Gallatin-Madison Special Education Cooperative
Regular Council Meeting
4/17/2025

The Regular Council meeting of the Gallatin-Madison Special Education Cooperative was held via Google Meet on April 17, 2025 for the purpose of considering business to come before the Council. Chair, Kristi Jacobs, presided over the meeting.

1. Call to Order

Kristi Jacobs called the meeting to order at 9:01am.

Members Present

- [x] **Amsterdam**– Marisa Stewart;
- [x] **Anderson–** Kristi Jacobs;
- [ ] **Big Sky**–Dustin Shipman;
- [x] **Ennis–** Jared Moretti;
- [x] **Gallatin Co. Supt.–** John Nielson;
- [ ] **Gateway**–Kelly Henderson;
- [ ] **Harrison**–Stephanie Stephans, Designated Harrison Board Representative
- [ ] **LaMotte**– Spencer Johnson;
- [x] **Monforton–** Laura Axtman;
- [x] **West Yellowstone**– Kevin Flannigan;
- [x] **Willow Creek–** Bonnie Lower

Visitors: None

2. Public Comments None

Staff Present: Lani Smith, Director; Joyce Schmidt, Clerk & Business Manager; Riley Russell, Executive Assistant Kim Wegner-Mccauley, School Psychologist/Special Education Coordinator

Staff Absent: None

3. Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes & Expenditures	a.	Approval of February 20, 2025 GMSEC Board Meeting Minutes
	b.	Approval of expenditures: #318071- #318101 (Feb & March)
	c.	Approval of Records Destruction: Resolution regarding record destruction in accordance with the State retention schedule. Resolution Number: 2025-01

Motion to approve mentioned minutes, expenditures, and record destruction.

Motion: Kevin Flannagan
Second: Laura Axtman **- Passed Unanimously.**

4. New Business:

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

The cash reconciliation totals by fund for January & February 2025 were provided to the Board as well as the tentative March totals.

Grant reimbursement requests for expenditures through March 2025 have been submitted to OPI for both the IDEA-B & Preschool Incentive grants. All submitted requests have been approved by OPI. Request 5 for both grants are reflected in the March tentative fund 315 total. Request 6 for both grants will be reflected in the April total. The co-op has expended the spending authority carryover from the previous FY & has been drawing on new dollars since January for the IDEA-B grant & November for the Preschool Incentive grant.

Regarding expenditures, the cooperative has not experienced any unanticipated material expenditures through March of this FY. Staffing continues to be our primary expenditure comprising 89% of our total FY budget leaving little opportunity for such an event.

Amsterdam SD continues to be invoiced for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing instructor personnel costs that total $4,305.07 through March. Amsterdam SD pays promptly & we thank them. The net effect to the co-op is zero as previously reported to the Board.

The primary differences between the two FYs in the Medicaid portion of fund 315 result from the vehicle purchase in November & paying the Amsterdam SD for their School Based IEP of $1,133.35. The remaining differences in fund 315 as well as 314 & 382 are due to changes in staff. As a result, the ongoing trend of expenditures being consistent with past years across all funds continues.

The co-op received the GMSEC Financial & Compliance Report for FY ended 06-30-2024 issued by Strom & Associates on March 17th. Per that report the 'Cooperative's records & accounting system are in a pass with no comments condition.' The Board was notified the publication notice & bound copy of the report would be submitted to the Bozeman Daily Chronicle as required by state law.

Participation Lists for the MAC Claiming [Random Moments] for all participating member districts were submitted by March 7th as required by the vendor. Joyce expressed a special thank you for each of the individuals selected to handle the MAC Claiming process for participating school districts—they did an admirable job learning the new system & inputting the SDs data. The vendor has moved forward as of April 1st with some SDs already having received Random Moment Time Studies. Joyce reminded the Board time studies must be completed within two business days to count in the study. Some participants have already had Random Moments that were not submitted within that time frame.

