

Gallatin-Madison Special Education Cooperative
Regular Council Meeting
6/25/2025

The Regular Council meeting of the Gallatin-Madison Special Education Cooperative was held via Google Meet on June 25, 2025 for the purpose of considering business to come before the Council. Chair, Laura Axtman, presided over the meeting.

1. Call to Order

Laura Axtman called the meeting to order at 11:02am.

Members Present

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

Visitors: None

2. Public Comments None

Staff Present Lani Smith, Director; Joyce Schmidt, Clerk & Business Manager; Riley Russell, Executive Assistant;

Staff Absent Kim Wegner-Mccauley, School Psychologist/Special Education Coordinator

3. Consent Agenda

Approval of a. Approval of May 22, 2025 GMSEC Board Meeting Minutes
Minutes & b. Approval of expenditures: #318128-318213(June)
Expenditures

Motion to approve minutes and expenditures.

Motion: Spencer Johnson
Second: Kevin Flannigan

- Passed Unanimously.

4. New Business:

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

(Informational)

Joyce provided the reconciled cash numbers by fund for April & May with tentative numbers for June. The June reports are not expected until mid July at the earliest but the numbers provide an approximation of totals to end the FY.

Reimbursement requests have been submitted to OPI through the e-grant system for IDEA-B & Preschool Incentive Grants for costs incurred through June 20th, the cutoff date to receive payment before the end of the current FY. Any reimbursable costs paid between June 21st & June 30th will be submitted to OPI at month end but payment will not be received until August. Joyce reported the remaining spending authority for both grants is a close approximation of what may be expected as reallocation totals at the end of the Federal FY.

Joyce reminded the Board that expenditures were reported through May at the previous Board meeting but updated them on the Deaf & Hard of Hearing Instruction costs for June. The invoice for those costs was submitted to the Amsterdam School District prior to the Board meeting. Also, earlier in the week the Amsterdam School District was reimbursed for the IEP amounts sent directly to the GMSEC since January 1st in the amount of \$410.37.

The MAC claiming training that was originally reported by the new vendor as being expected during June has been changed to mid-July. Joyce will keep participating member school districts apprised of any additional information.

b.) **Purchase of Outgoing Director's Office Furniture for \$350**

(Motion/Discussion/Action)

When Lani stepped into the Director position she didn't realize that the Co-op would purchase the office furniture and bought her own. She does not have a use for it and would sell to the Co-op for the next Director to utilize.

Motion to purchase outgoing Director's office furniture.

Motion: Spencer Johnson

Second: John Nielson

-Passed Unanimously.

c.) **2025-2026 GMSEC Budget: Preliminary Approval**

(Motion/Discussion/Action)

The numbers for IDEA-B and Preschool Incentive Grant are still not out but should be around July. Lani used last year's numbers to get an idea but they will change. Fund 382 received a large bump due to the STARS Act. As of now they are all hard numbers except unemployment and Director Mentor. A lot is up in the air concerning Psych staff. As for contracted services, Shey is still waiting on state reports based on A & B but should have them soon.

Rock Creek Therapy has a virtual SLP that would charge about \$80/Hour. This is roughly double what the Co-op has been able to pay SLPs and is why the budget is so out of whack. Lani has not made a contract with them and is leaving that decision up to the next Director. It would be optimal if the Co-op could find a SLP that does not go through an agency. This would significantly cut costs but the problem is finding one. The only benefit of going through Rock Creek would be that they are well established and have a lot of experience so a lot of the kinks have been worked out. If we decided to go the virtual route with a SLP that we know there may be a learning curve and it might potentially be a rough start. Board inquired if it was possible to hire a virtual SLP and then have a Para or person at each school help with the in person. Lani believes that is possible but the only problem is a lot of the schools are short staffed for next year. Kylee will also be an option to help in person.

Motion to approve 2025-26 preliminary budget.

Motion: Kevin Flannigan

Second: Spencer Johnson

-Passed Unanimously.

d.) **2025-2026 Director of Special Education-Personnel Committee Recommendation**

(Motion/Discussion/Action)

The hiring committee met and interviewed 5 candidates in one day. Out of the five candidates two did not have all the qualifications but were interviewed anyway to see if they potentially could be a good fit. The committee agreed that Kim Wegner-McCauley would be the best candidate for the position and Juliana Robinson would be a great fit for the Special Education Coordinator position.

Motion to recommend Kim Wegner-McCauley as Special Education Director for the 2025-26 school year.

