

## **COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCY #4**

The Board of Control met on Wednesday, April 2, 2025 at CESA 4, 923 East Garland Street, West Salem. Chair Catherine Griffin called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Board Members Present: Jim Bagniewski, Kevin Bauman, Larry Cyrus, Brad Dobbs, Catherine Griffin, Julie Meyers, Lindsay O'Hair, and Gerald Roethel

Blair-Taylor seat is currently vacate.

Absent: Jim Wright Excused: Sara Cook

Also present: Paul Fischer, Wayde Pollock, and Michelle Kotek

### **PUBLIC INPUT**

#### **APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA**

Julie Meyers moved to approve the agenda as distributed. Kevin Bauman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Board Recognition: Paul Fischer recognized Brad Dobbs with a clock for his service to the Board.

#### **READING AND APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 5, 2025 MEETING MINUTES**

Lindsay O'Hair moved to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2025 meeting. Jim Bagniewski seconded the motion. Motion carried. (March 5, 2025 meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather.)

#### **APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR FEBRUARY AND MARCH**

Kevin Bauman moved to approve the vouchers and financial statement for February and March. Brad Dobbs seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Approval of Retirement**

Julie Meyers moved to approve the retirement request of Katherine Reid effective June 30, 2025. Larry Cyrus seconded the motion. Motion carried.

#### **Approval of Personnel Contracts**

Lindsay O'Hair moved to approve the contract for Tammy Leis – part-time school counselor – 40 days for remainder of year and Sharon Carlson as a part-time substitute Deaf and Hard of Hearing Teacher to cover FMLA leave starting in April. Larry Cyrus seconded the motion. Motion carried.

#### **Approval of Dental Insurance Renewal 2025-26**

Julie Meyers moved to approve the Delta Dental Insurance renewal effective July 1, 2025 with an 8 percent increase in premium with CESA absorbing the increase in premium. Jim Bagniewski seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **Approval of Purchase of Conference Room Chairs**

Larry Cyrus moved to approve the purchase of 49 conference room chairs for \$13,105.54 from National Business Furniture. Brad Dobbs seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **Approve Standard raise increase for 2025-26**

Julie Meyers moved to approve the standard rate increase of 3 percent for 2025-26. Kevin Bauman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **Approve the Recommended changes to Neola Policies**

Lindsay O'Hair moved to approve the revisions to policies 1100, 1130, 2266, 3230, 4230, 1241, 4124, 6231, 7430, 7440, 8125 (reject policy), 4440, 6110, 6111, 6114, 6325, 7310, 7450 and removal of policy 2264. Jim Bagniewski seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **Discuss Annual Convention Meeting and Agenda**

The Black River Falls, Alma Center-Humbird-Merrillan, Cashton, and West Salem board seats have their terms expire at the annual meeting. The Blair-Taylor seat is vacant at this time. Program for the Annual Meeting will be LIFTtoFFs (Learning Innovations for the Teaching of Forward-Facing Students). The meeting is set for Wednesday, June 4, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at the CESA 4 office.

## **AGENCY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT TO THE BOARD – PAUL FISCHER**

1. Referendum results: Locally there were 9 districts in CESA 4 who went to referendum on Tuesday. Of those, 8 district referendums were asking their district residents to allow them to exceed their revenue limits while 1 district was seeking approval for Capital improvements. Cochrane Fountain City School District passed their capital improvement referendum. Of the remaining 8 that were asking permission to exceed the revenue limit, 4 of them passed (Bangor, Independence, Viroqua, and Whitehall), while the remaining 4 failed (Arcadia, DeSoto, Holmen, Melrose-Mindoro). Statewide, there were 89 districts that went to referendum. As of this writing we haven't seen the full results, but we should be receiving data from WASB soon in regards to the results.
2. The 97th annual **Paraprofessional Summit** will be held August 12, 2025 at CESA 4. Registration for this event is now open and seats are limited so it is highly recommended to register early! Each participant will be able to attend two keynote speakers and choose from three different breakout sessions. This year's keynote Speaker is Ellie Olson, author of the book "Energy Bus." Ellie brings a wealth of knowledge and educational experience to her presentation, where she empowers attendees to overcome challenges and bring positive energy to their schools. There are not a lot of professional development opportunities for support staff, so this is definitely a workshop they can and should attend.
3. I attended the WASB Day at the Capitol on Wednesday, March 12th. The CESA 4 region had several districts in attendance. The morning session began with a panel discussion that included two representatives from both sides of the aisle. The panel

