

The following actions were taken by the Northwest Ohio Educational Service Center Governing Board at their regular meeting held April 29, 2025.

The meeting was called to order at 5:52 p.m. by President Kelly Hug. All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment for the Retirement/Reemployment request of Dorothy Lambert, Education Consultant/Gifted Supervisor, was held.

REPORTS:

•**OSBA LEGISLATIVE LIAISON:** Mr. Brian Baker reported on several items in the legislative arena. The legislators are back in session and will be focused on HB 96, the State Budget bill, for the next several months. When the General Assembly returns, the Senate will formally begin budget deliberations on HB 96 and public testimony opportunities will resume. As of the week of April 28, 2025, several pending bills in the Ohio General Assembly may significantly impact education across the state. House Bill 145 proposes increasing the minimum instructional hours in a school year by 53 hours, while House Bill 187 would require a daily moment of silence in public schools for reflection, meditation, or prayer. House Bill 28 seeks to eliminate the authority of school districts to levy replacement property tax levies, potentially affecting local funding. House Bill 153 aims to make school board races partisan by requiring primary nominations and party designations. Student welfare and discipline are also in focus, with Senate Bill 158 proposing a ban on student cell phone use during school hours. Infrastructure and funding changes are addressed in House Bill 54, the transportation budget bill for FY 26–27, which may influence school transportation policies. House Bill 129 proposes eliminating the College Credit Plus advisory committee and making changes to program data reporting requirements, which could affect how dual-enrollment programs are monitored and improved. Senate Bill 68 would establish an Educational Savings Account Program for students attending non chartered private schools, expanding school choice. House Bill 168 seeks to redefine laws around criminal child enticement, with potential implications for school safety protocols.

•**OSBA STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT LIAISON:** Dr. Christine Smallman shared highlights focusing on innovative student programs and recent research impacting schools. A \$500 Leo Lucas Scholarship is available for graduating seniors from OSBA member districts who plan to pursue a two- or four-year degree at an accredited post-secondary institution. In the classroom, historical fiction is gaining traction as a powerful tool to foster student engagement, empathy, and critical thinking, with suggested activities like diary entries and historical research tied to the stories. Meanwhile, FFA students from Talawanda City Schools and Butler Tech demonstrated leadership by launching a fire safety initiative that supported local farmers through the inspection, recharging, and replacement of fire extinguishers. In New York, the Baldwin Union Free School District introduced a Future Jewelers Academy to prepare students for careers in jewelry design, marketing, and sales—an initiative expected to grow significantly next year. Lastly, new research into childhood ADHD highlights evolving approaches, including behavioral strategies, executive function supports, and emerging digital therapeutic tools to better meet student needs.

•**CFO/TREASURER:** Mrs. Abby Lorenzen provided a report summarizing her attendance at the OASBO Annual Conference with opportunities to learn from various school business professionals, reconnect with colleagues statewide, and network with other ESC treasurers. She attended sessions on AI tools and applications, investing, Robert's Rules of Order, and received updates from the Auditor of State's office, ODEW, and on legislative issues. There was also considerable discussion regarding public school funding and the biennial budget. She informed the board that additional service agreements for the 2025–2026 year are included on the agenda for approval, with six more pending. Mrs. Lorenzen updated the board on rising electric rates and noted that many districts are working to lock in new prices. The current rates expire at the end of May, and although a proposal was not ready for this meeting due to delayed pricing, she expects to have a recommendation for board approval next month. Lastly, she shared an update regarding the ESC's energy tax credit. The ESC ultimately received a check for \$197,289.68, which included \$5,756.75 in interest.

•**DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION:** Mrs. Jill Gilliland shared that due to increased projected enrollment of students at our Fulton County MD program, we are exploring options for additional classrooms. We are collaborating with Archbold Schools to add an MD (Multiple Disabilities) classroom at Archbold Elementary. We are currently reaching out to families about potential enrollment. This classroom is open to districts outside of Fulton

County. Regarding autism services, we are also working with districts to open an elementary classroom for students at the Independence Education Center and Archbold Middle School. Families are meeting with our supervisors and district administrators, visiting classrooms, and learning more about these options for the 25-26 school year. Skylar Joseph, Educational Audiologist, shared a description about how she and Lisa Giesige, Audiologist Assistant and HI teacher, conduct assessments virtually. This is a team effort that is possible due to technology and the expertise of our team.

•DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Mr. Andy Hunter highlighted the successful launch of registration for the Summer Honors Academy, which opened last night. Approximately 350 students in grades 2–6 are already registered to attend this year's week-long camp. The continued interest and strong enrollment reflect the value families place on this enriching summer experience. He also shared that final preparations are underway for the department's 4th annual Educator Bootcamp, scheduled for the week of June 2–5. This one-week professional development opportunity takes educators into local businesses to build relationships and gain firsthand insight into the skills and expectations students will need to succeed after graduation. The experience continues to strengthen partnerships between education and industry across the region. Additionally, Mr. Hunter noted that he and Mrs. Weir attended the OESCA Franklin B. Walter All-Scholastic Awards Program. County-level winners from the local event were recognized at the state level alongside honorees from all 88 counties. It was a meaningful celebration of outstanding student achievement, and Northwest Ohio was proudly and well represented.

•DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY & OPERATIONS: Mr. Chad Rex shared that 15 new computers were recently acquired, and Mr. Corey Todd has been actively working on their setup and deployment. Mr. Rex noted that plans have been developed for FY26 computer updates, driven by the upcoming obsolescence of Windows 10 in October. This initiative will involve the purchase, setup, and deployment of over forty devices beginning in July. Mr. Rex reported that the April Technology Leaders meeting had 27 participants, with the final meeting of the year scheduled for May 16th. Continuing efforts toward compliance with Senate Bill 29 and the protection of student data privacy, Mr. Rex highlighted the conclusion of a staff survey. He expressed appreciation to Mrs. Melissa Sears and the special education supervisors for their assistance in communicating about the survey, and he thanked all staff who responded. Mr. Rex is now in the process of analyzing the collected data, conducting research, and progressing toward the goal of securing data privacy agreements (DPAs) with appropriate companies. In the area of Operations, Mr. Rex shared that coordination for the upcoming driver training event is progressing well. Registration for the August 4th event has opened, and a "train-the-trainer" session has been scheduled for June 3rd. This session will prepare a group of transportation supervisors and On-Board Instructors to assist with the hands-on training component of the August event. Mr. Rex also noted that for FY25, the ESC is on pace to generate \$3,540 in revenue through meeting room rental agreements. Additionally, Mr. Rex reported on efforts to resolve a water well issue at the IEC facility. Both pumps for the two wells supplying water to the building failed. The main well has been repaired, and work is underway on the second. Mr. Chadd Speiser and Mr. Larry Davis have been collaborating with Watson Well Drilling to address the issue.

•Approved the Following Consent Items:

- Minutes from the regular board meeting held March 19, 2025

- Financial Transactions - appropriation modifications, transfers and advances, and monthly financial reports.

•AGREEMENTS

•Service Agreements/MOU's

-Above Pete's Garage to provide to NwOESC, 21st Century (Hicksville Elem), Extended Learning Opportunities Services for the period of 6/1/25-6/30/25.

-Northeastern Local Schools to provide to NwOESC, Bus Mechanic Services for the period of 7/1/25-6/30/26.

-NwOESC to provide to Edgerton Local Schools, ELL Specialist Services for the period of 2/20/25-6/15/25.

-NwOESC to provide to ESC of Northeast Ohio, Partner ESCs, Ohio Learning Community, and Miami University, Stronger Connections Grant Services for the period of 4/4/25-9/30/27.

-NwOESC to provide to Liberty Center Local Schools and Genacross Family & Youth Services, Liberty Education Center Services for the period of the 2025-26 school year.

-NwOESC to provide to Northwest State Community College, Clinical Education Experiences for the period of 6/30/25-6/30/27.

-To approve Annual Service Agreements with the following districts for the 2025-26 school year per R.C. 3313.845:

- Archbold Area Local Schools
- Central Local Schools
- Edgerton Local Schools
- Edon Northwest Local Schools
- Fayette Local Schools
- Holgate Local Schools
- North Central Local Schools
- Northeastern Local Schools
- Pettisville Local Schools
- Stryker Local Schools
- Swanton Local Schools

-Sunbelt Staffing to provide to NwOESC, Tele-SLP Services for the period of 4/7/25-5/30/25.

-NwOESC to provide to Liberty Center Local Schools and Genacross Family & Youth Services, Inc., Liberty Education Center Services for the 2024-25 school year.

•**Approved Recommendation Items:**

•Approved motion for Sunbelt Staffing to provide to NwOESC, Contingency Permanent Agreement for the effective date of 8/7/25.

