

The following actions were taken by the Northwest Ohio Educational Service Center Governing Board at their organizational and regular meetings held January 28, 2026.

The organizational meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m. by President Pro-Tem Kelly Hug. All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

- A moment of silence was observed in memory of Mr. Robert Baker, former Henry County School Superintendent, who passed away recently. His leadership in education impacted many students and families throughout the area.
- Commended Mr. Brian Baker on his recent retirement from the Liberty-Washington Township Fire Department, after 55 years of dedicated service.
- Approved the appointment of Christine Smallman as Northwest Ohio Educational Service Center Board Member District 2 effective January 27, 2026 through December 31, 2027.

-The Treasurer administered the oath of office to elected and appointed Board members.

- Elected Kelly Hug as President of the NWOESC Governing Board for 2026.
- Elected Ross Stambaugh as Vice-President of the NWOESC Governing Board for 2026.
- Established the following for regular monthly meetings; (4th Tuesday unless noted)

TIME: 6:00 pm

LOCATION: NWOESC Conference Room

DATES: February 24, 2026

March 24, 2026

April 28, 2026

May 26, 2026

June 23, 2026

July 28, 2026

August 25, 2026

September 22, 2026

October 27, 2026

November 24, 2026

December 15, 2026 (3rd Tuesday)

-Records commission to meet as needed after the regular NWOESC governing board meetings.

• Approved the appointment of the Superintendent, Director of Special Education, and the Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Development as purchasing agents for 2026 with the dollar limit of \$15,000 for the Superintendent per purchase, and \$7,500 for the Director of Special Education, and the Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Development per purchase. Purchase requests in excess of the Superintendent's limit will require Board approval.

• Granted the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer, Abby Lorenzen:

- Authority to pay bills, process payrolls, invest Board funds and make all necessary cash advancements to grants during 2026.
- Serve as the designee for each NWOESC governing board member effective 01/01/26 to comply with the requirements of the Ohio Public Records Law.

• Approved motion to allow the Superintendent, Kerri Weir (or her designee as applicable):

- To participate in Federal, State or other funded grants, contracts or agreements as they become available to the Board in 2026, and then be brought to the Board for ratification.

- To permit the superintendent to hire employees during 2026 contingent upon Board approval at the next regularly scheduled meeting.
- To authorize the Superintendent, on behalf of this Board, and to acknowledge acceptance of such offer on behalf of this Board, to accept resignations which have been submitted by employees during times when this Board is not in session, subject to ratification by this Board; provided however, that upon ratification by this Board, such resignations shall be deemed effective as of the date and time of the Superintendent's acceptance
- To approve school bus drivers and van drivers for Board certification who have met all of the established requirements. At the next regularly scheduled Governing Board meeting, these names will be approved also by the NwOESC Governing Board.

•Set the fees to individuals requesting copies of the schedule of meetings, agenda, or notice of individual meetings.

•Approved a Resolution Expressing Public Purpose for Educational Service Center Activities

•Appointed Jill Gilliland as Compliance Officer female representative and Andy Hunter as Compliance Officer male representative for the purpose of coordinating the Center's efforts to comply with applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including the duty to address in a prompt and equitable manner any inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination/retaliation or denial of equal access (i.e. Civil Rights, Anti-Harassment, Section 504, ADA, and Title IX) for 2026.

•Appointed Jill Gilliland and Andy Hunter as Title IX Coordinators for the purpose of coordinating the Center's efforts to comply with applicable Federal regulations regarding nondiscrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities for 2026.

•Appointed the following people to serve as OSBA Liaisons:

OSBA Legislative Liaison: Mr. Brian Baker

OSBA Student Achievement Liaison: Mrs. Nona Rupp

•Appointed individuals to serve on the following Committees:

Audit/Finance Committee: Abby Lorenzen, Ross Stambaugh, Jim George, Mary Alice Nagel

Building and Grounds Committee - Kerri Weir, Abby Lorenzen, Chad Rex, Brian Baker, Deborah Gerken, Christine Smallman

Policy Committee - Kerri Weir, Abby Lorenzen, Nona Rupp, Lori Weber, Kelly Hug

•As the Organizational meeting was complete, the meeting was adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

The Regular Meeting of the NwOESC Board of Education was called into session at 5:28 p.m. by President Kelly Hug. Attendance was noted.

