

The following actions were taken by the Northwest Ohio Educational Service Center Governing Board at their regular meeting held March 18, 2025.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Kelly Hug. All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **REPORTS:**

•**OSBA LEGISLATIVE LIAISON:** Mr. Brian Baker reported on several legislative items. Recently, Governor DeWine gave his annual State of the State address. In his address, the governor highlighted the state's progress and successes in literacy, the Governor's Merit Scholarship program, school-based health clinic expansion, student career exploration and workforce development training. Gov. DeWine asked the legislature to support various education proposals within the state operating budget, including his request for a mandatory school cell phone ban; expanding Ohio history and life skill curriculums; and integrating drivers' education into high schools. The House Education Committee heard testimony on HB 62, which would make changes to the College Credit Plus program, including requiring notice to school districts when a student drops a college course, transitioning to open-source textbooks, and lowering the cost of certain online CCP courses. The Senate Transportation Committee adopted a substitute version of HB 54, the transportation budget bill, which would authorize school districts to utilize 12-passenger vehicles for regular student transportation. The House Finance Committee heard public testimony recently on HB 96, the House's version of the FY26-27 state operating budget. Northwest Ohio ESC CFO/Treasurer, Abby Lorenzen, provided testimony in support of public school and ESC funding.

•**OSBA STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT LIAISON:** Dr. Christine Smallman shared information related to student achievement. An elementary school's breakfast club provides students with a supportive space to transition into the school day, fostering social-emotional well-being through creative activities and staff check-ins. Lakewood City's high school students recently developed financial literacy skills through a program designed by First Federal Lakewood to teach students real-world financial knowledge, including how to manage expenses, understand interest rates and develop responsible money habits. Ohio's career and technical education (CTE) programs are rapidly expanding, with a \$200 million state investment aimed at training students for high demand manufacturing roles like welding, machining and robotics. Enrollment is surging statewide, with over 136,000 juniors and seniors participating.

•**CFO/TREASURER:** Mrs. Abby Lorenzen presented a new grant for approval on the agenda, the School Safety Training grant, which is provided by the Ohio Attorney General's office. These funds will be used to purchase manuals for the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) training for ESC and district staff. She mentioned that districts are currently reviewing their service agreements for the 2025-2026 period, with those already approved locally included in the consent agenda for the board's approval. Mrs. Lorenzen expects the remaining agreements to be presented for approval next month. On March 12, Mrs. Lorenzen traveled to the Statehouse in Columbus to testify before the House Finance Committee regarding the Fair School Funding Plan and ESC funding, alongside many public school advocates. She expressed hope that their voices would be heard and that updates would be made to the funding formula for ESCs. She also reminded everyone about the upcoming Audit/Finance Committee Meeting on April 29, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

•**DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION:** Mrs. Jill Gilliland shared information about a new 1-Year Interim Resident Educator license that will be available for the 2025-2026 school year for candidates who have not yet met the exam requirements for standard Resident Educator licensure. One key component of this license is that candidates are required to have scored at least 206 on the Ohio Assessment for Educators (OAE) content area and Foundations of Reading exams. This is a change from the previously required passing score of 220. Due to increased projected enrollment in our multiple disabilities classrooms, along with the results of our survey to districts about the need for additional services for students with autism, we are working closely with school districts to identify additional classroom space for the 2025-26 school year. We will be sharing plans with districts very soon. Local school board approval verification is now due on May 30, 2025 (instead of March 30th).

**•DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Mr. Andy Hunter reported that the annual Franklin B. Walter Scholarship Award event took place on March 10, 2025. The event recognized an outstanding high school senior and teacher from each district, highlighting the exceptional talent within the region. He expressed appreciation for the many individuals who contributed to the event's success, including Michelle Hollstein for organizing, Larry Davis for setup, Four County Career Center for providing centerpieces, and all consultants and staff members who assisted throughout the evening. He also shared the following dates that the state testing windows will be open.

- ELA: March 24 – April 25, 2025
- Math, Science, Social Studies: March 31 – May 9, 2025
- Results Availability:
  - Math, Science, Social Studies – May 13, 2025
  - ELA – May 21, 2025

Finally, Mr. Hunter also reported that preparations for the annual Summer Honors Academy are well underway. Flyers are being distributed to area schools, with each district responsible for identifying and inviting students best suited for the program. Registration is set to open on April 29 at 6:00 PM, and due to the popularity of certain courses, early sign-ups are encouraged. The curriculum department is excited to continue planning this enriching opportunity for students.

