

REGIONAL EDUCATION COOPERATIVE VII

April Williams, Executive Director
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MINUTES

A Regular Meeting of the REC VII Board of Directors was held at the REC 7 Board Room on September 12, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Brian Snider, President
Gene Strickland, Vice President
Greg Slover, Secretary-Absent
Bruce Hatch, Member
Pam Quinones, Member
April Williams, Executive Director/REC VII
Pat Jaco, Director of Finance/REC VII-Absent

Guests: Gaylon Selman (Proxy), Tatum Municipal Schools

The meeting was called to order @ 10:00 a.m. by Mr. Snider.

AGENDA

Motion by Mr. Strickland for approval of Consideration of Agenda (09/12/2024); motion unanimously carried.

MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Strickland to approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting (08/08/2024); motion unanimously carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Motion by Mr. Hatch for approval of Entitlement, Preschool, Title II, Medicaid, REC Operational, Pre-K, and State Directed Activities (August 2024)

BRUCE HATCH
Superintendent
Eunice Public Schools

GENE STRICKLAND
Superintendent
Hobbs Municipal Schools

BRIAN SNIDER
Superintendent
Jal Public Schools

GREG SLOVER
Superintendent
Tatum Municipal Schools

**CONSIDERATION OF
APPROVAL OF INCREASE
BAR FOR FUND 24109**

Motion by Mr. Strickland for approval of Increase Bar for Fund 24109 to establish an initial budget for 24-25; motion unanimously carried.

**CONSIDERATION OF
APPROVAL OF INCREASE
BAR FOR FUND 24106**

Motion by Mr. Strickland for approval of Increase Bar for Fund 24106 to establish an initial budget for 24-25; motion unanimously carried.

**CONSIDERATION OF
APPROVAL OF RFP FOR
1 TO1 FRIENDSHIP
IGA#25-924-000166**

Motion by Mr. Strickland for approval of RFP for 1 To 1 Friendship Grant IGA#25-924-000166; motion unanimously carried.

**CONSIDERATION OF
APPROVAL OF INCREASE
BAR FOR FUND 27200
1 TO 1 FRIENDSHIP**

Motion by Mr. Strickland for approval of Increase Bar for Fund 27200 1 To 1 Friendships to establish an initial budget for 24-25 1 To 1 Friendship; motion unanimously carried.

SUPERINTENDENT DISCUSSION:

Executive Session

A. Limited Personnel Item-Executive Director

Time: 10:16 a.m.

Motion: Mr. Strickland

Second: Mr. Snider

Roll Call Vote: yes

B. Return to Regular Session

Time: 10:38 a.m.

Motion: Mr. Strickland

Second: Mr. Hatch

Roll Call Vote: yes

C. Action In Executive Session

No action taken

**CONSIDERATION OF THE
EXECUTIVE SESSION
RECOMMENDATION**

Motion by Mr. Strickland for approval of the Executive Session recommendation; no action taken, motion unanimously carried.

INFORMATION:

Executive Director Discussion:

1. Medicaid Information for August 2024.
2. ECLIPSE IGA-The REC7 has an IGA for the ECLIPSE program which involves the provision of literacy trainings for both parents and teachers. This past summer a meeting was held with a staff member for OSE regarding a submittal of a financial proposal to be considered for a new year for this program. REC7 submitted a proposal based on past figures as well as the needs stated by contractors in order to be effective. On August 27, 2024 we received a draft IGA from the OSE with significant changes including number of trainings as well as the allowable costs for supplies needed for the training. This raised concerns not only from the contractors involved in the implementation of this program but REC7 as well. The email stated that the draft would be discussed with Dr. Cage and to submit any questions. The contractors as well as REC7 submitted questions which were proved with responses; however, I requested a meeting. A meeting was held on Friday, September 6, 2024. Rec7 as well as the contractors met with OSE in order to continue discussion regarding the IGA. We were told that this is a new IGA with focus on the districts rather than schools and that districts receiving the training would be determined by OSEP. They want a program of sustainability. We do not have that list available at this time. Also, the districts eligible for the trainings would be considered based on low reading proficiency data. They have also included PRO (Parents Reaching Out) as having access to the contractor's materials and putting training kits together which is extremely time consuming and not a component on the previous contract. They have also requested monthly virtual literacy modeling to be uploaded onto the OSE website and made available for the parents. The contractors are also required to present their materials and content to OSE prior to initiating any trainings. We do not have a fully executed contract at this time.
3. RECA Meeting with OSE-RECA directors had their quarterly meeting with the Office of Special Education which was scheduled to be held in person at Region 9 in Ruidoso on August 20, 2024. The meeting was held through ZOOM as RECA was notified that the OSE required an agenda 15 days prior to an event in order to have travel approved. Jessica Dinsmore, Education Administrator Support Specialist, provided information regarding submission of training information prior to professional development scheduled to be paid with SLA funds, The OSE is creating a Professional Development Bank which will comprise approved vendors for trainings, and it will be made accessible. This list will be a tiered list and the vendors will be vetted. The trainings must align with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). If the presentation is "on behalf of the Office of Special Education" it must be approved by submitting the material 30 days prior to the training. Within 10 days of this notification the OSE will provide recommendations after review of the materials. The agency submitting proposal has up to 5 days to complete required revisions. Within 3 days of this review the OSE will notify the agency with approval status. The RECA directors indicated that they will all plan to attend the quarterly OSE meeting in person on November 12, 2024. The meeting will be held here in Hobbs on November 12th.
4. Academic Competition-At the previous board meeting we briefly discussed the continuance of the Academic Competition regionally. Everyone agreed that districts with interest would provide funding for those involved. I was able to get in touch with Jose Mares, Director of CTECH, who coordinated the competitions during the 2 years they were held under the tech grant. In your folders there is a sheet with specifics regarding costs as it stood under the grant. As far as stipends are concerned, those can also be determined according to an increment salary schedule. For example, stipend amounts such as those offered to coaches or after school activities coordinators. Jose also made a recommendation for

an Academic Competition Coordinator as well as stating that he felt that the competitions could be held at CTECH, depending on dates, etc. In addition, Jose reported that he has questions, which can be used for practice sessions. The following were dates when competitions were held at CTECH during 2023-2024 school year:

