

**LASALLE/PUTNAM COUNTY EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION**  
**1009 Boyce Memorial Drive Ottawa, IL 61350**  
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**Open Meeting Minutes**

Date: April 5, 2022

Time: 9:02 a.m.

Location: L.E.A.S.E. Office Board Room

Type of meeting:  Regular

Name of person taking the minutes: Colleen Stefan

Name of person presiding: Dr. Jodi Moore

Members in attendance:

1. Dr. Mike Cushing
2. Mr. Ryan Linnig
3. Dr. Jodi Moore
4. Dr. Lisa Parker
5. Mr. Michael Pillion

Members absent:

1. Mr. Jamie Craven
2. Mrs. Kristi Eager

Also present

1. Mrs. Kathy Fox, Director

**Reception of Guests and Visitors & Opportunity for Public Comment**

None

**Approval of Items on Consent Agenda (Open Session Minutes and Closed Session Minutes from the Board meeting held on March 1, 2022; February 2022 Bank Reconciliation; Bills and Financial Reports).**

Summary of discussion: All information was included in the board packets. An additional bill list was emailed out all board members prior to today's meeting.

Motion made by: Mr. Linnig

Motion:  To approve the open session minutes and the closed session minutes from the board meeting held on March 1, 2022, to approve the February 2022 bank reconciliation report, the bills and the financial reports.

Motion seconded by: Mr. Pillion

Roll Call: "Yeas" – Linnig, Pillion, Cushing, Moore and Parker.

"Nays" – none.

Action:  Passed

**Remaining Agenda Items**

**Agenda item: Approve the 2022-2023 Agreement with Peru Public Schools to provide breakfast and lunch for C.B.S. Students.**

Summary of discussion: Mrs. Fox told the board that Circuit Breaker will see a small increase in the price of the meals due to rising costs in food and distribution. The new cost is \$.30-.35 cents more than last year. Breakfast will cost \$1.65 for all grades, up from \$1.50 last year.

Motion made by: Dr. Cushing

Motion:  to approve the 2022-2023 agreement with Peru Public Schools to provide breakfast and lunch to C.B.S. students

Motion seconded by: Mr. Pillion

Roll Call "Yeas" – Cushing, Pillion, Linnig, Moore and Parker.

"Nays" – none.

Action:  Passed

**Agenda item: Approve agreement with Embrace to provide Medicare Fee for Service Claiming**

Summary of discussion: Mrs. Fox shared her concerns with the current Medicaid Fee for Service Claiming service, Hawthorn and Associates. The current structure of payments to the districts was explained. The Medicaid fee for service funds flow-through the cooperative. The money comes into the cooperative and is distributed to the districts after their fees have been deducted for Hawthorn and Associates service. The money is held until the checks are approved by the board. L.E.S.E. then pays Hawthorn and Associates the fees for the entire cooperative. Mrs. Fox would like the funds to go directly to the schools eliminating the cooperative as the middle man. Districts would receive their funds in a more timely fashion. The Embrace platform has many features to support the districts that Hawthorn does not. In addition, Embrace charges less- 5% compared to the current 6% fee. In addition, Medicaid changes are forthcoming in July and IAASE is helping with prepping districts for this. Hawthorn is not taking steps to prepare for this until changes get closer to implementation. Embrace will provide seven training at the beginning of the school year along with access to online trainings.

Motion made by: Mr. Linnig

Motion:  to approve the 2022-2023 agreement with Embrace as our provider for Medicare Fee for Service Claiming.

Motion seconded by: Dr. Parker

Roll Call "Yeas" – Linnig, Parker, Cushing, Moore and Pillion

"Nays" – none.

Action:  Passed

**Agenda item: Approve the resignations of staff**

Summary of discussion: Mrs. Fox shared resignation letters submitted to the board from Mark Sweet and Kim Snell. Mr. Sweet requested that his last day be May 31, 2022, while Ms. Snell's last day will be April 22, 2022. Mr. Sweet is our maintenance director at the L.E.A.S.E. central office and Ms. Snell is a secretary at Circuit Breaker School.

Motion made by: Dr. Cushing

Motion:  to accept the resignation of Mark Sweet as of May 31, 2022 and Kim Snell as of April 22, 2022.

Motion seconded by: Mr. Pillion

Roll Call: "Yeas" – Cushing, Pillion, Linnig, Moore and Parker  
"Nays" – none.

Action:  Passed

### **Adjourn to Closed Meeting**

Date: April 5, 2022

Time: 9:13 a.m.

Location: L.E.A.S.E. Office Board Room

A motion was made by Mr. Pillion

Motion:  To adjourn to closed meeting to discuss the Collective Bargaining matters between the Alliance and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees and for the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the Alliance or legal counsel for the Alliance, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the Alliance to determine its validity.

Motion seconded by: Mr. Linnig

Roll Call: "Yeas" – Pillion, Linnig, Cushing, Moore and Parker  
"Nays" – none.

Action:  Passed

Time of adjournment of closed meeting and return to open meeting: 9:24 a.m.

### **Motion to Return to Open Meeting**

Motion made by: Dr. Cushing

Motion:  To return to Open Meeting

Motion seconded by: Dr. Parker

Roll Call: "Yeas" – Cushing, Parker, Linnig, Moore and Pillion  
"Nays" – none.

Action:  Passed

### **Anticipated Action items**

#### **Agenda item: Approve resolution related to the employment of staff**

Summary of discussion: As discussed in Closed Session

Motion made by: Mr. Pillion

Motion:  to approve the following resolution

WHEREAS a vacancy exists for a Speech Language Pathologist to serve Grand Ridge Grade School (three days a week) and Tonica Elementary (two days a week) for the 2022-23 school year and...

