

**NORTHWEST INDIANA SPECIAL EDUCATION COOPERATIVE**  
**2150 W. 97<sup>th</sup> PLACE**  
**CROWN POINT, IN. 46307**  
**January 10, 2024**

Executive Session: The Board of Managers met in executive session at 5:30 p.m. and discussed items related to IC 5-14-1.5-6.1.

**REORGANIZATION**

1. Mr. Larry R. Biggs called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m and began with a moment of silence for Mariah Rogers, a student at Eagle Park Community School who passed away unexpectedly. The Pledge of Allegiance was then recited.
2. Mr. Porras took roll call. The following members were recorded as present: Mrs. Erica Smith-Gomez for Highland, Mr. Frank Porras for Hobart, Mrs. Louise Neese for Lake Ridge, Mr. Larry R. Biggs for Lake Station, Ms. Sylvia Pedroza for River Forest, Mrs. Tara Beilke for Hanover and Dr. Nathan Kleefisch for Tri-Creek. There was no representation for Merrillville.
3. Annually, the Board of Managers must take the Indiana Oath of Members. The Board members who were present recited the Oath and Mrs. Kirsten Gilmore, NISEC Notary, verified each Member's signature and notarized the documents. Members not present will take the Oath at the Board of Managers meeting on February 14, 2024.
4. The Board of Managers considered the election of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. Mrs. Horn asked for nominations for President of NISEC Board of Managers for 2023. Dr. Kleefisch motioned to nominate Mr. Larry R. Biggs for President. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Smith-Gomez and passed unanimously. Mrs. Horn then turned the meeting over to Mr. Biggs. Mr. Biggs presented a slate of officers to the Board which included Mrs. Erica Smith-Gomez for Vice President, Mr. Frank Porras for Secretary, Ms. Peyton Gilmore, NISEC's CFO, for Treasurer and Mrs. Kathy Cain, NISEC's Assistant Director, for Deputy Treasurer. There were no other nominations. Mrs. Beilke made a motion to approve the slate of officers presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Kleefisch and passed unanimously.

**BOARD OF FINANCE**

1. Mrs. Horn opened the Board of Finance Meeting for the purpose of electing the current designated officers of the Board of Managers to act in the same capacity as the Board of Finance for the current year. Mrs. Horn recommended the Board approve the entire Board of Managers as officers and Ms. Gilmore, NISEC's CFO, as Treasurer and Mrs. Cain, NISEC's Assistant Director, as Deputy Treasurer for the Board of Finance. Dr. Kleefisch moved for approval of the Board of Finance and Officers with NISEC's CFO, Ms. Gilmore, as Treasurer and NISEC's Assistant Director, Mrs. Cain, as Deputy Treasurer, as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Beilke and passed unanimously.
2. Ms. Gilmore presented the Annual Interest Report for 2023. Ms. Rosinko was excited to share the Annual Interest Report for 2023 and report the increased amount of interest compared to the last 4 years. Ms. Gilmore explained the increased amount of interest was predominately due to our interest rate increasing from 3.14% to 3.97% over the year.
3. Mr. Biggs adjourned the Board of Finance meeting.

**GENERAL MEETING OF THE BOARD**

1. Mr. Larry Biggs called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.
2. Mr. Biggs asked for comments or questions on agenda items from the audience. There were none.

3. Mr. Biggs asked for any additions or deletions to the December 13, 2023 minutes. Mrs. Beilke moved for Board approval of the minutes, as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Kleefisch and passed unanimously.
4. Ms. Gilmore recommended Board approval of the monthly financial reports dated December 31, 2023. Dr. Kleefisch moved for Board approval of the monthly financial report, as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Pedroza and passed unanimously.
5. Ms. Gilmore requested Board approval of Resolution #24-01: To Transfer Amounts from the Education Fund to the Operations Fund for December 2023. Ms. Pedroza moved for Board approval of Resolution #24-01, as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Neese and passed unanimously.
6. Mrs. Horn requested Board approval of Resolution #24-02/Re: I.C. 20-28-9-1.5 (a), as presented. Mrs. Smith-Gomez moved for Board approval of Resolution #24-02. The motion was seconded by Dr. Kleefisch and passed unanimously.
7. Ms. Gilmore requested Board approval of the memo regarding a change in Payroll Dates. Mrs. Beilke moved for Board approval of the change in payroll dates. The motion was seconded by Dr. Kleefisch and passed unanimously. Mrs. Beilke thanked the NISEC administration for coming up with this creative solution to correct the 27-pay year.
8. Mrs. Horn shared the tentative December 1, 2023 Count Compared to December 1, 2022 Count. Mrs. Horn explained that the report indicates an increase in overall dollars due to an increase in disability counts in most disability areas and the state increasing tuition dollars for each disability area.
9. Ms. Gilmore reported on the ESCRFT Renewal for the 2024 fiscal year. Dr. Kleefisch moved for Board approval of the ESCRFT Renewal for the 2024 fiscal year, as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Pedroza and passed unanimously.
10. Mrs. Horn shared that the NISEC educators received the Teacher Appreciation Grant (TAG) on December 22, 2023. The TAG stipend awarded a total of 142 educators rated Highly Effective (75) and Effective (67), per the grant requirements.
11. Mrs. Horn requested Board approval of the Administrative Benefit changes. Mrs. Horn explained all the changes, including the change from sick and personal days to paid time off days and the additional of holidays to align more with the member districts. Mrs. Smith-Gomez moved for Board approval of the Administrative Benefit Changes, as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Beilke and passed unanimously.
12. Mrs. Horn requested Board approval of the Revised Staff Needs for the 2023-2024 school year. Dr. Kleefisch moved for Board approval of the revised staff needs, as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Pedroza and passed unanimously.
13. Mrs. Horn requested Board approval of the Professional Leave Activities document. Mrs. Horn noted the increase in the meal allotment for professional leaves. Mr. Porras moved for Board approval of the Professional Leave Activities document, as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Beilke and passed unanimously.
14. Mrs. Winkoff requested Board approval of the Alternative and Residential Contract for Lake Ridge New Tech Schools. Mrs. Smith-Gomez made a motion to approve the Alternative and Residential Contract for Lake Ridge New Tech School, as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Kleefisch and passed unanimously.