Training for completing the vendor's version of the Financial Data Report is expected near the end of the quarter. Per the vendor the window to complete the financial report opens July 1st & remains open for 30 days. Joyce or Riley will keep SDs updated as information becomes available.

b.) **<u>Board Proposal of STARS Act (HB252) requirements:</u>**

i. Business Manager/Clerk Job Description
(Motion/Discussion/Action)

The requirements of the STARS Act necessitated updating the Business Manager/Clerk Job Description to clearly include all items identified in the Act. These included expanding the bullet point under Cooperative Board Meetings; the addition of two bullet points under Other Duties; & expanding one bullet point under Financial Management.

Motion to approve Business Manager/Clerk Job Description.

Motion: Marisa Stewart
Second: Jared Moretti -Passed Unanimously.

ii. BA and MA Salary Matrices
(Motion/Discussion/Action)

Lani presented the BA & MA Salary Matrices adjusting for the minimum requirements of the Stars Act. Since the qualifying minimum salary changes each year based on the greater of a percentage of the previous FY average salary, or eleven times the Quality Educator Payment the lanes/steps that would not presently meet the requirement have been blocked out. This has been the recommendation through the MTSBA. It is expected that no present cooperative employees will require an adjustment until possibly year three to be in compliance with the Stars Act should it become law.

Motion to approve BA and MA Salary Matrices.

Motion: Kevin Flannagan
Second: Laura Axtman -Passed Unanimously.

iii. GMSEC Policy Update: Reading/Approval: 5505
(Motion/Discussion/Action)

Per Board Chairperson, Jacobs the recommendation is to have only one reading of the GMSEC policy change for Teacher base Pay Incentive Funding. In order to qualify for FY 2025-26 should the Stars Act be signed into law, the required elements must be in place before the May 15th deadline or the date the bill is signed if later than the 15th. The timeline is short & there are no extensions possible.

Motion to approve GMSEC Policy Update: Reading/Approval: 5505.

Motion: Jared Moretti
Second: Bonnie Lower -Passed Unanimously.

iv. Approval for Director to certify HB252 compliance.
(Motion/Discussion/Action)

Lani shared that with board approval, she will attest to this statement. She shared that it is her understanding that this will come in the form of a survey or check-box from OPI to certify the statement.

Motion to approve Director to certify HB252 compliance.

Motion: Marisa Stewart
Second: Kevin Flannigan -Passed Unanimously.

c.) **Purchase of Fleet Vehicle: Expenditure Authority <$30,000.**

(Motion/Discussion/Action)

The Director discussed this item previously but requested Board approval to move forward with the purchase of a new vehicle. The intention is to trade-in the oldest vehicle that is requiring increasing maintenance for one under the $30,000 price point.

Motion to approve purchase of Fleet Vehicle up to $30,000.

Motion: Jared Moretti
Second: -Passed Unanimously.

d.) **2025-2026 Personnel: Speech Language Pathologist Offer of Contracts:**
(Motion/Discussion/Action)

Lani reported that all the SLPs are planning to return for FY 2025-26. Amanda Massey is decreasing to 0.6 FTE & Aubrey McAtee, who is new this year will continue at the 0.6 FTE level.

Kristi asked if the cooperative has met its full need for FY 2025-26 or if another position(s) is/are needed. Lani confirmed there is need for an additional 1.0 FTE.

Amanda Massey: MA30/Level (l), 0.6 FTE

Amber Fortier: MA30/Level (h), 1.0 FTE

Aubrey McAtee: MA/Level (f), 0.6 FTE

Beginning this past January Aubrey moved up to 0.6 FTE with the resignation of Alyssa Mount.

Kaitlin Sonderer: MA30/Level (n), 0.2 FTE

Shannon Childs: MA60/Level (u), 1.0 FTE

Motion to offer contracts to listed Speech Language Pathologists.

Motion: Bonnie Lower
Second: Kevin Flannigan -Passed Unanimously.

e.) **<u>2025-2026 Personnel: Occupational Therapist Offer of Contracts:</u>**
(Motion/Discussion/Action)

Lani reported the need exists for one more day of OT in the West Yellowstone SD with Julie Painter not returning for the new FY. However, Julie has expressed interest in providing services one day per week at West Yellowstone through the Idaho company she will be employed with. Lani has been communicating with the director of that private company to learn if this would be a financially good solution. The question of additional charges was raised with the answer being there is a flat fee with no hidden charges & the services would be in-person not virtual.

