

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 26, 2020

8:30 A.M. Meeting in Pana Jr. High Auditorium

CALL REGULAR BOARD MEETING TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL at 8:30 am

President Dr. Chris Dougherty called the regular board meeting to order and roll call was taken with three board members present. Board members present were Jason Bauer, Scott Doerr, and Chris Dougherty. Also present were NPT Director, Kelly Suey, NPT Program Coordinator/Transition Specialist, Sabrina Jones, NPT Business Manager, Deanna Tarter.

Others in attendance include: Anita Brown, Wendy Dulakis, Matt Hutchinson, Jessica Miller, Eric Bruder, Stephen Turner, Regina Hohenstein, Tina Martin, Katie Hilgert, Casey Matheson, Michelle Rexroad, Lauren Assalley, Gretchen Bland, Amber Daniels, Debbie Holthaus, Matt Wemple, Lori Wemple, Luke Wemple, Jodi Jannink, Dana Frailey, Jennifer Evans, Evan Hopkins, Erica Matthews, and Abby Huff.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS, PUBLIC COMMENT, AND CORRESPONDENCE

Stephen Turner, President of Taylorville Board of Education, addressed the board. Mr. Turner stated that he wanted to discuss the transfer of employees and relocation of the FACeS program, as an agenda item. He stated that FACeS teachers are Taylorville employees and work under their union. He stated that these employees will work where Taylorville assigns them. Since FACeS is housed at Taylorville, they will assign them their schedule and will follow Taylorville contracts. Mr. Turner continued by saying that this is a tough time and they had to come up with a plan to protect their students, staff and community. This is also why we will reevaluate our plan after the first quarter.

Lori Smothers, Special Education Resource Teacher at Pana High School wrote a letter on behalf of special needs children. Mrs. Suey read the letter she provided. The letter indicated that Mrs. Smothers was worried about returning to school, but made a decision to keep a positive outlook, mask up and move on. Her letter stated that the students at Pana Schools are doing absolutely wonderful with wearing their masks and they want to be at school, not e-learning. She spent last spring on the phone, on google meets, and providing any help she could to help her parents and students and it simply was not enough. Lori explained through the letter that she has a 7 year old grandson who has been in special education since he was 3 years old. He is not adapting to e-learning, but his sister who is in kindergarten is not having any difficulties. They live in Pontiac and go to school 2 days a week. His Special Education teacher called to check on his progress and the Director has now approved him to attend 4 days per week. Ms. Smothers indicated that everyone learns differently and some need additional support to learn.

She accepts that there may be a possibility of an outbreak, but at least Pontiac school district is doing all they can to give the support to the kids that are required by law to receive the services.

Debbie Holthaus discussed how her daughter, who is non-verbal, attends the FACeS program and has regressed since March. She is now in her room all day. Staying home and doing paper packets or remote in front of a computer is not an option for her. In class experience is the best thing for her and as a parent this has been very upsetting.

Abby Huff has a daughter that is currently receiving homebound instruction due to a spine surgery she is scheduled to have. Three of her daughter's physicians ordered homebound instruction because they say it is worth the risk because they see how she has declined since March. Completing 5 hours of remote work a day is not possible due to her and her husband working, plus there is nothing she can do remotely. Abby discussed how currently in South Korea students are doing remote learning except special needs children. If the Taylorville school district can have driver's education, then the children with IEP's should be attending school. She also wanted the board to know that she has contacted Equip for Equality.

Jennifer Evans and Evan Hopkins discussed how Evan is a senior in the FACeS program and she is a single mother and works full time. She feels that her son has been left out. She stated that her son cannot sit and watch someone talk, he needs one on one service and that is why an aide is listed in his IEP. She discussed how he needs to get out and be around people. Jennifer understands the risk of people getting sick, but it is worth the risk for her son to go to school.

Lori Wemple discussed that she has fought against doctors and insurance companies and now she has to fight for her son to get an education. Her son has great teachers and administrators, but other schools are making it happen where their students can attend school in person. She feels that Taylorville school district has dropped the ball for these kids. Her family went on vacation and had travel baseball all summer and they are ok. Something needs to be offered. Even ISBE highly suggests in person instruction and strongly encourages collaboration and communication with the school. Mrs. Wemple feels that they have had little to no communication from Taylorville School District. This is about being fair, right, and just. Her child is different, but he is not less than any other child. It is now August, let's do something and make this right for these students.

Erica Matthews, owner of AAMP Autism and Movement Project in Pana, discussed how people are here to give these children a voice. She understands that there is a health pandemic, but she is seeing 75 students by completing one on one sessions all while following all guidelines and rules. She attempted to do zoom with her students back in the Spring, but this wasn't working. She asked Dr. Doerr if he will still do what he can if an agreement has not been made and he said that is correct. She offered her building if that is what it took to provide an education for these children.

