

**BITTERROOT VALLEY EDUCATION COOPERATIVE
MANAGEMENT BOARD**

Tuesday, January 26, 2016
9:00 a.m. – Cooperative Office

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Introduce Staff Representative**
- 3. Consent Agenda**
 - A. Minutes**
 - B. Warrants**
 - C. Financial Report**
 - D. Next Meeting – February 23**
- 4. Public Comment**
- 5. Correspondence**
 - A. Letters of Appreciation - attached**
 1. Ashley Lippert, Mental Health Therapist, Hamilton/Daly Elem.
 2. Alana Lopez, Mental Health Behavior Consultant, Hamilton/Wash Elem./Preschool
 3. Robin Austin, Mental Health Behavior Consultant, Hamilton/Daly Elem.
- 6. Board Action**
 - A. Special Education Program Narrative Revisions**
 - B. 5.05 Independent Education Evaluation Policy – Revisions – 1st Reading**
- 7. Information and Discussion**
 - A. MBI/RTI Update – Mat Luras**
 - B. Update on Special Education Funding - School Funding Interim Commission and OPI Special Education Task Force**
- 8. Director’s Performance Appraisal – Executive Session**
- 9. Board Action: Director’s Contract**
- 10. Adjourn**

January 14, 2016

Dear Ashley,

This is to offer my sincere appreciation and commendation for your work recently. When we needed additional Therapist coverage due to maternity leave in the Washington/Preschool CSCT team; you took on additional duty to cover a caseload of approximately 20 students and offer leadership to two Behavior Consultants, one of which was a new employee without prior experience.

While taking on the extra duty your supervisors reported you maintained a positive attitude and maintained excellent communications with school staff and administration in both schools. Additionally, they report all billing and paperwork was maintained timely! Essentially, you helped maintain the services to our students and helped keep revenues up and extra costs to a minimum.

Thank you so much for the extra effort, teamwork and attitude!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Miller', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tim Miller

Copy: BVEC Board
Personnel file

January 14, 2016

Dear Alana,

Please accept my appreciation for your outstanding flexibility and making extra effort to keep things running smoothly during the maternity leave transition period at Washington Elem/Preschool.

Your supervisors report that you learned your new role and procedures quickly without the guidance of a full time Therapist and often functioned independently as a Behavior Consultant. Throughout, you maintained excellent communications with school staff and showed much flexibility and willingness to dive into difficult situations with challenging students.

Thank you for stepping-up and doing so well under less than optimal conditions for a new employee!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Miller', with a stylized flourish above the name.

Tim Miller

Copy: BVEC Board
Personnel file

January 14, 2016

Dear Robin,

This is to formally recognize your extra work and going beyond our standard job expectations.

Your supervisors report that you really stepped-up and took additional leadership responsibilities at Daly Elementary when your lead Therapist was assigned to support maternity leave at Washington Elem/Preschool CSCT program.

Furthermore, you provided support, guidance and mentoring for our new Behavior Consultant at Washington Elem/Preschool all while maintaining high levels of direct service at Daly Elementary. This was a great benefit to our students and helped minimize the difficulty and expense related to hiring and training a substitute BC during the first semester of school.

Thank you for your professionalism, commitment to your school and students - and your dedication to your work and our organization!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Miller', with a stylized flourish above the name.

Tim Miller

Copy: BVEC Board
Personnel file

5.05 Independent Education Evaluation Policy - Revised

A. General

1. The parents of a child with a disability have the right to obtain an independent educational evaluation of the child, subject to paragraphs (b) through (e) of this section procedure and criteria identified by the Bitterroot Valley Education Cooperative and its member districts.

(Strike the remainder of current policy and replace with the following:)

Procedure

Notice to Parents

- Please read this document before obtaining or paying for an independent educational evaluation. This document may limit your right to reimbursement.
- The District will not automatically reimburse parents who unilaterally obtain independent educational evaluations. Please review this document for further information about a parent's right to obtain independent educational evaluations at public expense.
- An independent educational evaluation, if not obtained in accordance with these procedures and criteria, may not be considered by your child's IEP team. Please ensure that any independent educational evaluation conforms to these requirements.

Definitions

"Independent educational evaluations" means an evaluation conducted by a qualified examiner who is not employed by the responsible local education agency.

"Public expense" means the local education agency either pays for the full cost of the evaluation or evaluation components or ensures that the evaluation or evaluation components are otherwise provided at no cost to the parent.

Parameters for Seeking Independent Educational Evaluations

If a parent disagrees with an evaluation conducted by the District and seeks an independent educational evaluation, the District may initiate a due process hearing to show that its evaluation is appropriate. In the alternative, the District will provide the parent an opportunity to obtain an independent education evaluation in accordance with these procedures by arranging for the independent evaluation. The parent must first inform the District in writing or communicate with the district at an IEP meeting that the parent:

1. Disagrees with the district's evaluation, and
2. Is requesting an independent educational evaluation at public expense.

The District may ask for the parent's reason(s) for disagreeing with the District's evaluation, but the parent is not required to provide those reasons. Parents may only request one publicly funded independent evaluation for each evaluation completed by the District.

Response to a Request for an Independent Educational Evaluation

If parents request an independent educational evaluation at public expense, the District will, without unnecessary delay, provide the parent options for an independent educational evaluation at public expense as follows:

1. A staff member from another school district in the Ravalli County or Missoula County area; or
2. A private sector provider

The District will provide a list of qualified individuals to perform the Independent Educational Evaluation, but parents shall not be required to obtain an Independent Educational Evaluation from one of the individuals recommended by the District.