Motion: John Nielson

Second: Marisa Stewart

-Passed Unanimously

e.) **1st Offer of Contract: Director of Special Education for Kim Wegner-McCauley:** Salary \$92,000; 220-day contract, 12.69 days Vacation Leave, 10.152 days Sick Leave, and 5 Days of Discretionary Leave.

(Motion/Discussion/Action)

This contract mirror's Lani's previous contract.

Motion to offer Kim Wegner-McCauley a contract to be Director of Special Education for the 2025-26 school year.

Motion: Jared Moretti

Second: Spencer Johnson

-Passed Unanimously.

- f.) **2025-2026 Personnel: School Psychologist/Sped Coordinator:** 1st contract offer for Juliana Robinson: MA60/Level (p), up to 1.0 FTE equivalent

(Motion/Discussion/Action)

Juliana will be offered up to 1.0 FTE with the option to do less. She would get the national stipend plus an additional \$2,000 to take on the Special Education Coordinator position. It sounds like she is looking to work 4 days a week during the school year and is open to working during the summer. It was discussed offering 150 days (.8 FTE) with an additional 37 days used either at the beginning of the year, end of year, during breaks, or split up to add hours to each work day. She would keep track of it on Google calendar as has been done in the past. The Board was concerned that this may create a problem with other staff who may already be working more than the 8 hour day but don't have this stipulation built into their contracts. Lani believes it won't be an issue as adding additional days has already been done in the past and the staff have the option to flex some of their hours week to week. Laura will talk more about this with Juliana when she offers the contract.

Motion to offer Juliana Robinson a contract as School Psychologist/Sped Coordinator for the 2025-26 school year.

Motion: Kevin Flannigan

Second: Spencer Johnson

-Passed Unanimously.

- g.) **2025-2026 SLP-Para Offer of Contract:** 1st contract offer for Kylee Seigal: \$20.00/hr (1200 hrs., 150 days); .8 FTE equivalent; \$24,000

(Motion/Discussion/Action)

Kylee was the only applicant and interviewed a few weeks ago. She does not fall on the pay matrix because she is in the process of getting her degree so she would fall under classified staff. The pay of Para Educators at the Co-op's member schools as well as Kylee's current pay were taken into consideration when arriving at \$20/hour. She will get her SLP-A Degree at the end of the year and will be able to take on more. SLP-A can do everything a SLP can do except Evals

and IEP paperwork. She is a great option for right now and she could also be utilized in a different capacity in the future.

Motion to offer Kylee Seigal a contract as SLP-Para for the 2025-26 school year.

Motion: Spencer Johnson

Second: Jared Moretti

-Passed Unanimously.

h.) **2024-2025 Office Personnel Contract Amendments:**

(Motion/Discussion/Action)

Riley Russell: Contract amendment for Riley Russell: Executive Assistant: 34 additional hours @ \$20.96; equivalent to \$712.64

Joyce Schmidt: Contract amendment for Joyce Schmidt: Business Manager/Clerk: 72 additional hours @ \$25.85; equivalent to \$1,861.20

It was suggested by the Co-op's auditor to get board approval if they went over contracted hours. Additional hours were accumulated at the end of the year but most of the additional hours were due to being paid out for vacation leave.

Motion to amend Riley Russell and Joyce Schmidt's contracts.

Motion: Kevin Flannigan

Second: Spencer Johnson

-Passed Unanimously.

i.) **2025-2026 Personnel: Special Education Director Mentor: Lani Smith, On-call Special Education Director Mentor, \$418.10/day (up to 15 days); \$6,271.50**

(Motion/Discussion/Action)

This will be a great opportunity to help out Kim and Juliana with some direct support. Lani believes that it will be helpful to have a day each month to help with any questions they may have. All 15 days may not be needed. John stated that as long as there is room for it in the budget he thinks it is a great idea. Kevin stated that if Lani is willing he thinks it would be great for Kim and the Co-op.

Motion to offer a Special Education Director Mentor Contract to Lani Smith for the 2025-26 School year.

Motion: Spencer Johnson

Second: Marisa Stewart

-Passed Unanimously.

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

a. August 14th In-Person at 11:00am-(At Monforton School with a virtual option as well).

5. Adjourn: Motion to adjourn meeting at 12:00p.m.

Motion: Spencer Johnson

Second: John Nielson

-Passed Unanimously.

Submitted by: _____ Date: _____

Board Chair: _____ Date: _____