



MEEKER AND WRIGHT SPECIAL EDUCATION COOPERATIVE

Board Meeting - Joint Powers Board #0938

Tuesday, June 24, 2025 - 5:00 pm

Meeting Minutes - *Unofficial*

Present: Sarah Baker, Gena Jacobson, Jessica Johnson, Cindy Miller, Kelsey Puncuchar, Tim Oster, Jen Rasset

Absent:

Others Present: Melissa Hanson, Kim Geurts, Scott LeSage, Emily Schneider

I. Call to Order/Board Roll Call

The Regular meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m.

A roll call vote was conducted.:

Sarah Baker: Yes

Gena Jacobson: Yes

Jessica Johnson: Yes

Cindy Miller: Yes

Tim Oster: Yes

Jen Rasset: Yes

A quorum 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 Kelsey Puncuchar and seconded by Gena Jacobson. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Consent Agenda

A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Gena Jacobson and seconded by Sarah Baker. The board unanimously approved the consent agenda which included:

- Minutes of Previous Board Meeting
- Bills for Payment and other financial reports as attached



■ Personnel Items

● *Resignation/Retirement of the following staff:*

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Position</u> | <u>Effective Date</u> |
|---------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Stephanie Harbulak-Barron | Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Specialist | June 18, 2025 |

○ *Employment of the following staff:*

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Position</u> | <u>Effective Date</u> |
|-----------------|--|-----------------------|
| Michael Belland | 1.0 FTE Paraprofessional Eastern Wright | August 11, 2025 |
| Anthony Frank | 1.0 FTE Special Education Supervisor, Delano | July 1, 2025 |
| Linda Hamm | On-Call Physical Therapist | July 1, 2025 |
| Annette Hystad | 1.0 FTE Special Education Teacher, STEP | August 11, 2025 |
| Kayla Jansen | 1.0 FTE Paraprofessional STEP | August 11, 2025 |

● *Contract Changes/Approvals/Position Changes*

- Position Change: Lea Dobbs, from 1.0 FTE ECSE and Due Process Coordinator to 0.6 FTE ECSE Teacher and 0.4 FTE ECSE Coordinator, Effective July 1, 2025
- Position Change: Kimberly Geurts, from 1.0 FTE Controller to 1.0 FTE Director of Finance, Effective August 1, 2025

● *At-Will Agreements*

- Elizabeth Sullivan, Director of Human Resources, Addendum to At-Will Agreement, Effective July 1, 2025

● *Leaves of Absence*

- Lucille Ekholm, Floating Special Education Teacher, Effective August 11, 2025 - October 28, 2025



- *Recognition of Tenure*
 - Tenured: Sonja Brevik, Social Worker
 - Tenured: Cassandra Drusch, Special Education Teacher
 - Tenured: Lucille Ekholm, Floating Special Education Teacher
 - Tenured: Karie Miller, ECSE Teacher
 - Tenured: Kelly Nowacki, Physical Therapist
 - Tenured: Kassandra Otto, ECSE Teacher
 - Tenured: Hailey Sinda, Occupational Therapist
 - Tenured: Kathryn Sisson, Floating Special Education Teacher
 - Tenured: Paige Vetch, Occupational Therapist
 - Tenured: Nancy Walter, Regular/Special Education Teacher
 - Tenured: Kristina Yaedke, Special Education Teacher

Cindy Miller arrived at 5:07pm.

V. Action Items

A. Old Business

1. Fiscal Year FY26 Preliminary Budget [Second Reading]

Motion to approve the Fiscal Year FY26 Preliminary Budget was made by Kelsey Puncochar and seconded by Gena Jacobson. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Organizational Structure Changes for FY26 (2025-2026 school year)

Motion to approve the Director of Educational Programs position as shown in the 2025-2026 Organizational Chart was made by Kelsey Puncochar and seconded by Gena Jacobson. Motion carried unanimously.

Kelsey Puncochar excused herself from the meeting.

VI. Reports

Executive Director Report

MAWSECO's 50th Anniversary Celebration Recap

On June 6, 2025, MAWSECO celebrated its 50th Anniversary at the Education Center in Howard Lake. The event brought together current and former staff, board members, superintendents, and special education directors. Guests enjoyed live-music, games, crafts, a cake walk, a puzzle tournament, and lunch. Highlights included an open-mic storytelling session and a "Legacy Tree" filled with messages of remembrance and hope. The celebration honored MAWSECO's history and reaffirmed its commitment to students and community.



NEW U.S. Supreme Court Case Decision - A.J.T. v. Osseo

In a unanimous decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of a Minnesota student with epilepsy, finding that her school district violated the ADA and Section 504 by failing to provide appropriate accommodations. The student received only about 65% of the instructional time her peers did, after the district declined to offer evening instruction to meet her medical needs. The Court clarified that schools can be held liable if they act with “deliberate indifference,” a lower standard than “bad faith or gross misjudgment.” This decision reinforces the importance of equitable access, responsiveness to medical needs, and careful documentation. MAWSECO’s leadership and program staff will continue reviewing practices to ensure compliance and uphold every student’s right to a full education.

MAWSECO Business Office Structure

MAWSECO will extend its short-term contract with CESO for Finance Support for an additional three months during the transition period. Kim Geurts, current controller, will assume the full-time role of Director of Finance beginning August 1, 2025. At that time, the controller position will be eliminated. MAWSECO plans to hire an Accountant to begin in November or December 2025.

Director of Finance Report

Update on Borrowing/Cash Flow

MAWSECO arranged short-term financing through Kensington Bank to support smooth year-end operations. Seasonal cash flow timing and how the cooperative’s funding structure differs from that of a traditional school district were also discussed.

FY26 Preliminary Budget

The FY26 Preliminary Budget was presented to Superintendents and Business Managers on May 20, 2025. It received a first reading at the MAWSECO Board meeting on May 27, with a second reading and request for approval scheduled for June 24, 2025.

FY25 Final Purchased Service Billing Timeline

The final FY25 Purchased Service Billing settle-up is expected in late July or early August. MAWSECO aims to complete this process early to support member districts with audit preparation. Factors that make final billing difficult to predict, including the estimation process and year-to-year changes in service levels were discussed.



Award Correction for SFY 2025 (420/620)

On May 29, 2025, the Minnesota Department of Education notified districts of a Federal Award Correction for SFY 2025 related to Finance Codes 420/620. MAWSECO, as the fiscal host, allocates these funds to member districts. The initial co-op-wide allocation was \$150,944 but was later adjusted to \$94,256, aligning more closely with prior year amounts.

FY25 Federal Allocation Payouts to Districts

FY25 federal allocation checks for Finance Codes 419/619 and 420/620 are scheduled to be issued by the end of June, consistent with the usual timing each fiscal year.

VII. Executive Director Evaluation - Discussion

The Executive Director's evaluation, originally scheduled for June's meeting, was postponed by the Board Chair to July's regular board meeting to allow additional survey responses to be received and reviewed.

VIII. Future Board Meetings

- A. July 17, 2025, 5:00 p.m., Union Negotiations Committee Meeting, MAWSECO Ed Center, Howard Lake
- B. July 22, 2025, 5:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, MAWSECO Ed Center, Howard Lake
- C. August 26, 2025, 5:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, MAWSECO Ed Center, Howard Lake
- D. September 23, 2025, 5:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting, MAWSECO Ed Center, Howard Lake

IX. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:58 p.m. was made by Gena Jacobson and seconded by Jen Rasset. Motion carried unanimously.

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