•Approved the 2025-26 Consortium Substitute Handbook as recommended.

•Approved motion to recognize and honor all NwOESC employees during Staff Appreciation Week, May 5–9, 2025. The Administrative Team and Board of Education extend their heartfelt thanks to each staff member for their dedication, teamwork, and commitment to advancing the mission and vision of the Northwest Ohio ESC. Your continued excellence in serving students, families, and districts across our region is deeply valued and appreciated.

•**Approved Personnel Consent Items:**

•**LEAVES**

FMLA and Disability

•**RETIREMENTS**

Johnson, Lynn, Paraprofessional, Effective 7/31/2025

Lambert, Dorothy, Education Consultant Effective 6/30/2025

Volkert, Michael, IEC Lead Teacher Effective 6/30/2025

•**RESIGNATIONS**

Ensign, Ashley, Education Consultant Effective 7/31/2025

Franks, Sherryann, Bus Driver, Effective 7/31/2025

Funchion, Mikaela, Paraprofessional Effective 3/26/2025 (position abandonment)

Knepley, Molly, Occupational Therapist Effective 7/31/2025

Kovnesky, Jill, Intervention Specialist Effective 7/31/2025

Luderman, Alison, Special Education Supervisor, Effective 7/31/2025

Ort, Jamie, Paraprofessional Effective 3/28/2025

Phillips, Carey, Paraprofessional Effective 7/31/2025

Reinhart, Shelby, School Psychologist Support Effective 3/7/2025
 Schroeder, Audrey, Paraprofessional Effective 5/29/2025
 Schwab, Haley, Occupational Therapist, Effective 7/31/2025
 Vargas, Micaela, OMEC Office Specialist Effective 5/1/2025
 Weber, Julie, School Climate Facilitator, Effective 7/31/2025

•EMPLOYMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

CONTRACTS

Certified Administrative

Name	Contract	Length
Selgo, Olivia	ADM-2 YR	7/1/2025-6/30/2027
Altman, Michael	ADM-3 YR	7/1/2025-6/30/2028
Rex, Chad	ADM-3 YR	7/1/2025-6/30/2028
Salinas, Jose	ADM-3 YR	7/1/2025-6/30/2028

Certified Administrative- Salary Rate

Name	Contract	Length
Nafziger, Brandi	CLASS-ADM-3 YR	7/1/2025-6/30/2028

Classified Administrative- Hourly Rate

Name	Contract	Length
Gutierrez, Maria	ADM-3 YR	7/1/2025-6/30/2028

Hollstein, Michelle	CLASS- ADM-3 YR	7/1/2025-6/30/2028
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Certified Limited

Name	Contract	Length
Sevey, Winter	CERT-1 YR	8/7/2025-7/31/2026
Sutton, Johanna	CERT-1 YR	8/7/2025-7/31/2026

Certified Administrative Notice

Name

Bell, Heidi
 Brown, Alissa
 Curry, Jestine
 Downing, Mariah
 Elchinger, Stacy
 Flegal, Brody
 Fredrick, Jessica
 Gensler, Kallie
 Gilliland, Jill
 Hunter, Andrew

Lorenzen, Abby
Merillat, Troy
Myers, Jane
Parrish, Stacey
Ritter, Kristine
Weir, Kerri

Classified Administrative- Hourly Rate Notice

Name

Schlosser, Linda
Sears, Melissa

•Substitute Paraprofessional

Laura Brown, Kathleen Grieser, MaryAnn Hurst, Craig Rutter

•Substitute Teachers

MaryAnn Hurst, Natalie Siebert, Dawn Stechschulte, Nicholas Yates

21st Century Site Coordinators

Defiance Middle School- Melissa Barnhart, Mary Frank
Hicksville Elementary- Rachel Ainsworth, Katelyn Niehaus, Jackalyn Siebenaler

21st Century Teachers

Defiance Elementary- Virgina Becker, Emily Cikity, Rachel (Gerken) Nainiger, Deb Rogers
Defiance Middle School- Cynthia Cereghin, Kimberly Engel, Jenna Gibson, Nathan Headley, Olivia Hines, Jamie Knueven, Amanda Kunz, Jana Lucas, Ed Miller, Lauren Perry (Helton), Amanda Rettig, Katie Smolik
Hicksville Elementary- Rachel Ainsworth, Ryan Miser, Katelyn Niehaus, Amber Scranton, Emily Sell, Jackalyn Siebenaler, Heidi Turnbull