REPORTS:

•**OSBA LEGISLATIVE LIAISON:** Mr. Brian Baker reported that due to inclement weather, the Ohio Legislature was not able to meet but are expected to be in session next week.

•**CFO/TREASURER:** Mrs. Abby Lorenzen updated the board on recent and upcoming fiscal activities. She shared that mid-year estimates were distributed on January 13, and staff are currently processing ODE deduction changes for several districts. At the combined superintendent and treasurer meeting on February 17, fiscal year 2027 initial estimates will be distributed. These estimates are calculated using current-year mid-year student count data, staff levels, and projected salary and insurance increases based on historical trends. She also reported that several grants will be updated through appropriation modifications this month. While the IDEA-B Special Education grant allocation update is still pending, the carryover funds have been received, noting that this grant typically experiences allocation changes at mid-year. Additionally, slight increases were received for the Title III, Early Childhood Special Education, and MEP ID and Recruitment grants. Mrs. Lorenzen concluded with a reminder for board members to complete their Ohio Ethics Commission Financial Disclosure Statements by May 15 and noted

that paper copies can be provided at the board meeting if needed. She also reviewed upcoming meeting reminders, including the Audit/Finance Committee meeting scheduled before the February regular board meeting and the March Records Commission meeting prior to the regular meeting.

•DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION: Mrs. Jill Gilliland shared an update on the number of students who are currently being served through various NWOESC programs, such as : Preschool services, MD Classrooms, autism classrooms, IEC K-12 program, Work Transition classrooms, Hearing Impairment classrooms and services, Vision Impairment services, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Adapted PE, and Work Study Coordinators. Denise Sawan Caruso, OCALI consultant, has worked with NWOESC over the years to provide professional development, most recently with our preschool program. She is currently providing classroom specific PD for two NWOESC Multiple Disabilities classrooms this year. Her work is at no cost to the NWOESC or districts and includes classroom visits. NWOESC is glad to be working with and learning from Denise again this year. Jill shared flyers for the upcoming early childhood screenings that will be held across Fulton, Williams, Henry, and Defiance counties. The screenings are free and are for children ages birth to 5 years old.

•DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Mr. Andrew Hunter reported that in December, Governor DeWine signed House Bill 114 into law, revising Ohio's kindergarten age requirement beginning with the 2026–2027 school year. Under the new law, students must be five years old on or before the first day of the academic year to enroll in kindergarten, representing a shift from previous cutoff practices and requiring districts to begin planning for implementation. In addition, the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce released a state model artificial intelligence policy to support districts in meeting the July 1 deadline for adopting a local AI policy. The model provides guidance on student and staff use, academic integrity, data privacy, communication, and instructional applications and is available in an editable format. Mr. Hunter shared updates on several upcoming initiatives and events scheduled for the coming weeks. The Franklin B. Walter Scholarship Evening will be held on March 9, 2026, recognizing outstanding students from 23 districts and four counties, with one representative per county advancing to the OESCA luncheon for additional recognition. Quarterly Resident Educator meetings continue to support first- and second-year teachers through targeted professional learning and networking opportunities focused on high-need areas. Quiz season is currently in progress across the four-county area, with strong student participation, and appreciation is extended to Michelle Hollstein for coordinating this extensive academic competition.

•DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY & OPERATIONS: Mr. Chad Rex reported that NWOESC began an audio/visual enhancement project for its conference room spaces. He noted that displays were upgraded in two rooms, and the replaced displays were relocated for use during large events with alternate room layouts. Additionally, he added that projector lamps were replaced, and filters were cleaned as part of the project. Mr. Rex stated that the work is expected to be completed this week once the contractor installs new controls, upgrades firmware, and updates the system programming. In addition, Mr. Rex shared that he and Mr. Larry Davis have been meeting with the Ohio Schools Council to finalize the training plan for the final two hours of the four-hour driver in-service. He highlighted that the team is pleased with the direction and content of the session and indicated that registration will be announced to districts in early March. Mr. Rex explained that the most recent Technology Leaders Meeting was held on January 16 and included 37 attendees representing 29 districts and organizations, with 21 participants attending in person and 16 participating remotely. He emphasized that key discussion topics included student data privacy, cybersecurity, school safety technologies, and strategies to support district educational initiatives. Additionally, Mr. Rex reported that Mr. Davis continues to provide significant support for the west-end renovation project for Marathon Health Clinic, which is in its final stages and nearing completion. He noted that Mr. Davis has been a key member of the implementation team and has contributed to keeping the project on track. Further, Mr. Rex stated that he is finalizing work related to the organization's internet contract renewal through the federal E-Rate funding program. He added that NWOESC receives a 90 percent discount for both the main office and the Independence Education Center. Finally, Mr. Rex shared that the Technology and Operations team completed 233 technology requests through the online ticketing system over the last three months.

•Approved the Following Consent Items:

- Minutes from the regular Board Meeting held December 16, 2025

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

•AGREEMENTS

Approved the following service agreements and MOUs:

-Above Pete's Garage to provide to NwOESC, 21st Century (Hicksville Elem), Extended Learning Opportunities Services for the period of 3/1/26-6/30/26.

-NwOESC to provide to Bowling Green City Schools, Instructional Services at the Liberty Education Center for the 2025-26 academic year.

-NwOESC to provide to ESC of Northeast Ohio, Fiscal Services (North Central Local Schools) for the period of 1/26/26-4/30/26.

-NwOESC to provide to St. Mary Catholic School, Intervention Specialist Services for the period of 8/1/25-6/15/26.

-NwOESC to provide to Patrick Henry Local Schools, Roots Analysis Services for the period of 7/1/25-1/30/26.

-NwOESC to provide to Pettisville Local Schools, Fiscal Services for the period of 1/23/26-6/30/26.

-NwOESC to provide to Pike-Delta-York Local Schools, Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer Search Services for the period of 1/21/26-position is finalized or until agreed upon by both parties to terminate services.

•Ratify the following service agreement:

-Current Office Solutions to provide to NwOESC, eFax Services for the period of 10/22/25-10/22/26.

•Approved a short-term lease agreement with Miller Bros. Const., Inc for specified office space of approximately 2438 square feet located in the NwOESC main office building effective March 16, 2026 - March 16, 2027.

•**Approved Personnel Consent Items:**

•**LEAVES**

FMLA and Disability

RETIREMENT

- Shively, Cheryl, Intervention Specialist, Effective 5/29/2026

RESIGNATION

- Mays, Ryan, Paraprofessional, Effective 1/14/2026
- Meyer, Angie, Paraprofessional, Effective 1/13/2026 (position abandonment)
- Nofziger, Natalie, Paraprofessional, Effective 1/16/2026
- Wilhelm, Rebecca, Paraprofessional, Effective 1/15/2026

•**EMPLOYMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

CONTRACTS

Certified Limited

Name	Contract	Length	Schedule
Hoops, Adrienne	CERT-1 YR	1/5/2026-7/31/2026	Teacher/IS
Orta, Robert	CERT-1 YR	1/5/2026-7/31/2026	Teacher/IS

Classified Limited

Name	Contract	Length	Schedule
Evans, Madison	CLASS-2 YR	8/1/2024-7/31/2026	Hourly
Hartman Zielinski, Alexis	CLASS-1 YR	1/5/2026-7/31/2026	Hourly
Minion, Kelly	CLASS-1 YR	1/5/2026-7/31/2026	Hourly

•**Approved the following substitute teachers and paraprofessionals:**

Substitute Paraprofessionals

Kamryn Chaffee, Mackenzi Decker, Clayton Douglass, Sophia Good, Ginger Hibbs, Cheznie Keber, Kylee Kern, Ryan Mays, Chelsea Pifer, Eli Plassman, Jodie Sabins, Elizabeth Shilts, Heather Zachrich