**•DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY & OPERATIONS:** Mr. Chad Rex shared that he has been working to ensure compliance with Senate Bill 29, which relates to student data privacy. In collaboration with Mrs. Jill Gilliland, Mr. Rex met with Dawn Schiavone, NBEC's student data privacy officer, to develop a process tailored to meet the ESC's needs. A survey is being distributed to a select group of staff to collect initial data on resources that house personally identifiable information (i.e., education records). This initiative will facilitate the acquisition of data privacy agreements with providers and advance the next steps in the ongoing process of protecting student data. Mr. Rex highlighted his involvement in supporting the Franklin B. Walter Scholarship event, where he contributed through video editing, presentation development, and website production. The videos from this event are available for viewing at <https://www.nwoesc.org/fbw2025>. Mr. Rex noted that he and Mr. Corey Todd met with NWOCA network engineers to develop plans for the organization and design of network closets. The goal is to complete this project during the summer. Additionally, Mr. Rex announced that he has joined a federal cybersecurity group that provides free assistance and information. He completed an onboarding meeting this month as part of his ongoing professional learning and efforts to improve the ESC's cybersecurity posture through the Cybersecurity Co-Pilot program in collaboration with NWOCA and DataServ. Mr. Rex also reported that he met with the ESC's phishing email training platform provider to coordinate and plan ongoing efforts. These meetings occur quarterly, and he was pleased to report that the most recent phishing campaign resulted in a 7% phish rate. In the area of Operations, Mr. Rex shared that the IEC experienced a septic tank issue caused by water backflow into the system and an electrical wiring failure between the building and the pump house. Mr. Larry Davis and Mr. Chadd Speiser worked together to identify and coordinate a resolution. J.A. Hillis, LLC promptly addressed the septic issue late on Friday and into Saturday, while Woolace Electric was onsite early Monday morning to resolve the electrical issue. The team's quick action and a temporary electrical line ensured no disruption to IEC's daily operations. Mr. Rex highlighted that at the main office, Mr. Larry Davis coordinated efforts to address a water leak in the main line entering the building. Schlatter's Plumbing promptly resolved the interior leak, though the Village encountered an issue turning the water supply back on, requiring an overnight repair. Mr. Rex commended Mr. Davis for his ongoing efforts in completing the renovation of the Business Office workroom into a new office space. Mr. Rex noted that over the past 90 days, the ESC's meeting spaces have hosted more than 70 events. Additionally, Mr. Rex announced that the ESC's new online training courses for drivers of vehicles other than buses are now live. He expressed appreciation for Mrs. Pat Turpening's dedication in developing the courses and for Mr. Larry Davis's assistance. Mr. Rex also shared that registration for the annual driver training in-service has been released. The training, hosted at Archbold High School on August 4th, will feature presentations by the Ohio Schools Council (OSC) Bus Safety and Security team. The event will include both a classroom portion and hands-on bus simulations. Mr. Rex expressed gratitude to member districts for their support in providing buses and trainers for this event.

**•Approved the Following Consent Items:**

- Minutes from the regular board meeting held February 25, 2025
- Financial Transactions - appropriation modifications, transfers and advances, and monthly financial reports.

**•AGREEMENTS**

**•Service Agreements**

-Diligent to provide to NwOESC, BoardDocs Pro for the period of 3/18/25-3/18/26, then automatic renewal for 1-year terms until written notice of non-renewal.

-Sunbelt Staffing to provide to NwOESC, Tele-Audiologist Services for the period of 8/13/25-6/12/26.

-NwOESC to provide to Bowling Green City Schools, Visual Impairment (VI) Services for the period of 8/15/24-6/15/25.

-NwOESC to provide to Defiance City Schools, Substitute Speech Therapy Services for the period of 1/6/25-2/21/25.

-NwOESC to provide to Holy Cross Catholic School, Occupational Therapist Services for the period of 8/15/24-6/15/25.

-NwOESC to provide to North Baltimore Local Schools, Visual Impairment (VI) Services for the period of 8/15/24-6/15/25.

-NwOESC to provide to Northwood Local Schools, Visual Impairment (VI) Services for the period of 8/15/24-6/15/25.

-NwOESC to provide to Pike-Delta-York Local Schools, Roots Analysis Services for the period of 3/7/25-6/30/25.

-NwOESC to provide to The University of Toledo/Judith Herb College of Education, Practicum/Student Teaching Experiences for the period of 3/18/25-3/18/28, then automatic renewal for 3 additional terms of 1 year each.

-NwOESC to provide to Van Wert City Schools, Independence Education Center Services & Speech Therapy Services at the IEC for the period of 11/21/24-6/15/25.

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

- Bryan City Schools
- Defiance City Schools
- Liberty Center Local Schools
- Millcreek-West Unity Local Schools
- Montpelier Exempted Village Schools
- Patrick Henry Local Schools

**•Licensing Agreement**

-Five Star Registration System for the period of 3/18/25-3/17/26, then automatically renew for 1-year terms until written notice of non-renewal.

•Approved Business Advisory Council Annual Report/Joint Statement March 1, 2025

**•Approved Recommendation Item:**

•Adopted special education model policies and procedures (with slight modifications).

