

## **MINUTES**

### **Agenda of Meeting**

#### **Northwest Texas SSA Management Board**

**February 9, 2023**

Notice is hereby given that a Management Board meeting of Northwest Texas Shared Service Arrangement will be held on February 9, 2023 at 9:00 AM in the Sunray ISD Board Room located at 400 East 7<sup>th</sup> St., Sunray, Texas.

Those in attendance: David Foote, Interim & Shane Whiteley, Adrian, Misty Heiskell, Channing, Wade Calloway, Gruver, Scott Vincent, Hartley, Paul Uttley, Stratford, Erin Boatmun, Interim Sunray, Jody Johnson, Vega, Kayla Yates, Texhoma, Troy Duck, Wildorado – Kacie Kaake, SSA Director, and Rhonda Brewster, recording secretary.

The subjects to be discussed or considered or upon which any formal action may be taken are as follows:

If during the course of the meeting, discussion of any item on the agenda should be held in a closed meeting, the Board will conduct a closed meeting in accordance with the Texas Open Meeting Act, Government Code, Chapter 551, Subchapters D and E. Before any closed meeting is convened, the presiding officer will publicly identify the section or sections of the Act authorizing the closed meeting. All final votes, actions, or decisions will be taken in open meeting.

Note: Items do not have to be taken in the same order as shown on this meeting agenda.

Packets given to all Board Members. It is time for Self-Assessment – Kacie asked if Districts wanted her to come help or not (paper to each Superintendent to check box as to Kacie coming or District doing their own). Mr. Jones asked if they could copy the one from last year --- Kacie said, 'yes' if District feels they are still on track.

## 1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 9:07 am

- a. Roll Call Establish a Quorum –100% attendance
- b. Prayer - Mr. Calloway opened meeting with prayer

Kacie noted at the last meeting, issues were tabled. She had created a Google document for Board members to ask questions or discuss issues presented – she got no input, questions, discussion.

Kacie shared that she returned from T-Case yesterday. She found out some information on the Cyclical Review – the number of folders requested from each District will be base on number of Special Ed. students. The Cyclical Review for all 10 Districts is scheduled for 2024. Kacie stated that next year will be a busy year – we are going to do mock Review. Kacie will be coming to Districts. She would like to hire a part-time temporary person to help w/paperwork, filing, etc. during this time. Kacie asked the Board to think about this and it will be discussed/decided at a later date.

## 2. New Business

- a. NWTSSA Director Evaluation & Contract (Action Required)

Board members went into closed session at 9:11 am. To discuss Kacie's evaluation.

Board members came back to open session at 10:10 a. Mrs. Boatmun shared formation with Kacie about discussion in close session. Mr. Calloway, great job and he appreciated her transparency/honesty. Everyone acknowledged a 'thank you' for all she does and being available and on campus when a situation happened. Kacie stated that she is on campus as situation/concerns happen. Districts stated that they would like to see Kacie more – she reiterated that she will be where she is needed, when she is needed.

Mrs. Boatmun told Kacie that the Board agreed for her a 4% raise. Mr. Foote stated that he admired and complemented Kacie. She said that she wants to be open and direct. Kacie assured District of 'confidentiality'. Mr. Johnson asked about staff for next year. Kacie shared that Kristi Waters, Ed. Diagnostician is retiring – at this point in

time, that is all she knows as far as staffing. Kacie is thinking about not filling this position, but she needs to think about quality of work and time-lines. Mr. Jones asked how the Board can help – Kacie said she could not think of anything at this time.

Mrs. Boatman asked about the process of hiring someone – position approved by SSA and then that person presented to the Sunray board to hire for the position. Kacie stated that last year the Board gave Kacie permission to hire and then Sunray Board will accept hiring at their board meeting as Sunray does NWT payroll.

Mr. Johnson asked if District's Pro Rata is based on number of students.

Cyclical Review –Kacie stated that they have a rubric; however, it depends on who you get will determine what is required. They want to know the validity of staff – certifications. Dyslexia can be 504 but now under the umbrella of Special Ed. Parents can request dyslexia evaluation only – qualifying student would be 504. We push hard for dyslexia evaluations under IDEA with all referrals.

Legislative Open Conversation - TEA – Mr. Jones asked the other Superintendents -What do you see is coming – no one knows – they are pushing vouchers. Mr. Vincent said it is intra structure. Mr. Uttley stated that down south, representatives, etc. have a hatred of education – we need voices heard from the Panhandle.

Governor Abbott – is saying 'parent choice – funds to private schools?? Mrs. Yates stated monies received affects ADA and she has to not only deal w/Elementary but Texhoma, OK side.

