

The following actions were taken by the Northwest Ohio Educational Service Center Governing Board at their regular meeting held October 21, 2024.

The meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by Vice President Brian Baker. All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance. A moment of silence was observed in memory of Four County Career Center Early Childhood Instructor, Susan Myers.

## REPORTS:

**•OSBA STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT LIAISON:** Dr. Christine Smallman shared several items of interest related to student achievement. 4-day school weeks are gaining momentum in the US. By one estimate, more than 60% of districts in Colorado have a four-day schedule to help address teacher shortages and budget issues. While the policy has proven popular and helped some districts retain staff, studies reveal mixed effects on student achievement. E-rate has expanded Wi-Fi hotspot funding. Schools and libraries can apply for E-Rate discounts on Wi-Fi hotspots to support off-campus use, however, strict eligibility and usage requirements must be met to qualify for the discounts. A Bay Village student group repairs computers for their school. A group of students at Bay Village City's Bay Middle School, known as Chromie Homies, are making repairs to the Chromebooks of their peers while gaining real-world technical skills. The program aims to build students' tech skills and confidence while also saving the school district money by avoiding other repair services. Georgia elementary students are turning food waste into compost. Students in Georgia's Lovin Elementary School are learning about sustainability through a composting program, in which they collect food waste in the cafeteria and turn the scraps into compost for the school garden. The program includes students using their math skills by weighing the discarded food while combating food insecurity by offering usable food on a share table. Chronic absenteeism has been shown to affect vulnerable students. Michigan students, particularly those with disabilities and from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, are facing high rates of chronic absenteeism. Experts emphasize that long-standing barriers like transportation and mental health issues have worsened since the pandemic and are calling for systemic solutions to address attendance challenges.

**•CFO/TREASURER:** Mrs. Abby Lorenzen discussed the annual insurance premium changes for calendar year 2025. Due to a change in vision insurance, most employees will benefit from lower premiums with improved coverage. The auditors from Clark, Schaefer, Hackett were recently onsite, and everything went smoothly. Their report is due to the Auditor of State's office by the end of November, with public release by December. Additionally, an SERS and STRS audit was completed successfully, and Mrs. Lorenzen appreciates her staff's efforts in achieving clean audits. A webcheck audit is also now complete and the ESC has been found to be in compliance.

**•DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION:** Mrs. Jill Gilliland reported 15 school psychologists attended this PD opportunity on October 9th. This series is open to district employed and NWOESC school psychologists in our service area. We were able to access larger classrooms at two locations this year. Our Work Transition program at Four County Career Center and our middle/high school classroom at Edon Northwest Local Schools. We do have increased enrollment in these programs, so this additional classroom space has been perfect.

**•DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Mr. Andy Hunter shared that on October 8, 2024, Rebecca Bultsma, an expert in AI, led a hands-on training, with NWOCA facilitating breakout sessions. Participants left equipped with practical strategies and a deeper understanding of AI's role in education. Additionally, it was noted that on October 2, 2024, Eric Sheninger conducted a virtual 'Brunch and Learn,' where area administrators engaged in discussions on empowering staff and students through positive change. The Director also highlighted the upcoming release of Value-Added metrics on October 22, 2024, focusing on student growth. Regional data leads will attend a training in North Carolina to enhance the use of this data. Finally, the Four County Career Center's professional development day on September 27, 2024, was praised for its organization, led by consultant Ashley Ensign, fostering valuable collaboration between both organizations.

**•DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY & OPERATIONS:** Mr. Chad Rex shared that he researched and communicated with the administrative team regarding SB29. Mr. Rex also shared that he received the agreement for the Cybersecurity Co-Pilot Program from NWOCA/NBEC. This is a three-year agreement that provides services that include but are not limited to an annual cyber readiness assessment, assistance with our annual cyber liability insurance application, monthly monitoring & scanning and review meetings quarterly. Mr. Rex will be attending the

