

The following actions were taken by the Northwest Ohio Educational Service Center Governing Board at their regular meeting held November 18, 2024.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by President Deborah Gerken. All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **REPORTS:**

•**OSBA LEGISLATIVE LIAISON:** Mr. Brian Baker reported on legislative items of interest. Now that the November Election is over, the General Assembly will return to the Statehouse for a handful of lame-duck sessions before the end of the year. The Senate returns on 11/13, with both committee hearings and a session. The House does not have a session scheduled until December but will be holding various committee hearings on 11/12. The Senate concurred with the House's amendments to SB 104, with a vote of 24-7. SB104 originally addressed Ohio's College Credit Plus system, but in the final hours before the General Assembly's summer recess, the House added the "Protect All Students Act" regarding single-sex bathroom access in schools and institutions of higher education to the bill. With this vote of Senate approval, SB104 will be sent to the governor's desk for signature. There are several education related proposals to watch - 13 in the Ohio House and 14 in the Ohio Senate.

•**OSBA STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT LIAISON:** Dr. Christine Smallman reported on a productive OSBA Capital Conference, including excellent dialogue with student liaisons.

•**CFO/TREASURER:** Mrs. Abby Lorenzen has added responsibilities to Brandi Nafziger's position. Ms. Nafziger has also completed her coursework and officially obtained her treasurer's license two years prior to the agreed upon timeline. Her hard work in completing the coursework early is appreciated, and she is a strong asset to the Business Office. At the April board meeting, the board approved an agreement with RMS US LLP for tax services in relation to IRC Section 48 Energy Credit, which allowed the filing for a tax credit for the solar field. The preparation has been completed, and the return has been submitted to the IRS. A sizeable credit is anticipated.

•**DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION:** Mrs. Jill Gilliland shared that BASA and ODEW held a joint online meeting on October 25th to discuss updates to the Operating Standards and Model Policies and Procedures for Special Education. A summary document of changes to the Operating Standards is available on the ODEW website. Districts will need to follow specific requirements when adopting the newest version of Policies and Procedures when those become available. The Work Transition Program newsletter was shared. The Work Transition Program, offered through NwoESC and housed at Four County Career Center, promotes the development of employability skills, along with social/emotional, behavioral, and daily living skills needed for success in both the workplace and in life. Classroom Intervention Specialists, Catlyn Pavel and Adrian Whitney, are instrumental in planning for Stryker Local Schools is a new job site for students in the classroom. Other regular activities include visiting the public library and weekly cooking lessons.

•**DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Mr. Andy Hunter reported that this month, our Regional Data Leads had the opportunity to travel to Cary, North Carolina, for advanced training in Value-Added metrics. This intensive program delves deeply into understanding the data and statistical foundations behind value-added measures and progress on school report cards. Next, he shared that this year, the curriculum department has taken intentional steps to foster stronger connections among the growing number of school social workers and area guidance counselors. The main objective is to create a support network these professionals can rely on as they address challenges related to mental health, substance abuse, academic success, and a range of other responsibilities. Mr. Hunter thanked Julie Weber for facilitating these crucial meetings. Finally, Mr. Hunter commended Mr. Mike Remer, and the class of his career from Swanton Middle School as these students traveled to the OSBA Conference to showcase their class and some of the unique activities happening at Swanton. The students enthusiastically shared their projects and how they connect to real-world applications, serving as outstanding ambassadors for their school. Congratulations to everyone involved in making this a memorable experience!

•**DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY & OPERATIONS:** Mr. Chad Rex reported that he attended the Educational Technology Leaders Alliance conference in Columbus. This was an outstanding opportunity to hear from technology leaders across the State on timely issues such as cybersecurity and artificial intelligence. He shared that he was involved in two other professional learning opportunities this month by attending a cybersecurity seminar hosted by

NWOCA and the Ohio CyberReserves and attending the OSBA conference. Mr. Rex also shared that a kickoff meeting was scheduled for the Cybersecurity Co-Pilot Program with NWOCA/DataServ. 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 stated that he has been coordinating the selection of a software development contractor that is necessary for the maintenance and future enhancements of the ESC's custom software applications. The special education and the business offices demonstrated the software to assist in the generation of the proposals. The proposals have been received and the team will be selecting a contractor as soon as possible. Mr. Rex was thrilled to report that the upgraded Cisco Webex phone system is fully implemented. Communications containing basic training information have been sent to employees. Everyone is settling in well with the difference and enjoying the new opportunity to utilize the Webex app that provides the ability to better communicate away from the desk. Mr. Rex also highlighted that he and Mr. Larry Davis received a proposal from the Ohio Schools Council for delivering the 2025 driver training program. Work is underway to communicate the opportunity to our member and non-member districts. Mr. Rex shared several maintenance projects as well. Mr. Davis has been hard at work rebuilding the bathroom faucets at the main office. This work saves a considerable amount of money over the alternative options of upgrading the faucets as well as the option of contracting the work. A reverse osmosis system was installed in the main office's cafe. Mr. Davis worked with Aquatek Water Conditioning to plan and install this system with our water and ice machine. Mr. Davis will be connecting this to the hot beverage machine in the cafe as well. Mr. Rex stated that he supported the creation and submission of a grant for the preschool department and a member district. Mr. Rex share that he and Mr. Davis prepared for and attended the annual building safety meeting and follow-up work is underway relative to quotes for access controls.