Substitute Teachers

Josh Atkinson, William Bany Jr., Isaac Brenneman, Mackenzi Decker, Clayton Douglass, Brittney Finnegan, Sophia Good, Sarah Harris, Madelyn Hopper, Bailey Izor, Kendyl Kime, Dana Leaders, Ryan Lothamer, Ryan Mays, Washington McGilvery III, Isaac Miler, Kent Morris, Christina Norman, Jessica Pfund, Eli Plassman, Nevaeh

Powers, Kyle Rabe, Brooklyn Reineke, Sydni Rivera, Kasen Schooley, Elizabeth Shilts, Madison Stairhime, Lacy Stull, Chloe Wiechers, Tori Wright

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- Salary Schedule Recommendations for FY27 & FY28 were discussed.
- OSBA/ESC Board Member Training is being held on Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.
- Penta Career Center All Boards Dinner is being held on February 26, 2026 starting at 5:30 p.m.
- OSBA NW Region Spring Conference will be held on March 19, 2026 at the Liberty Benton Local School District.
- 2025 Ohio Ethics Financial Disclosure Statement are due May 15, 2026.
- Superintendent/Treasurer Evaluations were finalized.

•**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Superintendent Kerri Weir reported on several items. NwoESC will be working with the PDY districts on their CFO/Treasurer search. The posting will roll out in early February, with interviews tentatively planned for March and early April. The goal is to have a person in place by August 1 for the 2026–27 school year. NwoESC is also updating its Service and Program Guide for the coming school year as conversations with member districts begin in February and extend into March. NwoESC continues to look for new opportunities to support districts across Special Education, Curriculum, Gifted, Fiscal services, and building operations. Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) are now in place across northwest Ohio through Unison Health, providing 24/7 behavioral health crisis support for youth from birth through age 20. Crisis responders can go to youth wherever they are - at home or at school - to help de-escalate the situation, develop a safety plan, and connect youth and families with ongoing supports. This is a free service and can be accessed by calling 988. NwoESC will continue to monitor the Vouchers Hurt Ohio lawsuit related to EdChoice. In early January, attorneys for Vouchers Hurt Ohio filed a reply brief in the Ohio 10th District Court of Appeals in the ongoing case. Ohio's Medicaid School Program (MSP) expanded effective January 1, 2026. With this expansion, districts may claim Medicaid reimbursement for a broader range of eligible students and services, and additional categories of qualified staff may be able to provide reimbursable services. The state is also updating required forms and billing guidance, including the School Services Plan of Care. Overall, the expansion is intended to increase access to reimbursement - particularly for services such as OT/PT, speech-language, nursing, and certain behavioral health supports - many of which are routinely provided by NwoESC staff. NwoESC is thankful for the thorough documentation completed by its staff that helps districts draw down the reimbursement available to them through the MSP. NwoESC continues to provide member districts with a Consortium Substitute List of eligible substitute teachers and paraprofessionals annually and throughout the year. NwoESC handles screening and documentation to verify qualifications prior to adding individuals to the list, and recruitment remains ongoing to bring in new candidates willing to serve in area districts and at the ESC. Currently, there are 529 individuals on the active list. NwoESC thanks Amy Colegrove-Mitchell for her work in managing key aspects of this process. More information is available at <https://www.nwoesc.org/Substitutes>. In December, NwoESC staff showed their giving hearts through generous support of Snack Sisters, a Fulton County-based nonprofit group that is part of the 501(c)(3) nonprofit Shepherd's Circle in Archbold. Staff contributed funds to help advance their mission of providing weekend snack packs for students at the Independence Education Center, along with encouragement for IEC staff. NwoESC thanks community member, Lilli Radabaugh, who spearheads this effort along with all the other volunteers.

•A Motion to enter into Executive Session was made for the purpose of consideration of the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee, or official. No action was taken upon exiting Executive Session.

•**Adjournment:** As all the business of the evening was complete the meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m. The regular meeting of the Board will take place on Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. at the Northwest Ohio Educational Service Center, 205 Nolan Parkway, Archbold, OH 43502.