

Southwest Arkansas Education Cooperative Board's Minutes
February 10, 2015

Schools Present: Blevins, Prescott, Texarkana, Lafayette, Spring Hill, Nevada, Hope, Genoa, Fouke

Guest Present: Scotty Caroom, Excel Energy Group

Co-op Staff Present: Monica Morris, Karen Massey, Elsie Roach, Gina Perkins

President Billy Lee called the meeting to order.

Robert Poole made a motion to approve the minutes from January, seconded by Angie Raney. The minutes were approved.

Robert Poole made a motion to approve the financial and expenditure reports for January. Angie Raney seconded the motion. Motion passed.

PERSONNEL POLICY UPDATE – The SWAEC policy committee met on January 9 to discuss changes in personnel policy. They requested the board's opinion on drug and alcohol screening for workman's compensation claims and have asked how many of our schools require these screens.

There was a brief discussion about random drug screening for all staff and bus drivers.

TEACHER CENTER UPDATES – Monica Morris

PARCC - There have been issues with the infrastructure trial for PARCC. The ADE has requested that the schools give feedback to help pinpoint these issues. Ms. Morris gave the board members the contact information and directions for reporting.

TESS - The ADE will provide training for administrators on formal evaluation process in BloomBoard, including summative scoring for TESS and LEADS. This training is scheduled for February 11-12 at the Co-op.

OTHER INFORMATION

The LDC/MDC rollout information is now available. The tentative schedule was given to the superintendents.

Computer Science Frameworks for coding will be presented to AR State Board in their February meeting. A Praxis assessment to be used for Computer Science licensure will be available in June.

Districts that participate in Virtual Arkansas will only pay \$25 per student for courses designated by this bill. There will be no cost for districts that are not using any other Virtual Arkansas Courses and only offer courses covered under this law.

Virtual Arkansas will have a new scheduling and enrollment system. Counselors should attend training at SWAEC March 11, April 16, or May 28. Registration for classes in VA will be first come, first served.

Teen Suicide Awareness and Prevention is the required PD for the 2015-16 school year. Superintendents should get with Ms. Morris to schedule training at their districts for summer. Sessions will also be held at the Co-op.

Upcoming Professional Development and Meetings

TESS Support Training – Feb 11, 12

Zoom Meeting for Counselors – Feb 13

TCC Meeting – April 3

Administrator Institute – June 29, 30

SWAEC Student Voice and Engagement Institute – June 10, 11

EXCEL ENERGY GROUP – Scotty Caroom presented the board with an option for upgrading to energy efficient lighting in their districts. The Excel Energy Group offers their services to schools requiring no money down. They can receive incentives from their power company to help with costs. Monthly payments start after the savings are generated. Mr. Caroom has successfully worked with schools in this area in the past. He asked that the superintendents notify him if there is interest and they need more information about these services.

LEGISLATIVE DISCUSSION AND COMMITTEE UPDATES – Robert Poole reported for the governance committee. One bill discussed was a proposed act to amend qualification for the position of Commissioner of Education. The committee has also discussed legislation dealing with the PARCC Assessment. Another bill mentioned requires a prosecuting attorney to listen to taped sessions of every board meeting to ensure all laws are followed properly.

Rick McAfee spoke about House Bill 1312, which gives an automatic waiver to keep schools open that have less than 350 students, as long as these schools are not in distress and meeting state standards.

Bobby Hart is on the finance committee. They have been looking at HB 1003 that removes the prohibitive-cost exemption for public entities that are installing shielded outdoor lighting. The committee is working with the sponsor to have PK-12 schools excluded from the bill, not just K-12 as currently stated.

Ms. Bailey serves on the curriculum committee. They have worked with the sponsor of HB 1044 to ensure that cursive writing will be taught, but not assessed by 3rd grade. A professional development bill in the works will give superintendents 4 flexible teacher contract days that can be used for professional development, student contact, or other district needs.

Ms. Bailey also mentioned that the Curriculum Committee was watching House Bill 1313, Senate Bill 268, House Bill 1243, House Bill 1183, Senate Bill 179, and Senate Bill 226.

EARLY CHILDHOOD – Karen Massey has hired LaCheryl Smith at the Lafayette Early Childhood room. There has been an increase in referrals for special needs programs. Transitions will begin next month.

The Board went into executive session.

DIRECTOR’S CONTRACT

Forrest Mulkey made a motion to renew Ms. Bailey’s contract for three years with a 3% raise for fiscal year 2015-2016. Angie Raney seconded the motion. Motion passed.

PERSONNEL – Bobby Hart made a motion to accept the resignation of Angie Bradshaw, ADE Dashboard Data Systems. Robert Poole seconded the motion. Motion passed.

OTHER ITEMS – Four Corners Conference will be hosted by ASBA on February 26 at the Co-op. Topics will include Legislative Updates, Superintendent Evaluation, and presentation on CTE.

CTE will hold Advisory Council Meeting in August. More information will be available next month.

Next Board meeting will be held Tuesday, March 10, 2015.

With no further business, Bobby Hart made a motion to adjourn. Angie Raney seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.