WHEREAS a suitable and fully qualified applicant has now been found for this position,  
Therefore be it . . .

RESOLVED to employ Kimberly Kaschke for the 2022-2023 school year at a salary of  
\$58,610.

Motion seconded by: Mr. Linnig

Roll Call: “Yeas” – Pillion, Linnig, Cushing, Moore and Parker

“Nays” – none.

Action:  Passed

Summary of discussion: as discussed in closed session

Motion made by: Mr. Linnig

Motion:  to approve the following resolution

WHEREAS a vacancy exists for a School Psychologist Intern to serve LEASE and its  
member districts for the 2022-23 school year and...

WHEREAS a suitable and fully qualified applicant has now been found for this position,  
therefore be it . . .

RESOLVED to employ Lauren Tomasson for the 2022-2023 school year at a stipend of  
\$16,000.

Motion seconded by: Mr. Pillion

Roll Call: “Yeas” – Linnig, Pillion, Cushing, Moore and Parker

“Nays” – none.

Action:  Passed

**Agenda item: Approve the retirement request resolution for Susan May**

Summary of discussion: As discussed in Closed Session

Motion made by: Mr. Linnig

Motion:  Adopt the resolution for retirement request from staff

WHEREAS After 34 years of service to the L.E.A.S.E. Cooperative, Mrs. Susan May has  
officially indicated her intent to retire on June 30, 2025, and...

WHEREAS Susan May is requesting the Executive Committee consider a 6% increase in  
creditable compensation for each of the periods of July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024, and July 1,  
2024 through June 30, 2025, therefore be it formally...

RESOLVED to approve a 6% increase to creditable earnings on July 1, 2023 and July 1,  
2024 and to accept Mrs. May formal notification of pending retirement as a formal letter of  
resignation as of April 5, 2022.

Motion seconded by: Mr. Pillion

Roll Call: “Yeas” – Linnig, Pillion, Cushing, Moore and Parker

“Nays” – none.

Action:  Passed

### **Agenda Item: Approve salary for Executive Director for FY23**

Summary of Discussion: As discussed in Closed Session

Motion made by: Dr. Cushing

Motion:  To approve a 6% increase in pay for FY23 for Mrs. Fox

Motion seconded by: Mr. Linnig

Roll Call: “Yeas” – Cushing, Linnig, Moore, Parker and Pillion

“Nays” - none

### **Information Items**

#### **Circuit Breaker Monthly Report**

Mrs. Fox shared with the board that the C.B.S. report was included in the board packets. There was one incident where police were involved and one major incident on the bus. Mrs. Fox announced that there was one new student that started in March, with two student inquiries for placement. There are three grade levels that have waiting lists, and they include the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades.

Mrs. Fox informed the board that the C.B.S. floor project is going slower than expected, as there are supply issues. The project will be completed during the winter break of 2022. Mrs. Fox completed the grant (offered through the LaSalle County Board), has submitted it and is waiting while it is currently being reviewed. Once approved, these funds will be used to replace the HVAC system. The grant is for \$1.65 million.

#### **Review Preliminary budget amendment for FY22**

Mrs. Fox shared the preliminary F22 budget amendment information. The FY 22 budget amendment hearing is scheduled for the May meeting, with the FY 23 budget hearing scheduled for the June meeting.

#### **Review of Central Office Coordinator calendar for 2022-2023**

A copy of the coordinator calendar was included in your packet. Mrs. Fox announced the start-up day would be Aug. 1, 2022. Mrs. Fox explained that the calendar is geared to have coordinators available to provide services when districts are back in session. It was also mentioned that days for autism training is included in the schedule in June of 2023.

#### **L.E.A.S.E. Office and Circuit Breaker summer hours**

This is an annual memo that is sent out to member districts in early May. The offices will be open from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. starting Tuesday, May 31, 2022. The offices will be closed on Fridays. The offices will resume normal hours starting on Monday, August 8, 2022.

**L.E.A.S.E. / V.O.I.C.E. / Legislative / I.S.B.E. / Medicaid recent initiatives**

- a. Mrs. Fox updated the board that details on the lawsuit filed on by Equip for Equality (Vs. LEASE/Wallace/Ottawa High School) seem to change daily. Mrs. Fox reminded the board that the lawsuit stems in part from the lack of communication from the detention home to the schools that special education services are needed for detainees. Currently there is no system in place.

ISBE is working with L.E.A.S.E. and the schools and is asking Equip for Equality for the State complaint to be dropped. Equip for Equality is requesting a meeting in the upcoming weeks to ensure the complaint doesn't stall. Chris Dvorak, R.O.E. #35 Executive Director, is involved in providing a curriculum for the detention home. Discussion was held on different issues the detention home is having with offering special education services to detainees. Issues include who is teaching the students and the methods being used to do so. Other issues included the issues with the LaSalle county Detention Homes handbook.

- b. Mrs. Fox announced that care packages are being delivered today to students at Circuit Breaker School for spring break.
- c. Mrs. Fox informed the board that a new program called Canvas Kids has been implemented here at the central office. Art work from a variety of different special education students will now be displayed at the office and students are eligible to receive \$10 gift cards. The artwork is displayed at the front entrance area.
- d. Mrs. Fox also passed out to the board members an example of a School Psychologist Scholarship and Employment Agreement and asked the board to consider a possibility of paying for two years of tuition for school psychology majors if they agree to work with L.E.A.S.E. for a certain period of time.

**Approval of Motion to Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn made by: Mr. Lining

Motion seconded by Dr. Cushing

Voice vote: Yeas all

Nayes none

Action:  Passed

Time of adjournment: 9:49 a.m.

**Post Meeting Action**

Date minutes approved: May 2, 2022

Date minutes were available for public inspection: May 2, 2022

Date minutes were posted on Alliance website: May 2, 2022