Educational Technology Leaders Alliance conference in Columbus this month. Mr. Rex stated that the Technology office implemented a process to begin receiving compensation for old iPads and iPhones from a company that pays for shipping and makes it a streamlined process. Thank you to Mrs. Patricia Shotwell and Mr. Corey Todd for executing this effort. Mr. Rex highlighted that October is Cybersecurity Awareness month and that he has sent emails to the entire staff with helpful information. In that information, he highlighted and encouraged the use of a password manager and reminded staff of the wonderful benefit that the ESC provides through a premium account with LastPass. In addition to the account for work, each employee receives a personal account along with the ability to provide up to five friends or family members with access to a premium account while they are employed with us. Mr. Rex also shared that the phone system was upgraded on October 17th at 4pm and everything went well. It was a collaborative effort between Mr. Rex and Mr. Corey Todd along with the team at NWOCA and DataServ. Mr. Rex further shared that he, Mr. Larry Davis, and Mrs. Pat Turpening have begun planning for an update to the online refresher course for van drivers. The plan is to have this completed by June of 2025. Mr. Davis and Mr. Rex met with the Ohio Schools Council to discuss their driver training services and how the ESC could partner with them for the annual in-service training in August. A proposal is forthcoming.

**•Approved the following items under the consent agenda format:**

•Minutes from the regular board meeting held September 24, 2024.

**•AGREEMENTS**

-Defiance Karate to provide to NwoESC, 21st Century (Defiance MS), Extended Learning Opportunities Services for the period of 10/14/24-6/30/25.

-Northern Buckeye Education Council to provide to NwoESC, Cybersecurity Co-Pilot Program for the period of 7/1/24-6/30/27.

-Songbird Speech Therapy, LLC to provide to NwoESC, Speech-Language Services for the period of 10/10/24-11/30/24.

-NwoESC to provide to Edgerton Local Schools, Roots Analysis Services for the period of 7/1/24-11/30/24.

**•LEAVES**

FMLA and Disability

**•RESIGNATIONS**

Dunham, Jody, School Psychologist Support, Effective 10/21/2024

**•EMPLOYMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**CONTRACTS**

**Certified Limited**

Name	Contract	Length
Dunham, Jody	CERT-1 YR	10/21/2024-7/31/2025

**Certified Limited School Year Enrichment**

Name	Contract	Length
Eidenier, Vicki	CERT-1 YR	10/1/2024-5/31/2025

**Classified Limited**

Name	Contract	Length
Kiefer, Kim	CLASS-1 YR	10/14/2024-7/31/2025
Crosser, Leah	CLASS-1 YR	10/15/2024-7/31/2025
LaGrange, Theresa	CLASS-1 YR	10/15/2024-7/31/2025
Lutz, Rebecca	CLASS-1 YR	10/28/2024-7/31/2025

Pena, Marina                      CLASS-1 YR              10/23/2024-7/31/2025

**Classified Limited School Year Enrichment**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Contract</b>	<b>Length</b>
Alspaugh, Kerri	CLASS-1 YR	10/1/2024-5/31/2025
Keller, Emiley	CLASS-1 YR	10/1/2024-5/31/2025
Keller, Teresa	CLASS-1 YR	10/1/2024-5/31/2025
Mann, Donna	CLASS-1 YR	10/1/2024-5/31/2025
Myers, Dorothy	CLASS-1 YR	10/1/2024-5/31/2025

**Substitute Paraprofessionals**

Shaylee Brown, Lindsay Cooley, Mackenzie Decker, Clayton Douglass, Amber Johnson, Cynthia McCann, Elise Siegel

**Substitute Teachers**

Adysen Andres, Klayton Boland, Patrick Bowsher, Shaylee Brown, Braden Bumb, Olivia Clingaman, Lindsay Cooley, Raina Cox, Molly Crall, Mackenzi Decker, Madyson Eitnhear, Brecken Garretson, Laney Grimwood, Zada Haas, Lindsay Hartman, Christina Hedeon, Silvia Hurtig, Ried Jury, Olivia Kennedy, Edward Koch, Brendan Lanier, Kaylor Martin, Jill McMurray, Gracie Miller, Ethan Panico, MaKenzie Prigge, Zoey Ripke, Elise Siegel, Brooklynn Tracy, Anna Wendt, Kathro Yoder

