

Board of Education

Northeast Kansas Education Service Center

Minutes

Date: March 16th, 2005

Location: Oskaloosa UDS #341 - Central Office

Time: 7:00 p.m. Call Meeting to Order

At 7:05 p.m., Board President, Tom Holroyd called the meeting to order. Members present: Paul Brown, William Perry, Jr. (for Keith Ostrander), Carol Meneley (arriving at 7:10 p.m.), Julie Zule, Tom Holroyd, and Todd Gigstad; Jim Wheeler, Ph.D., Executive Director; Judy Denton, Assistant Director; Susan Aspinwall, Business Manager/Clerk; Krystal Porter, Administrative Secretary; Jean Rush, Superintendent; Sharon Branson, SETA Representative; and Ellen Mellard, OT, Tiny-K Coordinator.

*** Action - Consent Agenda**

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Approval of Bills and Claims

Perry moved to approve the consent agenda with no changes. Gigstad seconded and motion carried 5-0.

*** Communications from Visitors Present**

Sharon Branson, Voc-Ed Teacher/Transition Coordinator, provided information on the upcoming annual Resource Fair and Disability Supports Seminar scheduled for Wednesday, April 13th at the Free State High School in Lawrence, KS. The fair is sponsored by the Transition Council of Douglas and Jefferson Counties. It is a disability support seminar and resource fair to provide information and options for parents and individuals with disabilities. Nearly 60 agencies will be represented with information related to employment, housing, post-secondary education, guardianship, special needs, advocacy, financial planning, day services and much more.

*** Communications**

1. Treasurer's Report
Susan provided copies of the Treasurer's Report for the month of March.

Holroyd moved the meeting to RSC Item #2 - Tiny-K Presentation. Meneley arrived at the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

*** Special Education**

1. Action - Personnel Update

Judy reviewed the list of contracts, resignations and terminations for approval. Gigstad moved to approve as listed. Perry seconded and motion carried 6-0.

2. Information/Discussion - Update on State Special Education Finance

Jim discussed that recent school finance plans have included funding special education excess costs at the 90% level over three years. At the 90% level, according to Veryl Peter, we should be looking at \$19,390 per teacher FTE in three years. Jim then reviewed the history of categorical aid funding and the impact its reduction will have on the budgets for the coming year. In the past we have depended on Dale Dennis and Veryl Peter to advise us on the categorical aid figure to budget. However, for the current year, they suggested \$19,500 as the magic number, we budgeted \$19,300 and it is coming in at \$18,500. As our carryover dollars dwindle, we will be dependent on Medicaid to fund the special education budgets for another year.

3. **Information/Discussion - Health Insurance**

NEKESC is reviewing options for health insurance. At the present time, we have not received renewal rates from Humana. Some schools have joined the non-state group of the state health plan - several because their coverage was about to be dropped and they had exhausted other resources. The state plan would almost triple NEKESC's costs for coverage, but to our knowledge, Humana has no plans to drop our coverage.

4. **Information/Discussion - NCLB and Special Education Update**

Texas defies federal rules on testing special education students

AUSTIN - State education officials have overridden a federal rule on the testing of special education students. The decision by Education Commissioner Shirley Neeley prevented more than 40 percent of Texas school districts from failing to meet federal improvement standards. The Texas Education Agency announced Friday that nearly 92 percent of the state's 1,037 school district made "adequate yearly progress" under the federal No Child Left Behind law. Districts make adequate yearly progress, or AYP, by improving standardized test scores and raising graduation and attendance rates. Neeley's decision sets up a potential showdown between the TEA and the Bush administration. Texas receives more than \$1 billion in federal money tied to compliance with No Child Left Behind. Some of that money could be in jeopardy depending on how federal officials react to the move.

Jim noted that this is an information item. Judy added that she had attended a recent KASB Law Conference where Carol Dermeyer provided a draft of the Kansas Special Education Support and Monitoring System that could be used to improve educational results and functional outcomes for all students with disabilities. To ensure districts meet IDEA requirements, each district would have a performance review and receive a status report. Depending on whether they are determined to be a Level I, II, or III, sanctions could be imposed, training required and funds withheld or directed for targeted areas needing improvement. Plans are to invite superintendents and special education administrators of Northeast Kansas Area Region 3 to a meeting to explain and discuss how this process would work. Carol Dermeyer, KSDE, would provide the presentation.

* **Regional Service Center**

1. **Action - Audit Contracts**

We have received the audit contracts from Lowenthal, Singleton Webb & Wilson for the '05-'06 fiscal year. The gross fee for the accounting audit, including expenses, will not exceed \$5,000 without a Single Audit. The additional fee for the Single Audit will not exceed \$1,500. The amount for last year's contract was \$5,900.

The maximum fee, including expenses, for the Medicaid audit will not exceed \$2,600. The amount for this contract last year was \$2,400.

Meneley moved to approve both contracts as presented. Gigstad seconded and motion carried 5-1 with Holroyd opposed.

2. **Information/Discussion - Tiny-K Presentation**

Jim introduced Ellen Mellard, Occupational Therapist and coordinator of the Tiny-K program, who presented information on NEKESC's program to serve infants and toddlers with disabilities. Ellen provided several informative handouts describing this program which serves infants to 3-year olds who have disabilities. She explained the program is funded with Federal Part-C, SGF, State Categorical, Medicaid, and Jefferson County Mill Levy dollars with no local USD assessments. Since her presentation to the Board last May, at the State's request, NEKESC's program was combined with the Hiawatha program and now serves not only Atchison and Jefferson, but Doniphan, Jackson, Brown and Nemaha counties as well. Additional staff have been hired since the delivery model for Hiawatha was changed to match NEKESC's. This means utilizing our own staff, not contracting for services, as it is a more efficient and cost effective model, and the service delivery is more family oriented. She noted that parents have social and emotional needs as well as the child and the team addresses these in their service provisions. Ellen then discussed numbers of children served, staff required for the program, how students are identified or referred for services,

and the types and severity of disorders/impairments the team has to deal with. A mini-grant was written and awarded to provide inservice training on infant mental health. Other trainings have been held for staff in the areas of service delivery, family service coordination, child abuse, feeding and other issues. Ellen also discussed how children are transitioned to PAT or other programs, services obtained through KU Medical Center, as well as state issues including funding per child. Board members thanked Ellen for her presentation and the meeting returned to Special Education Item #1.

3. **Information/Discussion - JDLA Budget**

Jim provided copies and reviewed JDLA budget planning for '05-'06 including projected sources of revenue. This is not an action item, but to make board members aware of the need and cost for this program.

*** Executive Session**

At 7:50 p.m. Perry moved to go into executive session with the Executive Director for 15 minutes until 8:05 p.m. to discuss negotiations. Brown seconded and motion carried 6-0. Holroyd extended an invitation to Rush to remain for executive session and she declined.

At 8:05 p.m. open session resumed.

*** Adjournment**

At 8:10 p.m. Meneley moved to adjourn the meeting. Zule seconded and motion carried 6-0.

Tom Holroyd
CPS
President
Manager/Clerk

Susan Aspinwall,
Business