Jennifer Lewis: MA60/Level (u), 1.0 FTE

Angela Holmes: BA75/Level (t), 0.8FTE +10 additional days

Angela was hired this FY & would be increasing to a 0.8 FTE with 10 additional days. The additional days result from the significant amount of travel required for her to reach our distant SDs.

Motion to offer contracts to listed Occupational Therapists.

Motion: Kevin Flannigan
Second: Jared Moretti -Passed Unanimously.

f.) **<u>2025-2026 Personnel: Special Ed. Teacher Offer of Contract:</u>**
(Motion/Discussion/Action)

Julia Tucker: BA/Level (g), 1.0 FTE

Motion to offer contract to Special Education Teacher.

Motion: Bonnie Lower
Second: Kevin Flannigan -Passed Unanimously.

g.) **<u>2025-2026 Personnel: Physical Therapist Offer of Contracts:</u>**
(Motion/Discussion/Action)

Megan Kemp: $65.56/hr (19 days, 150 hours.); .1 FTE

Caroline Rehder: $63.65/hr (38 days, 304 hours.); .2 FTE

Motion to offer contracts to Physical Therapists.

Motion: Jared Moretti
Second: Marisa Stewart -Passed Unanimously.

h.) **<u>2025-2026 Personnel: School Psychologist and Special Ed. Coordinator Offer of Contracts:</u>**
(Motion/Discussion/Action)

Jamie Greene: Ed.S/MA45/Level (h), 1.0 FTE, +10 additional days

Lani reported Jamie has two Pre-Kindergarten through High School assignments & the highest number of evaluations this school year. The additional days for both Jamie & Nicole allow them to have adequate time to complete paperwork & is appreciated by both employees.

Superintendent Flannigan asked what the number of days in a standard full time contract would be. Director Smith stated that 187 days is the cooperative standard full time employee number of days.

Nicole Bottsford-Miller: MA60/Level (t), .8 FTE, +5 additional days

Kristi Jacobs, Board Chairperson offered Nicole has been fantastic & Laura Axtman concurred–'good fit'.

Motion to offer contracts to School Psychologists and Special Ed. Coordinator.

Motion: Kevin Flannigan
Second: Laura Axtman -Passed Unanimously.

i.) **<u>2025-2026 Personnel: School Psychologist/Special Ed. Coordinator Offer of Contract:</u>**
(Motion/Discussion/Action)

Kim Wegner-McCauley: MA60/Level (p), 1.0 FTE, +10 additional days

Lani informed the Board that there were no changes to the proposed contract. The ten additional days account for administrative duties the Director would normally perform such as compliance & legal.

Juliana does overlap but may not return for FY 2025-26. Another individual is presently being considered should she not return.

Motion to offer contracts to School Psychologist/Special Ed. Coordinator.

Motion: Kevin Flannigan
Second: Bonnie Lower -Passed Unanimously.

4. Board Meeting Schedule: **Projected 2024-2025 Third Thursday of the Month (Zoom/In-Person) *no less than 5 meetings per year**

Per Board Chairperson, Kristi Jacobs, Laura Axtman, Board member will serve as the Chairperson for remainder of the current FY & for FY 2025-26.

a. May 22nd-Virtual at 9:00am

Director Smith will tentatively plan for the budget discussion for FY 2025-26.

b. June 19th In Person at 11:00am-(In Person), Location TBD

Board members discussed the possibility of holding the meeting virtually or changing the date to the 18th with Monforton SD serving as host. Board members decided to move forward with holding the meeting at Monforton SD on the 18th.

5. Adjourn: Motion to adjourn meeting at 9:38a.m.

Motion: Bonnie Lower
Second: Marisa Stewart **-Passed Unanimously.**

Submitted by: ______________________________ Date: ________________

Board Chair: ______________________________ Date: ________________