15. **Director's Report:**

Results Driven Accountability Report from the OSE

Mrs. Horn shared data regarding the RDA Report that was issued to the corporations in December. Mrs. Horn said some of the data on the RDA Report in regards to IAM testing isn't being reflected in the correct corporation and this is skewing the numbers.

Audit Exit Conference Results

Mrs. Horn shared information regarding the Exit Conference held on December 20, 2023. She also mentioned that there was a mix up with the time of the meeting due to time zone confusion. The meeting was held at an earlier time than it was scheduled and this was the reason Mr. Biggs was not in attendance.

Paraprofessional Training

Mrs. Horn shared information regarding Paraprofessional Training that Dr. Rebecca Harkema is running through May 15<sup>th</sup>. She said this training was developed after our Paraprofessional Training Grant was approved by the state.

16. **Personnel:**

Mrs. Horn recommended approval to the following personnel actions:

**A. Retirements**

*Denise Jamerson*, Educational Diagnostician, effective June 1, 2024.

**B. Resignations**

Certified

*Samantha Dafgard*, Educational Diagnostician, effective December 22, 2023.

Classified

*Aarika Bolden*, Paraprofessional at Fieler Elementary, effective December 22, 2023.

*Kelly Dinkins*, Paraprofessional at Longfellow Elementary, effective September 25, 2023. Never Started.

*Nicole Elliot*, Paraprofessional at Oak Hill Elementary, effective January 23, 2024.

*Amber Hubbard*, Paraprofessional at Wood Elementary, effective December 22, 2023.

*Belinda Sczurko*, Paraprofessional at Lowell High School, effective November 28, 2023.

*Kamila Wolowiec*, Paraprofessional at Eagle Park Community School, effective December 15, 2023.

**C. Terminations**

None at this time.

**D. Appointments**

Certified

*Mon'toya Flowers*, Mild Interventions Teacher at Calumet High School, effective January 9, 2024.

Classified

*Airika Buckley*, Paraprofessional at Pierce Middle School, effective January 22, 2024.

*Andrea Flowers*, Paraprofessional at Evans Elementary, effective January 8, 2024.

*Brianna Glenn*, Paraprofessional at Joan Martin Elementary, effective January 9, 2024.

Registered

*Antonio Brooks*, Behavioral Intervention Specialist at Evans Elementary, effective January 16, 2024.

**E. Leave of Absence**

*Denise Hickey*, FMLA pursuant to memo from Kathy Cain, dated January 8, 2024.

*Avis Raybon*, Medical Leave pursuant to memo from Kathy Cain, dated December 5, 2023.

*Natasha Scroggins*, Medical Leave pursuant to memo from Kathy Cain, dated January 8, 2024.

*Shamara Williams*, Medical Leave pursuant to memo from Kathy Cain, dated October 9, 2023.

**F. Conference Leave**

None at this time.

**G. Independent Contracts**

*Katherine Hensley*, IEP Facilitator, effective January 9, 2024.

## **H. Other**

*Veronica Bakker*, Temporary change of position from Daily Teacher Substitute to Long Term Teacher Substitute at Red Cedars Elementary, effective January 5, 2024 and for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year.

*Ryan Bradford*, Teacher Substitute at Pierce Middle School, effective January 16, 2024.

*Patricia Curry*, Teacher Substitute in Highland, effective August 14, 2023.

*Sonia Garcia*, Change of position from Paraprofessional to Teacher Substitute in Highland, effective August 11, 2023.

*Dewonda Norman*, Teacher Substitute at Salk Elementary, effective January 16, 2024.

*Megan Tekin*, Temporary change of position from paraprofessional to Teacher Substitute at Evans Elementary, effective December 4, 2023 and for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year.

*Kristen Wagoner*, Long Term Teacher Substitute at Wood Elementary, effective January 8, 2024 and for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year.

Dr. Kleefisch moved for Board approval of the Personnel Report, as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Pedroza and passed unanimously.

17. Mr. Biggs asked for comments or questions from the Board.

Mr. Biggs said to keep up the hard work on hiring staff and welcomed the new Vice-President and Secretary. Dr. Kleefisch stated it is very disappointing to see teachers leaving mid-year. Mr. Porras thanked Peyton for her work with audit.

18. Mr. Biggs asked for comments or questions from the Audience.

There were none.

19. Dr. Kleefisch moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Porras and passed unanimously.