MOVE TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 26, 2020 CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

Motion by Doerr, seconded by Bauer to approve the August 26, 2019 Consent agenda as presented. Bauer- YEA, Doerr- YEA, Dougherty- Abstained. Motion passed.

The consent agenda included Minutes from June 2020 regular board meeting, minutes from August 19 2020 special meeting, minutes from August 21 2020 special meeting and Bills/Treasurer's Report from June, July and August.

NEW BUSINESS

FY 21 Budget

Dee Tarter, Business Manager, presented the FY21 Budget during the Budget Hearing at 8:20am. Dr. Dougherty asked if there was a motion to approve the FY 21 Budget as Presented.

Motion by Bauer, seconded by Doerr to approve the FY21 Budget as presented. Bauer- YEA, Doerr- YEA, Dougherty- YEA. Motion passed.

Review and approve Reopening and Remote Learning Plan

Dr. Dougherty explained that there are three school districts in this co-op and one of the school districts is doing remote learning. Dr. Dougherty stated that we are under a pandemic and are doing the best to meet all children's needs. Dr. Dougherty asked Mrs. Suey to explain the FACeS Remote Learning Plan. Mrs. Suey stated that she was finally in a face to face conversation yesterday and Taylorville has offered to do in class instruction on Tuesday/Thursday and remote Monday/Wednesday/Friday due to bargaining agreement and MOU. Dr. Doerr asked for a 15 minute recess and Mr. Bauer seconded the motion. Time was 8:57am and reconvene at 9:13 am.

Meeting resumed at 9:13 am with Dr. Dougherty stating that Taylorville school district is in a remote status and they are in their legal right to do so. Nokomis and Pana have decided to provide options to their families for learning. Dr. Dougherty stated that their decision to do Tuesday/Thursday in-person for FACeS is due to safety and the resources we have been given.

Mr. Bauer explained that we are in a pandemic and each individual school will do what is best that fits their student's and community needs. Pana school district has chosen to attend school 5 days a week and want all of our students to receive the same opportunity. Since Taylorville is offering Tuesday/Thursday instruction, we will try to find a way to bring the Pana students of the FACeS program into one of the Pana facilities Monday/Wednesday/Friday using the remote instruction provided by Taylorville staf. Mr. Bauer stated that the exact information regarding times and locations of services on M/W/F have not been determined yet, but will be communicated with the families.

Dr. Doerr explained that Nokomis' plan is going to be very similar to that of Pana's plan. He stated that Nokomis will transport FACeS students to Taylorville for Tuesday/Thursday instruction and on Monday/Wednesday/Friday transport the Nokomis student's to one of the Nokomis schools. The students will complete the remote learning plan work on those days, related to IEPs, and recommended 2 ½ hours instruction and other related services. Mrs. Suey, or her designee, will work with the staff to ensure related services and remote learning are provided on M/W/F. Dr Doerr stated that when we called the special board meeting, a two day plan on Tuesday/Thursday was brought up by the Taylorville school District. After the first special board meeting on August 19th, a planning meeting was held with the Nokomis and Pana Superintendent, Taylorville's proxy and Mrs. Suey. During this meeting there were questions that were brought up and were going to be answered and addressed. However, on Thursday, August 20th Taylorville had decided to move to fully remote. The meeting on August 21st was to finalize a remote learning plan, however with Taylorville's decision to go full remote, a plan could not be agreed upon on the 21st of August.

Dr. Dougherty stated that Taylorville's plan is a fluid plan. She indicated that Mrs. Suey is a part of their District Leadership Team and was in session when they discussed their options of all in school, hybrid or all remote. Dr. Dougherty stated that health will also dictate the district's plan. She stated that Nokomsi already has a positive case within their school, and those matters may have to make the districts make adjustments along the way.

Dr. Dougherty asked if there was a motion to approve the Reopening and Remote Learning Plan, as presented and amended.

Motion by Doerr, seconded by Bauer to approve the FACeS/CBI Learning (Reopening) Plan as presented and amended. Mr. Bauer- YEA, Dr. Doerr- YEA, Dr. Dougherty- YEA. Motion passed.

FY21 FTE for NPT Employees

Mrs. Suey explained that it was recommended during the audit that we have the NPT employee's full time equivalent (FTE) percentages approved by the board. Mrs. Suey provided the board with a handout of the FTE's for NPT personnel. Dr. Dougherty asked that Mrs. Suey review the handout. Mrs. Suey then went through the employees and what their Full Time Equivalent (FTE) was for each school district. This is based upon child count.

Motion by Bauer and seconded by Doerr to approve the FY21 FTE for NPT employees as presented. Mr. Bauer- YEA, Dr. Doerr- YEA, Dr. Dougherty- YEA. Motion passed.

