The regular council meeting of the Gallatin-Madison Special Education Cooperative was held via GoToMeeting on December 16, 2021 for the purpose of considering business to come before the Council. Chair, Katherine Dawe, presided over the meeting.

1. **Call to Order**

Katherine Dawe called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

Members Present

- **Amsterdam**—Katherine Dawe; **Anderson**—Kristi Jacobs; **Big Sky**—Dustin Shipman;
- **Ennis**—Casey Klasna; **Gallatin Co. Supt.**—Matthew Henry(1:18pm);
- **Gallatin Gateway**—Theresa Keel; **Harrison**—Billi Taylor; **Monforton**—Darren Strauch;
- **West Yellowstone**—Brian Smith

Members Absent:

- **LaMotte**—LeeAnn Burke; **Willow Creek**—Bonnie Lower

Visitors:

None

2. **Public Comments**

None

3. **Consent Agenda**

Approval of

Motion to approve the minutes of November 18, 2021 as well as expenditures

Minutes & Expenditures

(#317273; #317275-#317295)

Motion: Darren Strauch
Second: Casey Klasna
- Passed Unanimously.

4. **New Business**

   a.) **Business Manager Report:** (Informational)

Reports were received for September from the Gallatin County Finance Department on Friday, December 10th and have been reconciled with the Cooperative books. Joyce provided the reconciled cash totals by fund for September as well as tentative cash totals for October & November.

Grant reports for IDEA-B and IDEA-Preschool Incentive through November have been submitted to OPI and approved. Payment for the October and November requests were sent to the Gallatin County Treasurer on December 8th per the OPI E-grant system. The ESSER I grant request for November was delayed as we were awaiting approval for a budget amendment. That amendment has been approved by OPI and the November request was
submitted earlier this week. The IDEA-B/ARP and IDEA-PIG/ARP grant totals are as previously reported—20% must be used for COVID-19 related expenditures & the entire award must be expended by September 30, 2024. We are in the process of determining the account code strings & making changes to the C & C accounting package for these grants.

The external audit FY 2020-21 notice was published per state statute in the Bozeman Daily Chronicle on Sunday, December 12th. Also, the cooperative received notification that the audit deficiencies & corrective actions identified in the audit have been accepted by the state.

Joyce reported that the annual MAC portal cost doubled for the current fiscal year. Per School Services of Montana, they received COVID dollars last year & the decision of their Board was to decrease costs to their customers by reducing the rate from $5 to $2.50. The portal access quantity remained unchanged at 185. The invoice was paid in December.

Expenditures fiscal year to date [FYTD] are as expected through November. The expenditure comparison report provided a few items that were highlighted. The variances of note included a timing issue in Medicaid involving reimbursement from member districts; a vehicle purchase in the prior fiscal year; the Governor’s CRF grant that had to be expended entirely by December 30, 2020; & the ESSER I grant that has a small amount yet to be expended by September 30, 2022.

b.) Director’s Report: (Informational)

Michelle provided a review of the updated Special Education Guidelines in Special Education that was sent to each administrator and special education staff (i.e. District and Co-op). She provided an in-depth description on the meaning of FAPE in special education and how specialized instruction/special education and related services in the least restrictive learning environment are calculated to meet the definition of “appropriate” under the Endrew F. standard, “In determining the scope of FAPE the Supreme Court reinforced that ‘every student should have the chance to meet challenging objectives.’. Simply put, we continue to assume competence, deeply understand abilities, promote learning strengths and remove barriers from each student’s path.

The focus on MTSS continues for the Co-op staff. Michelle asked each administrator to invite their building SLP and OT to provide a short presentation during staff meeting (i.e. elementary) on their roles and how they support this problem solving process up to the point of pre-referral under IDEA. She will be reaching out to administrators specifically to promote this opportunity.

Each district has received instructions to prepare for the State Compliance Monitoring conducted virtually February 7-11, 2022. Michelle and Lani will be working with Case Managers directly to prepare and return necessary forms by January 24th.

Goalbook region facilitator, Logan Janicula, Lani and Michelle met to review Goalbook utilization by Special Education Case Managers. Given this information and Michelle’s IEP reviews, projections for another Goalbook training session will be designed. Like many other tools that support special educators, it seems the staff who already deeply understand the connection between documentation and implementation will attend this type of training and the ones who are struggling do not and do not utilize this valuable tool. In addition, utilization will inform the development of a contract for next year with Goalbook and at some point may be something member districts have to share in the cost.
c.) Personnel Committee: (Informational)

The search process for Special Education Director was discussed by Chairperson Katherine Dawe and Michelle. The personnel committee includes Supt. Dawe, Supt. Klasna, and Supt. Shipman. They are inviting Co-op staff to participate directly in the interview process and this includes Shannon Childs (SLP), Jennifer Lewis (O.T.) and Joyce Schmidt (Business Manager/Clerk). The vacancy notice, application and job description will be posted on multiple websites by Kaitlin Sonderer, Montana Schools Recruitment Project Program Director. Michelle will also send it out to the MCASE/Special Education listservs. The GMSEC website will be updated the first week of January to include an “employment opportunities” tab where positions will be posted and application packets available from here forward, including the current Director position, potential S.T. and School Psychologist positions for 2022-2023.

6. Board Meeting Schedule & Future Agenda Items:
   - January 20th In Person at ANDERSON SCHOOL District
   - February 17th
   - March
   - April 21st
   - May 19th
   - June 16th In Person

7. Adjourn

   Motion to adjourn meeting at 2:08 pm.

   Motion: Brain Smith
   Second: Darren Strauch -Passed Unanimously.

Submitted by: _______________________________ Date: ________________

Board Chair: _______________________________ Date: ________________