**Substitute Speech Language Pathologist**

Marty Foltz

**Student Teachers/Interns/Volunteers**

Bockrath, Caitlin, Field Experience as a Rhodes College student, Fall 2024, Placed with Matt Ferguson  
Centers, Kayden, Field Experience as a Rhodes College student, Fall 2024, Placed with Haley Schwab  
Nunez, McKenna, Field Experience as a University of Toledo student, Fall 2024, Placed with Mary Beth Beck

**21st Century Teachers**

Defiance Middle School- Nathan Headley, Katherine Smolik  
Hicksville- Jessica Saunders, Amber Scranton Heidi Turnbull, Kayla Vetter

**21st Century Program Assistants**

Hicksville- Daniel Ainsworth, Tamarah Chamul, Courtney Rittenhouse

**INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

- Departmental Goals/Priorities 2024-25 – The Board was provided a draft of the Departmental Goals & Priorities for the 2024-25 school year as developed by the Administrative Team.
- Everside Health (aka Marathon Health) Clinic – The Board was provided information on the potential expansion of the Health Clinic at the Archbold location to accommodate more examination rooms and other enhancements.
- Solar Energy Project Credit – The Board was updated that the filing is in process and on target for submission.
- Superintendent/CFO annual evaluations were distributed.
- A summary of the 2025 Benefit Increases for Health, Dental, Vision, and Life was shared:
  - Northern Buckeye Health Plan (NBHP) recently set the health, dental, vision, and life rate increases for 2025.
    - All health plans will see a 2% increase. These include the Traditional Access + Healthcare Plan, the Advantage High Deductible Healthcare Plan with a Health Savings Account, and the OpenCare Reference Based Pricing Plan.

- The dental plans will increase 4%.
- All vision plans were transitioned to fully insured vision plans and will be offered at a composite rate.
- Life insurance will see no increase.
- Staff will be receiving more detailed information as the open enrollment period approaches.

•**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Mrs. Kerri Weir reported that ESC leadership is once again offering district visits this year, focusing on districts with newer Superintendents and Treasurers. These visits provide the opportunity for personalized, one-on-one discussions to address the specific needs of district leadership. The visits will include an overview of NwoESC's programs and services, details on the annual estimate and billing process, and a walkthrough of program cost documents. In November, staff from NWOCA, NBHP, and NwoESC will gather for the annual building safety meeting. Over time, significant efforts have been made to enhance safety at both the Main Office and the IEC/Opportunity School. Special acknowledgment goes to Chad Rex, Larry Davis, Jestine Curry, and Stacey Parrish for their contributions to safety initiatives, which include annual drills, systems testing, required school drills, Emergency Operations Plans (EOP), ALICE training, public address system and surveillance upgrades, emergency response guides, door access controls, and the provision of first aid kits, AEDs, and Narcan/Naloxone kits and training. Healthcare Process Consulting recently provided an overview of the Ohio Medicaid School Program (MSP) to area Superintendents and Treasurers. Since its inception in 2009, NwoESC has played a key role in coordinating districts' participation in the program. NwoESC staff - including those in occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, audiology, nursing, mental health, and evaluation/assessment services - help districts secure Medicaid funding. In the 2020-2022 school years, approximately \$9.2 million in settlement payments were received by member districts for eligible costs, with NwoESC staff contributing to 78% of the reimbursements. The program is expected to expand in the coming school year to include more students and services, and NwoESC will continue supporting districts to maximize reimbursements. Quarterly meetings with Superintendents from surrounding ESCs—ESC of Lake Erie West, Hancock County, Putnam County, Wood County, Western Buckeye, and North Point—offer valuable opportunities for collaboration, sharing of information, and resource exchange. Mrs. Weir expressed her appreciation for the camaraderie within this group and looks forward to continued learning from fellow ESC leaders.

•As all the business of the evening was complete the meeting adjourned at 5:46 p.m. The next meeting will take place on **Monday, November 18, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.** (changed from 11/19/24 at 6:00 p.m.) at the Northwest Ohio Educational Service Center, 205 Nolan Parkway, Archbold, OH 43502 with the Finance Committee meeting immediately following.