21st Century Program Assistants

Defiance Elementary- Lana Kiessling
Defiance Middle School- Stephanie Holbrook, Aubrey Relyea
Hicksville Elementary- Tamarah Chamul, Shelby Oury, Courtney Rittenhouse

•Summer Honors Academy Teachers

Paige Patton

•Approved Personnel Recommendation Items:

•Approved a certified administrative salary contract:

Name	Contract	Length
Gerken, Emily	ADM-3 YR	7/1/2025-6/30/2028

•Approved a certified administrative salary contract:

Name	Contract	Length
Kruse, Michelle	ADM-3 YR	7/1/2025-6/30/2028

•Approved MOU agreement with Behavior Consultant Specialist, Johanna Sutton, for a period of 3 years in relation to contingency permanent fee.

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- Presentation, discussion, and acceptance of public comment on the Independence Education Center/Northwest Ohio Opportunity School Calendar for the 2025-26 School Year was held. The calendar is anticipated for adoption at the May meeting.

- Policy Updates and Recommendations – 1st Reading

Bylaw 0131.1	Technical Corrections	Revised
Bylaw 0171	Review of Policy	Rescind
Policy 1422.01	Drug-Free Workplace	New
Policy 1613/ 3213/4213	Student Supervision and Welfare	Revised
Policy 2340	Field and Other District-Sponsored Trips	Revised
Policy 2460	Special Education	Revised
Policy 5223	Released Time for Religious Instruction	New/Revised
Policy 5330	Use of Medications	Revised
Policy 5350	Student Health, Wellbeing, and Suicide Prevention	Revised
Policy 5751	Parental Status of Students	Revised
Policy 5780.01	Parents' Bill of Rights	New
Policy 7421	Restrooms, Locker Rooms, Shower Rooms, and Changing Rooms	New
Policy 8142	Criminal History Record Check for Contracted School Services	Revised
Policy 8452	Automated External Defibrillators ("AED") and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	Revised

- Summer Operational Hours will be effect June 2 - August 1, 2025 with a Monday – Thursday schedule of compacted hours and doors open to the public from 8:00AM - 4:00 PM
- Financial Disclosure Statements are due to the Ohio Ethics Commission May 15, 2025

•**SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:** Superintendent Kerri Weir reported on several items. The Treasurer/CFO search for North Central Local Schools closed on April 28. The NwoESC team will now work with the district’s board and superintendent to review applicants and identify those selected for first-round interviews. Contract recommendations for the 2025–26 school year are being finalized. Certified and classified staff decisions are based on service needs, performance, and staffing projections. The agency remains focused on employing exceptional individuals who support member districts and student success. Administrative Professionals Day was recognized on April 23 with a catered lunch at the main office. Superintendent Weir expressed appreciation for the professionalism and care provided daily by the office professionals who support NwoESC operations. NwoESC hosted its Spring Legal Update on April 15, featuring Bronston McCord of Ennis Britton LLC. The session covered timely topics including Religious Release Time, the Parent’s Bill of Rights, SB104, federal executive orders, DEI policy changes, and student discipline. Attendee feedback was very positive. A joint meeting between NwoESC and the Northern Buckeye Education Council (NBEC) took place on March 24 as part of the annual building review process outlined in their lease agreement. The meeting focused on shared operational priorities and ongoing facility collaboration. Renovations are underway at the Marathon Health Clinic, which serves NwoESC and district staff as well as other entities. Improvements include expanding from four to nine exam rooms, adding space for behavioral health services, and improving safety and security features. The project is fully funded by the Healthcare Consortium. Superintendent Weir also discussed concerns with the current version of House Bill 96. The bill proposes reductions in public school funding, stalls progress on the Fair School Funding Plan, and leaves ESC funding unchanged. Advocacy efforts with legislators and community stakeholders are ongoing to raise awareness about the potential local impact. Initial conversations have begun regarding a potential cell tower partnership with Arcadia Towers. This could enhance local connectivity and create revenue-sharing opportunities at select ESC properties. St. John’s Lutheran School in Defiance has announced it will cease early childhood and school-age operations after the 2024–25 school year. NwoESC has previously partnered with the school through COVID relief grants and special education support. Lastly, the ESC has completed a newly required federal certification through ODEW, verifying compliance with Title VI non-discrimination provisions.

•**Adjournment:** As all the business of the evening was complete the meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board will take place on Tuesday, May 27, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the Northwest Ohio Educational Service Center, 205 Nolan Parkway, Archbold, OH 43502.