Kacie stated that questions were asked about funding, etc. at T-Case and no one really had answers – questions w/questions. Another issue discussed is truancy – (excuses) anxiety and such, we should be calling for ARD meetings to discuss the matter fully and the impact it has on the child's ability to make progress– Mr. Uttley said it is called WASP Texas legislature. Kacie noted to many restraints - threat assessments being deemed "vague" by outside supports without a true

understanding of the student's history and then possibly under fire if something should ever occur, why wasn't it addressed more strictly and/or why wasn't the child ever referred if not already identified. You have to make deals/jump through hoops to get \$200,000.00. This money should be sent w/o stipulation – should be an entitlement. Kacie noted that autism grant has a stipulation where the school's AU program can be applied state wide and yet our "little" programs would not be a true fit for the grand districts down south and so they are rejected while it's perfect for our cases/needs.

Mr. Foote brought up concern w/retires – has not be raised per cost of living – it is now 2.3 multiplier. – concern for everyone.

Mr. Jones asked about recovering windows (he just had the windows done 2 years ago and now they are not in compliance) – he said that 3M was at Texline. He asked if TEA will come check. Mr. Foote stated that it will probably be ok unless Texline has an incident.

b. SSA Agreement (Action Required)

Kacie had a print-out of current SSA Agreement. Andrea, NWT lawyer, stated that it should be re-done as things have changed. Kacie highlighted the things she found that needed updated/changed. She said that Andrea would meet w/them and update the Agreement. One important change – how a District can be terminated, etc. Regulations are not as strict/specific with regards to dates to vote or opt out of the SSA, but advised for budget and staffing reasons – pro rata share – as invoiced – meetings – 3 X a year. Mr. Jones asked if Board can make updated changes. Seems this was the consensus of the Board – come back later this Spring to make needed changes. Last year Districts agreed for the diagnosticians & SLPs to use copy machine, etc. at Districts. Long reports, etc will need to be made a NWT office.

c. 2023-24 Budget Review- Tabled Discussion from Nov. 2022 Meeting  
(Action Required)

25% must be set aside for residential placement per TEA mandates- \$149,1740.00 for our SSA. The closest placement is Dallas and there is approx. a two- year waiting list. During that waiting period the student still has to be served by the district. Mr. Jones asked if we can build that fund up in 3 or 4 years. At this time, we may have \$20,000.00. Kacie thought maybe she can use Kristi's salary \$75,000.00 to set aside and continue to build it up as quickly as possible.

Question - how NWT money is handled in Sunray. Mrs. Boatmun assured Board that it is separate from Sunray's. Jane does a draw-down once a month (money comes out of M&O).

Salaries w/o raises. Mr. Uttley said he thinks what Sunray does, NWT may want to follow. Do you want to choose to do stipends? Stipends should go before NWT Board.

Huge issue – OT/PT – choices each District pick-up their own or pro rate will increase. Mr. Calloway stated that they have their own SLP and so does Stratford – Channing, Hartley & Texline share SLP. Kacie noted that Grant has decreased some while mandates/needs only continue to increase. Mr. Calloway has concerns – how can Districts do this. Kacie stated that she is presenting the situation and options to consider – IDEA from Districts, we get approx. \$600,000,00 and expenses are \$700,000.00 Pro-Rata is based on total student population for each district. We have more needs and less money. Mr. Vincent stated, we have to decide. None of the Districts can go individual. Kacie stated that she has no clear answers on how to get the additional funds from each district, she can only present the current situation/needs and strongly advise action for continued compliance and to ensure FAPE.

Kacie stated that electronic signatures are no longer acceptable without a great deal of documentation and multiple attempts to get ink

signatures. Now OT/PTs are required to stay through entire ARDs (more money).

Kacie asks to look into hiring another SLP or SLP-A. Kacie stated that the issue driving this is --- compliance; proper staffing is needed and funding is needed when looking at compliance; without each, we may fall short which we strive to avoid. Mr. Uttley/Mr. Calloway – we want to pay fair share, but must think about District needs as well.

Question – do we have a fund balance – Mrs. Boatmun said that she will ask Todd, Region 16 business person, the general understanding is no we don't.

Kacie stated that decision must be made on budget & residential money soon so that proper staffing needs for next year can be analyzed for optimal levels of support.

Mr. Calloway made a motion that Board come back to discuss tabled issues and Mr. Uttley seconded. Board agreed to hold another meeting on Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> @ 9 AM to put a final vote to the financial discussions.

Kacie shared some more informational material in Board members folders (regional programs, trainings, etc.).

Mr. Uttley entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Calloway seconded. All in agreement. Meeting ended at 11:54 am

Respectfully submitted,  
Rhonda Brewster, Recording secretary

Posted January 20, 2023