

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 27, 2021

8:30 A.M. Pana Unit Office

CALL REGULAR BOARD MEETING TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL at 8:31 am

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, and NPT Business Manager, Deanna Tarter.

Others in attendance include: Michael Edwards, Anita Brown, Wendy Dulakis, Casey Matheson, Katie Hilgert, and Lauren Assalley.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS, PUBLIC COMMENT, AND CORRESPONDENCE

There was no public comment or correspondence.

MOVE TO APPROVE THE January 27, 2021 CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

Dr. Dougherty said she doesn't know, on the staffing plan, what the intention of the school psychologist intern and the school social worker intern positions is and wanted clarification. Mrs. Kelly Suey clarified we are putting these positions out there to see if we have anyone interested. We may or may not hire depending on Taylorville's staffing plan moving forward.

Motion by Doerr, seconded by Bauer to approve the January 27, 2021 consent agenda as presented. Bauer - YEA, Doerr - YEA, Dougherty- YEA. Motion passed.

The consent agenda included Minutes from December 16, 2020 regular board meeting, Bills/Treasurer's Report from January, retirement letter for Mrs. Mara Atkins, School Social Worker, effective the end of this fiscal year, posting for a School Psychologist Intern and School Social Work Intern position for the 2021-2022 school year, Certified Seniority List, Non-Certified Seniority List, and LMHN Accountant engagement letter for FY21 Audit.

NEW BUSINESS

Discuss ESY (Extended School Year)

Mrs. Suey has had some principals reach out regarding providing ESY for students with IEP's that have been remote learning and not showing the expected progress that they should be making on their IEP goals and objectives. Typically ESY is only for FACeS/CBI students or those who have more significant disabilities. The current dates for ESY are scheduled for June

7 - June 17 on Monday through Thursday from 8:30am -11:00am and July 26 - August 6 on Monday through Thursday from 8:30am -11:00am. Mrs. Suey asked if the districts would have opportunities for these students to participate in Summer School in the District or if they would like for NPT to expand their program for these students/remote learners that are struggling due to COVID. Dr. Doerr thinks this would be good to explore because it is very possible that we are going to see a mandate come from ISBE or from the general assembly that we will have to look at this anyway. We do not want to lose these students and have them get further behind. Mr. Bauer asked about the latest stimulus money/CARES, if we could use this towards it. Dr. Doerr replied that we are supposed to receive more details in early February, but from his understanding, that money is going to be very flexible. Mr. Bauer asked when we talk about opening this up to students that are not necessarily our highest needs students, are we thinking about a certain percentage of students, is it all over, or depend upon district, what are these numbers going to look like for potential students that would utilize this. Mrs. Suey responded that she has had 3 students that have been mentioned to her that historically have not attended the ESY program. Mrs. Suey thinks that if we hire an extra teacher, we will definitely be able to fill those classrooms. She would anticipate hiring a third teacher, but we have never offered it like this, so she is unsure how many we would have that are recommended to attend. Mr. Bauer asked what the curriculum will look like with throwing an entire year's worth of material in a couple weeks. Mrs. Suey responded that it would be individualized to each student's IEPs goals. The teacher would have to look at those goals and develop some individualized plans for those students. If we keep the classes to 10-15 students per class that is a typical caseload, this expectation would be achievable.. Dr. Doerr recommends that the teachers need to complete the paperwork that has been completed for ESY in the past and have the data that the student is showing regression or the potential for regression that they are struggling to not meet their IEP goals. He thinks we keep the same process in place that we have, but look at options to help those students. Mrs. Suey would much rather provide this opportunity to students in the summer to make up that regression rather than retaining them, especially with the older grade levels. Mr. Bauer asked if Mrs. Suey will put together some numbers for everyone and the next steps to move forward. Mrs. Suey responded yes and they will revisit this at the next board meeting. Mrs. Suey also added that she will plan on having this in Nokomis again because it worked out well last year with it being easily accessible. But if there are enough students to have a class within each district, we can look into that as well.

Open Discussion

Mr. Bauer wanted to address that at the end of the calendar year 2020, when he got back from having health issues, and when we started talking about Taylorville wanting to withdrawal, he had a conversation with Mrs. Suey to reach out to Dr. Dougherty to see about having a conversation to see how we can preserve the NPT cooperative. He believes Mrs. Suey sent the email to Dr. Dougherty on Monday, November 30th. To his knowledge this request was never responded to and he would like to know why it has not been responded to. Mrs. Suey commented that he is correct and she has not received a response. Mr. Bauer responded in saying that there has been no communication from Taylorville in regards to the email Mrs. Suey

sent to schedule a meeting to potentially see what can be done to remedy any concerns with the direction of the NPT cooperative. Mrs. Suey responded that this is correct. Dr. Dougherty did not answer the question about the email, but she noted that as all three are aware the withdrawal of Taylorville from the Cooperative is being addressed through legal counsel. Mr. Bauer responded with yes we are aware of that.

