCC-SLP
406-360-9616
athmant@bvec-mt.org