- A. October 25
- B. December 6
- C. February 21
- D. March 5-State Competition

Once the coordinator is designated then contacts can be made with previous coaches as well as new coaches in order to determine dates, etc.

5. Hard to Staff Pay Differentials-This project was presented by the OSE during the Secretary Call on August 22, 2024. In addition, it was presented during a NMRECA directors' meeting on August 20, 2024. Dr. Cage and staff presented a project where the RECs would be given \$500,000 each. The Hard To Staff Pay Differential initiative aims to offer financial incentives to attract and retain certified special education teachers to positions that have been vacant, difficult to fill or have experienced high turnover. Stipends of \$10,000 will be give to certified teachers, \$5,000 in the fall and \$5,000 in the spring. The fiscal management of the project would be handled by each REC. The directors requested a meeting with Dr. Cage and her staff regarding concerns about self-employment taxes, potential IRS audit, ERB, etc. Bryan Dooley did the research on behalf of the RECs and presented at the OSE meeting. There were negative tones noted during the meeting. Several RECs including his own region have opted out of the project after speaking to their boards. Is there any interest from this region?

Additional Information Items:

It was brought to my attention that ECECD posted new requirements for NM PreK Administrators, teachers, long-term subs and educational assistants. One requirement that was significant is that educational assistants are now required to complete 41 hours of specific professional training...along with obtaining 6 college hours/semester. There was not notification specifically regarding these updates. This region in supposedly under realignment and has been informed to adhere to NM PreK standards and requirements. I requested a meeting which took place on Monday, September 9, 2024. They did state that the requirement has changed and this information was not provided at the PreK administration meeting. Your PreK administrators were informed.

In your folders there is an email from Bryan Dooley regarding joining a consortium Equity Council with Region 9 member districts. The district specifically addressed is Eunice. There could be fees involved if Eunice agrees to join their Equity Council (\$5,000 annually). There was also an option of the REC7 to join to represent them and there would be no charge. There were three districts in Region 6 who were also addressed in which they expressed that they have it covered. What would be the benefit of a district joining the consortium? More information in this needs to be gathered.

I was contacted by Renee Kinsey regarding Edgenuity renewal is coming up on 10/1/24. Do you all want to go with EdgeEX that they talked about when they came to our meeting? It is my understanding that Lovington did go with EdgeEX this year. Would we want to do a 2- or 3-year contract and save a little?

There is information in your folders for upcoming CES Regional Meeting in Carlsbad on September 17, 2024 from 9-1. In addition, there are flyers in your folders regarding TAP opportunities through CES.

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There is information in your folders regarding a Professional Development Tour provided by the Office of Special Education. Hobbs will now be a location in the place of Artesia on the schedule provided. The OSE called me this past Friday and asked if I could secure a location. The resource fair will take place at the Training Center in Hobbs on the evening of October 28, 2024 and professional development all day on October 29, 2024. I have a meeting scheduled tomorrow morning through ZOOM with OSE. I do not know specifics at this time except for the information provided on the handout in your folder. If you would like for me to set up a table to represent districts, I will be glad to do that or you may register your own district to provide an individual representation.

The University of the Southwest is having a Career Mixer to be held on Tuesday, October 8, 2024. Earlier in the year I made a proposal to the board to represent those of our districts who are interested in representation at job fairs. I will be happy to register and have a REC7 table. I will need SWAG or flyers from districts interested and will be happy to go out to the districts and get those.

DASH-I am trying to get more information regarding DASH and a window for reviewer certification. I have reached out to Connie Copeland and have not received a response at this time. It was my understanding that districts were required to have an internal reviewer; however, I will be happy to move forward with reviewing if this has changed. Bruce Hatch requested that I review his DASH plans.

Our audit was completed and the review is scheduled for September 24, 2024 at 1:00, and Brian will attend.

Upcoming Trainings/Events

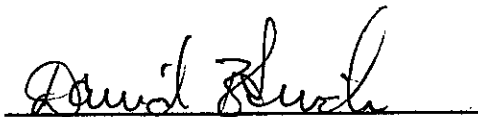
- A. Regional School Board Meeting. September 23, 2024-Tatum 5:30
- B. NMREC Directors Fall Meeting October 1, 2024 9:00-4:00 Espanola, NM
- C. Legal Counsel Call October 8, 2024
- D. October 9, 2024 Session 1 AIM In Person 8:30-3:30 Maddox Foundation
- E. October 30, 2024 Lea County Transition Meeting 1:00 REC7
- F. Secretary Call October 19, 2024 9:00
- G. NM Association of Elementary School Principals October 21-22, 2024 Albuquerque
- H. Next REC7 Board Meeting Scheduled for October 10, 2024

ADJOURN: There being no further business, the Regular Board Meeting of 09/12/2024 was adjourned at 11:15 a.m., motioned by Mr. Strickland; motion unanimously carried.



April Williams

REC VII Executive Director



Brian Snider

REC VII Board President