Mrs. Suey brought up that as most are aware, Dee and I have been working out of Taylorville at least three days a week, but it has become a challenge. As we need to work together on a lot of items, when either of them have a meeting or phone call, one of us has to work in the hallway. Due to this, Mrs. Suey started looking to see if she could find a location where her and Dee can work together, but then also separately. There was nothing available in Nokomis, but Pana did find something at their Lake Land facility that would work well. There is a smaller office and a classroom that can be used as office space as well as space for board meetings and trainings. Mrs. Suey wanted to start a discussion about possibly moving their office to the new location so they can be more effective because what we have right now isn't working. She wanted to talk to Taylorville staff and see about when to hold office hours or if they would rather set up meeting times for them to come to the Taylorville office since they are still NPT's fiscal agent. Mrs. Suey asked if we could start the discussion about the move and said there would be no cost involved. Mr. Bauer wanted to make sure everyone is aware that the Lake Land Western Region building that is across from Lincoln Elementary school, Pana Unit #8 owns the building and Lake Land leases it. There is a portion they are not utilizing. They have offered an office and classroom. If the challenge is having issues with workspace and confidentiality, Pana Unit #8 is willing to allow NPT to use the space and would not charge NPT. Mrs. Suey commented that they appreciated that and asked Dr. Dougherty, since they are the fiscal agent, if they had any issues, concerns or oppositions to NPT making this move. Dr. Dougherty asked Wendy Dulakis if she could come on the meeting. She asked Wendy that as far as what has been done fiscally, with bringing Dee on, and getting things cleaned and aligned, if NPT is now in a state where they can work remotely and if Taylorville can trust that the fiscal responsibilities would continue. Wendy responded absolutely. Dr. Dougherty then asked Wendy if there was any reason why we could not agree with this move. Wendy responded that she does not see a reason. Dee and her have good communication. Dr. Dougherty asked Wendy if she wanted to meet with NPT as an as needed basis or a more structured schedule. Wendy responded with as needed is fine. Dr. Dougherty commented to Mrs. Suey that she does not see any reason why the move cannot occur. Mrs. Suey said thank you and she will need to look into moving technology and getting things setup and finalized with Pana. Mrs. Suey will update the Superintendents through her Friday updates as to where we are with the process and will go ahead and start making plans to move. She appreciates everyone's support with the move. Dr. Dougherty asked if NPT needs assistance with Taylorville's technology and maintenance department. Mrs. Suey responded that technology will go through Pana since we are in the Pana school district and we will tag onto some of their leases. Scott Savage, Pana's technology director, is open and willing to help NPT. As far as maintenance, NPT is going to see what they can do. Dr. Dougherty said when we get this scheduled we have a maintenance team with trailers that can help and they will need to get the keys and have those rights and responsibilities signed over so they don't have

anything lingering. Mrs. Suey asked what was meant by rights and responsibilities and Mr. Bauer said as in keys or key fobs that give access to the building. Mrs. Suey said definitely we will turn those in when the move is completed. Dr. Dougherty asked what's this estimated time so she can talk to her maintenance and technology department. Mrs. Suey responded with she is unsure because she wanted to discuss this at today's meeting to see if anyone had any issues before moving forward. She will continue to update everyone in her Friday updates and as soon as she has a projected date she will let everyone know. Dr. Dougherty said she will work with NPT on this and Mrs. Suey responded with thank you.

Dr. Doerr was informed about two weeks ago that Mt. Zion was touring our FACeS program and wanted to know how that went and the purpose of the tour. Dr. Dougherty responded that Travis Roundcount was trying to find ideas on how to serve those students in his district and he looked at the teachers in the program and the kids. Mt. Zion believes they can do something similar in their district. Dr. Doerr responded thank you.

OLD BUSINESS

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

Dr. Dougherty said that Mrs. Suey keeps putting these two agenda items on the agenda and Taylorville's stance has not changed. They still do not want to transfer or move any programs out of Taylorville.

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

See notes in the previous agenda item.

REPORTS

Director's Report

On January 7, 2021 NPT received a FOIA request from the Chicago Tribune regarding any agreements, finances and records that serve the law enforcement agencies. We do not have any such records, therefore Mrs. Suey responded that NPT does not have any documentation to report in regards to their FOIA request. She wanted to give a shout out to Katie Hilgert. Katie is piloting and partnering with the Nokomis High School counselor to implement a school wide suicide prevention program. They will be working with parents, students and families to screen all students and then implement interventions as appropriate. Mrs. Suey hopes that this will be very successful and we can do this with the other two school districts.

