



Meeker and Wright Special Education Cooperative

720 9th Ave, Howard Lake, MN 55349

Joint Powers Board Meeting

Tuesday, October 20, 2026 - 5:30 pm

Meeting Minutes - *Unofficial*

Present: Sarah Baker, Gena Jacobson, Jessica Johnson, Cindy Miller, Kelsey Puncochar, Jen Rasset
Absent: Alex Carlson
Others Present: Dan Bultsma, Kim Geurts, Melissa Hanson, Kate Ryan

I. Call to Order/ Board Roll Call

The Regular meeting was called to order at 5:33 pm

A roll call was conducted:

Sarah Baker: Present

Alex Carlson: Absent

Gena Jacobson: Present

Jessica Johnson: Present

Cindy Miller: Present

Kelsey Puncochar: Present

Jen Rasset: Present *via Google Meet due to scheduling conflict*

A quorum of six board members was established.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Approval of Meeting Agenda

A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Gena Jacobson and seconded by Kelsey Puncochar.

Roll Call Vote:

Sarah Baker - aye

Gena Jacobson - aye

Jessica Johnson - aye

Cindy Miller - aye

Kelsey Puncochar - aye

Jen Rasset - aye

Motion carried with six votes in favor.

IV. Consent Agenda

A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Kelsey Puncochar and seconded by Sarah Baker.

Roll Call Vote:

Sarah Baker - aye

Gena Jacobson - aye



Jessica Johnson - aye
Cindy Miller - aye
Kelsey Puncochar - aye
Jen Rasset - aye

Motion carried with six votes in favor of approving the consent agenda which included:

- Minutes of Previous Board Meeting
- Bills for payment and other financial reports as attached
- Personnel Items
 - Recommendations for Employment
 - Jennifer Erickson, Occupational Therapist, Long-term Substitute, Effective October 19, 2026 - April 2, 2027
 - Allyssa Gronseth, Special Education Paraprofessional, STEP, Effective October 21, 2026
 - Contract Changes/Approvals/Position Changes
 - Reinstatement: Nancy Walter, 1.0 FTE Special Education Teacher, STEP, Effective August 24, 2026
 - Additional Assignments
 - Additional Assignment: Laurie Nosbush, Long-term Substitute COTA, 15 hours/week, Effective November 1, 2026 - March 31, 2027
 - Additional Assignment: Katie Thelen, Long-term Substitute Occupational Therapist, 18 additional days, Effective October 9, 2026 - March 29, 2027
- Contract Items
 - Consultant Contracts
 - Fatima V Miller Service Contract 26-27
 - Golden Tongue Consultants, Inc Contract 26-27

V. Informational Items

A. Executive Director Report

Discontinuance of Assurance of Compliance Reporting Requirement

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) has eliminated the requirement for a separate annual Assurance of Compliance (AOC) submission, integrating its data collection directly into the Minnesota Education Grant System (MEGS). Designed to streamline compliance and grant administration, this update removes redundant reporting while ensuring all required regulatory information remains fully collected and maintained within MEGS.

Emergency Preparedness

Leadership recently partnered with Wright County Emergency Management Deputy Director Richard Ward to continue developing clear, cohesive emergency preparedness plans for county review. Building on this collaboration, all program staff received detailed instructions on program-specific emergency procedures



and participated in collaborative Q&A discussions during the October 14 professional development day.

Celebrating our Staff at the Educational Support Staff (ESS) Banquet
STEP Paraprofessional Nancy Barnes and Wings Paraprofessional Anna Spencer have been named the MAWSECO 2026 Educational Support Staff (ESS) Staff Choice Award recipients. Created to recognize outstanding educational support personnel, the award celebrates their exceptional dedication to the cooperative. Both honorees will be celebrated at a regional dinner banquet hosted by Resource Training and Solutions on October 28 in Waite Park.

B. Director of Finance Report

Auditors are currently on site. Both Transition and Special Pupil Billing processes are underway. A \$15,000 FY27 Building and Cybersecurity Grant was secured from the MDE. Brothers Fire & Security are installing new swipe access points on the Office and Journey's doors.

C. School Psychologist Report

School Psychologist Dan Bultsma, in his 5th year at MAWSECO, delivered a presentation providing an overview of School Psychology services within the cooperative. While all team members possess at least 6 years of total professional experience, their MAWSECO tenure ranges from 2 to 11 years across assigned member districts, served by Dan Bultsma, Natalie Dunning, Suzy Sickler, Brittney Hjelmeland, Daidre Vaala-Logeais, Danielle Gehrman, and Marissa Warren.

The primary responsibility of MAWSECO school psychologists is conducting Special Education Evaluations, which account for approximately 75% to 90% of their total time. All evaluations are subject to a strict completion timeline of 30 school days, with the cooperative averaging approximately 100 evaluations per year across member districts. In addition to evaluations, school psychologists provide core support across multiple areas, including behavior support, consultation, data collection and analysis, intervention and MTSS support, compliance work, mental health and crisis support, as well as research and program evaluation.

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) recommends a staffing ratio of 1:500 for comprehensive services, or 1:700 for schools with solid prevention and MTSS frameworks. By comparison, Minnesota's current overall ratio is 1:1071, while MAWSECO's current ratio stands at approximately 1:1600.

VI. Action Items

A. Old Business

1. Policy Review [Second Reading]

A motion to approve the listed policy changes was made by Gena Jacobson and seconded by Jessica Johnson.



Policy 202 - School Board Officers
Policy 208 - Development, Adoption, and Implementation of Policies
Policy 402 - Disability Nondiscrimination Policy
Policy 521 - Student Disability Nondiscrimination
Policy 529 - Staff Notification of Violent Behavior by Students
Policy 535 - Service Animals in Schools
Policy 706 - Acceptance of Gifts
Policy 709 - Student Transportation Safety
Policy 806 - Crisis Management Policy

Roll Call Vote:

Sarah Baker - aye
Gena Jacobson - aye
Jessica Johnson - aye
Cindy Miller - aye
Kelsey Puncochar - aye
Jen Rasset - aye

Motion carried with six votes in favor.

2. Policy Rescission [Second Reading]

A motion to rescind the listed policy was made by Sarah Baker and seconded by Gena Jacobson.

Policy 406.p - Procedures for Carrying out HIPAA Regulations

Roll Call Vote:

Sarah Baker - aye
Gena Jacobson - aye
Jessica Johnson - aye
Cindy Miller - aye
Kelsey Puncochar - aye
Jen Rasset - aye

Motion carried with six votes in favor.

VII. Future Board Meetings

- A. November 24, 2026, 5:30 pm, Regular Board Meeting, MAWSECO Ed Center, Howard Lake
- B. December 15, 2026, 5:30 pm, Regular Board Meeting, MAWSECO Ed Center, Howard Lake
- C. January 26, 2027, 5:30 pm, Organizational & Regular Board Meeting, MAWSECO Ed Center, Howard Lake



Meeting Date
Tuesday, October 20, 2026

VIII. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Kelsey Puncochar and seconded by Sarah Baker.

Roll Call Vote:

Sarah Baker - aye

Gena Jacobson - aye

Jessica Johnson - aye

Cindy Miller - aye

Kelsey Puncochar - aye

Jen Rasset - aye

Motion carried with six votes in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 pm.

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