Evaluation Appeals Process

Mrs. Suey discussed that in response to SB1213, NPT Special Education Cooperative has developed the following appeals process for unsatisfactory summative evaluation ratings. NPT Special Education will cooperate with its employees to develop and implement an appeals process for "unsatisfactory" ratings under Section 24A-8. This process will include an

assessment of the original rating by the NPT board of directors. The Board of Directors and Executive Director will have the power to revoke the “unsatisfactory” rating it deems to be erroneous. The employee that receives an “unsatisfactory” rating on their summary performance evaluation will provide a formal letter to the Executive Director requesting an Appeals Process Meeting with NPT’s Board of Directors. Upon receiving the letter, the Executive Director will have two school days to schedule a meeting. During the meeting the employee will present their case. At this time, the board of directors will complete an assessment of the original rating by reviewing the evaluation, facts and data presented. After consideration of the facts, the Board of Directors and Executive Director will either (a) complete further evaluations of the employee by another qualified evaluator, (b) accept the appeal of the summative evaluation rating and provide a new rating based off of presented facts and collected data, (c) deny the appeal and the employee will receive the unsatisfactory summative evaluation rating.

Motion by Bauer and seconded by Dougherty to approve the Evaluation Appeals Procedures as presented. Mr. Bauer- YEA, Dr. Doerr- YEA, Dr. Dougherty- YEA. Motion passed.

Discuss the Transfer of Employees employed in the FACeS/CBI program from Taylorville CUSD #3 to NPT Special Education Cooperative starting July 1, 2021

Dr. Doerr explained that FACeS/CBI is a NPT owned program where Taylorville hires the teachers and paraprofessionals and NPT hires related services. He believes we need to look into NPT hiring the teachers and paraprofessionals instead of Taylorville CUSD#3. Dr. Doerr stated that we had a very short time where we formed NPT so we had to have a fiscal agent since we were not able to be set up as an employer yet. Mrs. Suey is working on those steps for NPT to be our own fiscal agent. Once this happens, we are no longer under Taylorville CUSD#3 and an amendment to the bylaws will have to be made.

Dr. Dougherty wants to table this discussion until she is able to have more conversations with Special Education Legal Services. Dr. Dougherty made a motion to table and no one seconded. She said to scratch this from the agenda since no one seconded.

Discuss the Transfer of location of the FACeS/CBI program from Taylorville CUSD #3 to a different location starting July 1, 2021

Dr. Dougherty discussed that this can be incorporated with the previous line item on the agenda. She wants to table this discussion until she talks more with Special Education Legal Services. The classrooms are housed in Taylorville and the other districts are choosing to send their students to this program. The districts are not obligated to utilize the FACeS Program if they don’t want to.

Open Discussion

There was not any open discussion.

REPORTS

Director's Report

Kelly Suey spoke about the Extended School Year (ESY) that was held July 20-August 12 8:30-11:00 in Nokomis. She thanked the teachers, paraprofessionals and therapists who taught the students that attended. The 4 students from Nokomis and 1 student from Pana did an amazing job and we received a lot of appreciation from parents for providing this new platform of ESY. Overall, it was a great success! The NPT office is now located at the Taylorville High School instead of being on Spresser St. She thanked the custodial staff for moving the office and the Taylorville tech department (Christ Kuntzman and Lindsey Davis) for helping NPT obtain the technology needed for our staff. NPT staff has been working hard to schedule and accommodate the different districts' plans. We have a great team of employees that collaborate and work together to always get the job done! And lastly, Mr. Mathis, who completed our first audit, stated that it was clean and had no findings. We appreciate his recommendations and support during the auditing process. He will present at the next board meeting. The board did not have any additional questions for Kelly.

Program Coordinator/Transition Report

Sabrina Jones reported that all IDHS packets have been passed out to all freshman through seniors at all three high schools in hopes more students sign up for the program. She has even reached out to the 504 and ISP students, and created digital packets for this school year that are going over well. She reported that she currently has 12 students who have filled out their packets and are "eligible". Ten of those are working and would be potential outcomes. Currently, we have 29 students who have filled out their packets and are in the "Referral Process". The current contract for 20-21 asks that we service 30 students with 10 outcomes. She then discussed how DHS has brought out a new program during the COVID-19 pandemic. From April 13th - June, for each student who completed the DHS survey, NPT will receive \$50 each week. From July - Present, for each student who completed the DHS survey, NPT will receive \$200 each month. So far the total we should be receiving is \$5,350. Kelly and Sabrina have met with all special education teachers this year to update them on changes. She praised the teachers for doing a great job updating their remote learning plans to cover all types of learning possibilities for this school year. The board did not have any further questions for Sabrina.

Business Manager Report

Deanna Tarter reported that the June unpaid bill balance is \$366.18 and July unpaid bill balance is \$121,741.97. The board did not have any additional questions for Dee.

CLOSED SESSION

The meeting did not move into a closed session.

MOVE TO ADJOURN AT 9:38.

Motion by Bauer, and seconded by Doerr. Motion passed by voice vote.

Dr. Chris Dougherty, President

Dr. Scott Doerr, Secretary