Once the parent chooses an option, the District will arrange for the alternative evaluator, contract with an independent examiner, or otherwise ensure that an Independent Educational Evaluation is provided at public expense.

If the District initiates a hearing and the final decision is that the District evaluation is appropriate, the parent still has the right to an Independent Educational Evaluation, but not at public expense.

Timeline Regarding Independent Educational Evaluations

In the interest of consistency between public and private evaluations, the District encourages parents to choose an option for additional assessment offered by the district within 15 days of receiving the options.

After the parent of the student with a disability chooses an option for an additional evaluation and signs an assessment plan, the District will arrange for or initiate a contract with an appropriate evaluator.

The District will make arrangements for a new evaluation, or contract with a qualified independent examiner who is able to provide a written report for an IEP meeting within 60 days of receipt of parent consent for assessment. If the evaluator cannot meet the required timeline, the District will inform the parent and ask for agreement to an extension of time or selection of another option.

Information Provided to Parents

Upon parent request for an independent educational evaluation, the District will provide the parents with a copy of its policy/procedures and criteria for independent educational evaluations.

Criteria

Consideration of the Independent Educational Evaluation

Independent Educational Evaluations are designed to determine the educational needs of disabled students. The District is responsible for determining placement and services. Therefore, the District will consider recommendations obtained in independent educational evaluation reports completed in accordance with these procedures and criteria. However, independent educational evaluations will not control District determinations and may not be considered if not completed by a qualified professional as described in herein for educational evaluations.

Local Limitations for Evaluators

Evaluators must be located within the Ravalli County or Missoula County area. Evaluators outside of this area will be approved only on an exceptional basis if the parents can demonstrate that there is a unique need for a specialized evaluation for their child and that there are no qualified evaluators within Ravalli or Missoula County who can appropriately assess their child's educational needs.

Requirements

Independent evaluators shall be required to:

- Obtain parent consent to allow communication between the evaluator and District staff;
- Obtain written parent consent for the evaluation;
- If appropriate, communicate with the child's teacher(s) and related service providers to gain a perspective on how the child is performing in school and/or observe the student in the educational setting;
- Send the evaluation report, including all legally required components, to parents and the District at least five (5) days prior to any meetings convened where the evaluation will be considered;
- Participate in any IEP team meetings in person or via telephone conference to discuss the results of the independent educational evaluation; and
- Release all test protocols, notes, etc. to a District representative at the time the evaluation report is provided.

These requirements shall apply both to independent evaluators with whom the District contracts for services or for reimbursement for an Independent Educational Evaluation obtained at parent expense.

Assessments

All Independent Educational Evaluators must utilize testing and assessment materials and procedures which are selected and administered so as to not be racially, culturally, or sexually discriminatory. Tests and other assessment materials must be provided and administered in the student's primary language or other mode of communications, unless a written explanation is provided as to why this provision and administration are not clearly feasible. All assessment instruments utilized must have been validated for

the specific purpose for which they are used, and be administered by trained personnel in conformance with the instructions provided by the publishers.

Minimum Qualifications for Evaluators

If the parent requests an Independent Educational Evaluation at public expense, the District will provide the parent with information about where an Independent Educational Evaluation can be obtained and these criteria. All Independent Educational Evaluations must be provided by a qualified specialist. Evaluators with credentials other than those listed below will not be approved unless the parent can demonstrate the appropriateness of using an evaluator meeting other qualifications.

<u>Type of Assessment</u>	<u>Qualifications</u>
Academic Achievement	Certified Special Education Teacher* Licensed Educational or School Psychologist**
Adaptive Behavior	Licensed Educational or School Psychologist** Certified Special Education Teacher
Assistive Technology	Certified or Licensed Speech/Language Pathologist Certified Special Education Teacher*
Auditory Acuity/ Auditory Perception (CAP)	Licensed or Certificated Audiologist
Behavioral	Licensed Educational or School Psychologist** Licensed School Counselor Licensed Psychologist Licensed Psychiatrist Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) Certified Behavior Analyst
Cognitive	Licensed Educational or School Psychologist **
Motor	Licensed Physical Therapist Registered Occupational Therapist
Occupational Therapy	Registered Occupational Therapist
Physical Therapy	Registered Physical Therapist
Speech and Language	Certified or Licensed Speech/Language Pathologist
Social/Emotional	Licensed Educational or School Psychologist** Licensed School Counselor Licensed Psychologist Licensed Psychiatrist Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) Certified Behavior Analyst
Visual Acuity/Developmental Vision	Licensed Ophthalmologist Optometrist
Visual-Motor Integration/ Visual Perception	School Psychologist (Credentialed) or Licensed Educational or School Psychologist** Licensed Ophthalmologist Optometrist

* Master’s Degree

** Credentialed Note:

Note: Evaluators must be free from any conflict of interest.

Independent Educational Evaluators must agree to release their assessment information and results to the District prior to receipt of payment for services. The results of the Independent Educational Evaluation will be considered in the diagnosis, program decisions and placement of the student with disabilities as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Cost Limitations

Reimbursement for Independent Educational Evaluations will be limited to the amount it would have cost the district to provide the same type of evaluation. Costs in excess of this amount will not be approved unless the parent can demonstrate that such costs reflect a reasonable and customary rate for such evaluative services, or if the parents can demonstrate that there are other factors that make the extraordinary costs necessary.

Costs beyond the Independent Educational Evaluation (i.e. transportation, lodging, food, etc.) are not covered in the cost of the independent evaluation and will not be approved, unless the parent can document that such travel costs reflect factors that make the extraordinary costs necessary.