answered questions that related to the upcoming budget, as well as issues school districts currently face. The afternoon allowed us to meet with various legislators that represent the Coulee Region. We were given 30 minutes to share our stories and provide our thoughts on the state budget. I personally met with the offices of Brad Pfaff and Tara Johnson. The messaging from all those I spoke with is that both sides of the aisle are behind the Special Education reimbursement. In our talks they highly recommended that districts focus on telling their story of how the increase in SPED reimbursement would impact your districts. Other than that, there doesn't appear to be much consensus in terms of the budget. All parties admitted at that time that items on the floor were being "slow rolled" so they could buy time to get to the April 1st election. Once the results are in, and depending on who is elected, will impact the work moving forward. They did caution that districts may not see final budgetary numbers until we are well into the summer, and possibly this fall.

4. As of this writing, I have completed all but two of my district visits. The visits have gone very well in terms of connecting and the relationships we continue to build. It is clear that the upcoming state budget, and in some cases local referendums, loom large in terms of financial decisions districts have to make. We have not seen significant changes in terms of contract services, but we anticipate there could be some changes based on the election results and the state budget.

### **State News**

1. The Joint Finance Committee is hosting hearings throughout the state. There are four hearings being held throughout the state, with one of them being the night of our Board of Control meeting. If your administration or school board would like to share their story and reinforce your district's needs, they are highly encouraging districts to do so. The meeting being held on April 2nd is being hosted at Kaukauna High School. The April 4th meeting will be held at the Wisconsin State Fair Park. The April 28th meeting will be held at the Hayward High School gymnasium. The April 29th meeting will be held at the Northcentral Technical College in Wausau. Each of these meetings run from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., but everyone is encouraged to arrive early and get in line well before the 10:00 a.m. start time. Following the statewide public hearings, JFC will begin voting on provisions of the budget during executive sessions throughout the month of May and potentially into June. It is anticipated that the budget will not be approved by July 1, with the possibility of it being late summer or early fall before it is finalized.

Julie Meyers approved the Administrator's Report as presented. Jim Bagniewski seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION UNDER WI STATUTE 19.85 1 [c] TO DISCUSS ADMINISTRATOR CONTRACT**

Kevin Bauman moved to go into closed session. Lindsay O'Hair seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Jim Bagniewski – aye; Kevin Bauman – aye; Sara Cook – excused; Larry Cyrus – aye; Brad Dobbs – aye; Catherine Griffin – aye; Julie Meyers – aye; Lindsay O'Hair – aye; Gerald Roethel – aye; and Jim Wright – absent. Adjourned into closed session at 8:05 p.m.

## **RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION**

Catherine Griffin moved to return to open session. Julie Meyers seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Jim Bagniewski - aye; Kevin Bauman – aye; Sara Cook – excused; Larry Cyrus –aye; Brad Dobbs - aye; Catherine Griffin – aye; Julie Meyers - aye; Lindsay O’Hair - aye; Gerald Roethel – aye; and Jim Wright – absent. Returned to open session at 8:35 p.m.

## **CRACKER BARREL**

- WI Rural Schools Conference – October 30 and 31 – Stevens Point Convention Center
- WASB New Board Member Gathering – April 22<sup>nd</sup> 7 – 9 p.m. at CESA 4
- WASB continues to look for board members with interest on serving on the Policy and Resolution Committee

## **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Approval of the Health Insurance Renewal for 2025-26

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Kevin Bauman moved the meeting adjourn. Larry Cyrus seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Next meeting: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at CESA 4, West Salem.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michelle Kotek