Since we are in phase 4 and some restrictions have lifted, Sabrina Jones and Mrs. Suey are going to be providing a combination of virtual and in-person CPI trainings. One of

Mrs. Suey's goals for next year is to offer more professional development for the districts. Lauren Assalley has a passion for learning as much as she can about learning disabilities and she will be offering a virtual professional development opportunity, hopefully in March, that will be available to all three districts. Mrs. Suey then shared some professional development opportunities that the NPT staff have been able to attend. She also provided each Superintendent with a caseload update. Mrs. Suey also sent out a NPT Second Semester Newsletter in January with reminders and tips for IEP meetings, policies and procedures and a few things that needed cleaned up based on some conversations with ISBE. She has received great feedback from this newsletter, has seen some changes already be made, and thinks we are off to a good start for the second semester.

Dr. Doerr asked Mrs. Suey where we are with the amended joint agreement. Mrs. Suey responded that Nokomis and Pana have approved it and she believes it is to be on the agenda for Taylorville's February board meeting, but she believes that according to our joint agreement, since we do have 2/3 signatures, we can move forward with becoming our own fiscal agent. She also said she will share the signature page with Dr. Dougherty so that all signatures are on the same page.

Program Coordinator/Transition Report

Mrs. Sabrina Jones reported for DHS, we have 11 out of 10 outcomes. She has reached out to DHS/STEP to amend our contract to 25 outcomes. We currently have 25 students who have filled out their packets and are 'eligible". 11 of those students are current outcomes and 7 of those students are working and will be additional outcomes. We currently have 30 students who have filled out their packets and are in the "Referral Process". 8 of those students are working and would be additional potential outcomes.

Mrs. Jones continued by giving an update that \$47,250 has been received from the STEP grant. She also reported that DHS Covid-19 surveys are back. They started back up again on December 15th and it will run until June. So far we have received an additional \$16,350 from the COVID-19 surveys.

As the Program Coordinator, Mrs. Jones has reviewed 282 IEPs so far this school year. Special Education staff in all three Districts are working hard to continue to stay in compliance and some changes have been made that ISBE recommended. As Mrs. Suey discussed, they will be working with the school districts to schedule and start trainings for CPI and is excited to be a part of this.

Business Manager Report

Dee Tarter first thanked the bookkeepers from each school district on getting the Excess Cost reports to her by the deadline she had set. This allowed for any changes that needed to be made and they will all be turned in by Friday the 29th. She then continued to give an update on where NPT is with becoming their own fiscal agent. We have been approved as a 501(c)(3),

have a FEIN number, have a RCDT code, are tax exempt with the state of Illinois, registered with the Social Security Administration, and purchased SDS for payroll/financial software. We are currently working with IMRF, TRS, and creating a GATA account, but cannot move forward until the amended joint agreement is approved and signed. We have also set up a meeting with Bushue for February 4th. In the future we will register NPT with the state of Illinois, set up our own "stand-alone" bank account, set up health, dental and vision insurances (this will have to be agreed upon by the NPT board in the future), purchase property, workmans comp, and liability insurances, creating a Duns account, and look into NSN Employer Services Inc. Dee also noted that if they are not able to find a competitive health, dental or vision insurance, NPT can join one of the member Districts' plans and we can strike property insurance off the list since the move to the Lake Land facility was discussed and approved.

Mr. Bauer commented that if we do decide to go with Bushue, they will assist in securing bids for possible health, workmans comp, and liability insurances. This is one of the things you are paying for when you utilize their services.

Dr. Doerr wanted to let everyone know that he received a phone call because he has negotiated special education legislation in the past, that there is a special education bill to extend special education to students until the age of 22 years old. If a student turns 22 during the school year, Districts will be required to continue their education until the end of that school year. He has been asked to negotiate the bill along with the sponsor of the bill and some interest groups and asked if anyone has any feedback, questions, concerns or ideas to please share those with him. Dr. Dougherty commented that the most obvious is the unfunded mandate and Dr. Doerr commented that's correct.

CLOSED SESSION

The meeting did not move into a closed session.

MOVE TO ADJOURN AT 9:02 am.

Motion by Doerr, and seconded by Bauer to adjourn the meeting. Bauer - YEA, Doerr - YEA, Dougherty- YEA. Motion passed.

Dr. Chris Dougherty, President

Dr. Scott Doerr, Secretary