**•Approved Personnel Consent Items:**

**•LEAVES**

FMLA and Disability

**•RETIREMENTS**

Mutzfeld, Deborah, Intervention Specialist – Effective 5/31/2025

Shawber, Julie, Preschool Intervention Specialist – Effective 5/31/2025

**•RESIGNATIONS**

DeLong, Ashley, Paraprofessional Effective 3/12/2025

Smith, Susan, Paraprofessional Effective 7/31/2025

Treace, Savannah, Paraprofessional Effective 3/14/2025

**•EMPLOYMENT RECOMMENDATIONS****CONTRACTS****Certified Administrative- Salary Rate**

Name	Contract	Length
Nafziger, Brandi	CLASS-ADM-2 YR	3/19/2025-6/30/2025

**Certified Limited**

Name	Contract	Length
Elser, Addison	CERT-1 YR	8/1/2025-7/31/2026
Trivelas, Alexandra	CERT-1 YR	8/1/2025-7/31/2026

**Classified Limited**

Name	Contract	Length
Waters, Ashley	CLASS-1 YR	3/19/2025-6/30/2025
Blevins, Crystal	CLASS-2 YR	3/19/2025-6/30/2025
Colegrove-Mitchell, Amy	CLASS-2 YR	3/19/2025-6/30/2026
Grunden, Ashlee	CLASS-2 YR	1/1/2025-7/31/2026
Kirkingburg, Sarah	CLASS-2 YR	3/19/2025-6/30/2025
Carpenter, Mikala	CLASS-CONT	3/19/2025-CLASS CONT
Shively, Kendall	CLASS-CONT	3/19/2025-CLASS CONT

**•Substitute Paraprofessional**

Kali Landskroener

**•Substitute Teachers**

Ricardo Avila, Hayley Bostelman, Mackenzie Detmer, Kathryn Gentit, Elizabeth Mitchener, Blake McClory, Jennifer Perry, Molly Perry, Sydney Pickles

**•Summer Honors Academy Teachers**

Kaitlyn Kersey, Kiersten Long, Jacob Palte

**INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

- The Board was provided an NwOESC Business Advisory Council Quarterly update, and the December 19, 2024 Meeting Minutes were shared.
- A reminder to complete the Financial Disclosure Statements was provided, as they are due to Ohio Ethics Commission by May 15, 2025.

- A notice of public comment regarding the re-employment of Dorothy Lambert has been shared. This meeting will take place on Tuesday, April 29, 2025 at 5:50 p.m. (prior to our regular meeting).
- Discussion was held regarding Nominating Petitions and Statement of Candidacy for the General Election November 4, 2025.

•**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Superintendent Kerri Weir reported the Northwest Ohio Educational Service Center continues its efforts to support districts and staff through various initiatives, programs, and collaborations. The search for Montpelier's next CFO/Treasurer has successfully concluded, with Eric Smeltzer, currently serving as North Central's Treasurer, accepting the position. He will transition into his new role on August 1, replacing Carla Rice. As a result, North Central has partnered with NwOESC to facilitate the search for his successor. Superintendent Weir and CFO Lorenzen are scheduled to meet with North Central's leadership soon to discuss next steps in the selection process. On March 4, the Independence Education Center (IEC) welcomed area administrators to an open house, providing an opportunity to observe staff and students in action and tour the facility. Those who participated found the event valuable. NwOESC extends its appreciation to all who contributed to making the event a success. The Four County Suicide Prevention Coalition, supported by the Four County ADAMHS Board, remains active in its mission to increase awareness, reduce stigma, and encourage help-seeking behaviors related to suicide prevention. Superintendent Weir has represented NwOESC and the PreK-12 education community as a coalition member for the past 13 years. The coalition brings together various agencies, community members, and families to support awareness and prevention efforts. More information about its initiatives can be found at [www.4countysuicideprevention.org](http://www.4countysuicideprevention.org). Each month, NwOESC building-based staff are recognized with birthday treats and mini potlucks, thanks to the coordination of Linda Schlosser. The organization extends its gratitude for her efforts in fostering a positive and celebratory workplace culture. Now in its third year, the "Shout Outs" initiative continues to highlight the outstanding contributions of NwOESC staff. This program provides a platform for recognizing the positive impact of staff members in classrooms, programs, offices, and districts. Submissions and photos are collected through a dedicated link, with highlights shared via email and across social media platforms each month. The NwOESC appreciates those who take the time to acknowledge and celebrate the hard work of its staff.

•**Adjournment:** As all the business of the evening was complete the meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board will take place on Tuesday, April 29, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the Northwest Ohio Educational Service Center, 205 Nolan Parkway, Archbold, OH 43502. (Public Comment for the Re-employment of Dorothy Lambert will take place at 5:50 p.m.).