

Gallatin-Madison Special Education Cooperative
Regular Council Meeting
11/6/2025

The Regular Council meeting of the Gallatin-Madison Special Education Cooperative was held via Google Meet on November 6, 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 11:02 am.

Members Present

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

Visitors:

2. Public Comments

Staff Present Kim Wegner-McCauley, Director; Joyce Schmidt, Clerk & Business Manager;
Riley Russell, Executive Assistant

Staff Absent

3. Consent Agenda

- | | | |
|-------------|----|--|
| Approval of | a. | Approval of August 21, 2025 GMSEC Board Meeting Minutes |
| Minutes & | b. | Approval of expenditures: (#3318234-3318242, #3318243-3318258, #318259-318271) |

Expenditures

Motion to approve minutes and expenditures.

Motion: Scott Poloff

Second: John Nielson

- Passed Unanimously.

4. New Business:

a.) Business Manager's Report:

(Informational)

Cash reconciliation totals by fund were provided to the Board for July, August & September 2025 with tentative totals for October 2025. The October reports are not expected from the GCFD until late November.

The IDEA-B & IDEA-Preschool grants for Federal FY 2026 had not opened by our self imposed cutoff date so requests comprising July through September were submitted under the Federal FY 2025 allocation for IDEA-B. Joyce reported she has tried in past years to mirror co-op requests to our July 1st through the following June 30th FY as opposed to the Federal FY that begins October 1st & ends the following September 30th. In addition, the final reports for the grant year have been submitted & approved by OPI for both grants. The carryover spending authority for IDEA-B is \$138,798 & IDEA-Preschool is \$3,189.

The IDEA-B October request has been submitted to OPI & approved. In addition, the Preschool Incentive Grant requests for September & October have also been submitted & approved. Payment will be reflected in the November financials from the GCFD.

August expenditures were significantly less than July as anticipated with the largest expenditure being the annual payment for hearing conservation.

September expenditures are consistent with past years consisting primarily of staff payroll costs. There were no expenditures that warranted additional explanation to the Board.

October included the payment to Strom & Associates that was made at the completion of the external audit fieldwork & exit conference. The October expense comparison showed our shortage of school psychologists & the use of additional days for some staff including our current director as well as having the former director assist when possible. Other differences included not using an independent contractor for SLP services; timing difference of paying the annual hearing conservation invoice; director mentor costs; & moving from Goalbook to Playground IEP.

The cooperative was notified in early September that we had been selected for a Workers Compensation audit. Requesting documentation was provided Monday, September 29th & we were notified later that same day by Auditor Pennell that no variance was found & the audit was complete.

The fieldwork for the external audit of GMSEC FY 2024-25 began October 6th with the exit meeting conducted the afternoon of October 8th. There was an unmodified opinion & we were reminded that due to our limited size there are inherent internal control weaknesses & to remain

vigilante. We were not given a tentative date for receipt of the final report but expect it to be in late February or March 2026.

For those participating in the Teacher Incentive Certification [STARS] act OPI is requesting your FY26 base teacher pay report that is due December 1st. The two numbers needed are those you submitted in late May with your application. Per Autumn with OPI, we will submit a new application in November 2026 similar to that submitted this past May.

The Fund Balance spreadsheet was provided to the Board with the FY 2024-25 numbers included. Joyce pointed out that the spending authority carryover numbers for the grants are as of completion of Federal FY25 [September 30th]. The carryover amount for IDEA-B was \$224,431 on June 30th & the Preschool Incentive Grant would have remained unchanged at \$3,189. The fund numbers are as of June 30, 2025.

b.) **Director's Report**
(Informational)

i. Child Find Developmental Screenings update

Child find is now complete and was successful. Shey Mayland and Family Outreach were a big help. Kim discussed exploring options going forward and potentially pairing schools or having screening days throughout the year held at the office for better use of staff time. Co-op staff have commented that numbers have been going down the last few years. There was a question concerning the location of the Child Find and if it had to be held at the School. It is not required but most schools do. Will discuss more throughout the year.

ii. IDEA E-Grant update

Kim thanked the Board for sharing information with her that was needed to complete the federal FY26 grant applications. Kim further shared that both grants were submitted in late September & OPI later returned them requesting additional information. The requested information was included, the grants were then resubmitted & both have now been approved.

iii. FAPE Judgement update

This will not affect all member schools, just high school students and older. It is now a requirement to report to OPI if staff has reached out to a student but never heard back. Everyone is doing their best until more guidance and information from OPI is provided. There was a question about if this only concerns students who are on track to graduate with a regular diploma and it does only affect them. It is also expected that partial enrollment will be possible now. The Director will share more information when available.

iv. OPI Pre-Monitoring Training-Oct. 30th 8:30-12:30 virtual

The training went well overall and the District and Co-op staff who attended appreciated it. John shared a guide and slides with the Board that Kim had previously shared with staff. OPI monitoring dates are coming in the fall.

5. **Approval of Gallatin-Madison Special Education Cooperative office building lease agreement July 1, 2026-June 30, 2029 (\$1,335.00 mth, \$16,020.00 yr)**

(Motion/Discussion/Action)

Our current three year office rental agreement ends June 30, 2026 & the owners were asked to provide another three year agreement for the Board's consideration. We requested that the cost remain the same for all three years as with prior agreements to make annual budgeting easier. The Board was reminded that we share a portion of the space with audiologist Shey Mayland as well as the cost. The building is in a good location & the owners have been good about keeping rents lower.

Motion to approve Gallatin-Madison Special Education Cooperative's Lease Agreement as presented.

Motion: Scott Poloff

Second: Stephanie Stephens

-Passed Unanimously

6. **Board Meeting Schedule: Projected 2025-2026 Third Thursday of the Month (Zoom/In-Person) *no less than 5 meetings per year**

a. **January 15th In Person** [coop office]

b. February 19th

c. April 16th (*could be removed*)

d. May 21st

e. **June 18th In Person** [host at a member SD]

5. **Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn meeting at 11:34 am .

Motion: Kevin Flanagan

Second: Scott Poloff

-Passed Unanimously.

Submitted by: _____ Date: _____

Board Chair: _____ Date: _____