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

•Minutes from the regular board meeting held October 21, 2024.

**•AGREEMENTS**

-Learn21 to provide to NwoESC, EdTech Leaders Alliance (ETLA) District Membership for the period of 11/7/24-11/7/25.

-Sunbelt Staffing to provide to NwoESC, Tele-SLP Services for the period of 1/6/25-2/24/25.

-NwoESC to provide to Anthony Wayne Local Schools, Independence Education Center Services for the period of 8/15/24-6/15/25.

-NwoESC to provide to Anthony Wayne Local Schools, Instructional Services at the Liberty Education Center for the 2024-25 academic year.

-NwoESC to provide to Defiance City Schools & St. John Lutheran School, Speech Therapy Services for the period of 8/15/24-6/15/25.

-NwoESC to provide to Napoleon Area Local Schools, Instructional Services at the Liberty Education Center for the 2024-25 academic year.

**•LEAVES**

FMLA and Disability

**•RESIGNATIONS**

Alsubehat, Sami, Paraprofessional- Effective 11/27/2027

Cozart, Brittany, Paraprofessional- Effective 10/30/2024 (position abandonment)

Durfey, Chelsey, Paraprofessional- Effective 11/15/2024

Heather Voyer, Paraprofessional- Effective 11/8/2024

Hernandez, Jacqueline, School Psychologist Support- Effective 11/27/2024

Miller, Denise, Paraprofessional- Effective 11/12/2024

Oberlin, Amy, Paraprofessional- Effective 11/11/2024

Riley, Daniel, Educational Audiologist- Effective 11/1/2024

**•EMPLOYMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**CONTRACTS**

**Certified Limited**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Contract</b>	<b>Length</b>
Fraker, Christine	CERT-1 YR	11/11/2024-7/31/2025
Rutledge, Stacy	CERT-1 YR	11/18/2024-7/31/2025

**Classified Limited**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Contract</b>	<b>Length</b>
Williams, Shelby	CLASS-1 YR	10/31/2024-7/31/2025
Brown, Shaylee	CLASS-1 YR	11/18/2024-7/31/2025
Durfey, Chelsey	CLASS-1 YR	11/4/2024-7/31/2025
Gifford, Chantel	CLASS-1 YR	11/15/2024-7/31/2025
Mcquillin, Rodney	CLASS-1 YR	11/26/2024-7/31/2025
Wolfrum, Amanda	CLASS-1 YR	11/14/2024-7/31/2025

**Certified Administrative- Salary Rate Notice**

**Name**

Nafziger, Brandi

**ESC Long Term Substitute Paraprofessional**

Sanaa Brown

**Substitute Paraprofessionals**

Jenny Ackerman, Melissa French, Kirian Mercer, Jena Mireles, Denise Sholl, Josh Williams

**Substitute Teachers**

Peyton Arme, Lowyn Atkinson, Gabriella Bowers, Madilyn Coler, Clayton Douglass, Austin Farnsel, Addison Gerken, Katelynn Greer, Jordyn Hein, Sydnie Horning, Mikala Jimenez, Aliya Khandaker, Cynthia McCann, Kirian Mercer, Karissa Merillat, Carter Michel, Jena Mireles, Aubrey Pennington, Brooklyn Reineke, Allison Salmi, Adryan Sanchez, Callie Seedorf, Micah Shelton, Brianna Sintobin, Macey Stover, Nick Tammarine, Kerrin Towers, Kevin Tufts, James Tyler, Aerial Weidner, Lindsay Whitman Drewes, Josh Williams, Scylea Zolman

**Student Teachers/Interns/Volunteers**

Henry, Payton, Practicum as a University of Toledo student, Fall 2024, Placed with Katie (Goodman) Donaldson  
Kulaszewski, Rachel, Practicum as a University of Toledo Student, Fall 2024, Placed with Brooke Varble

**21st Century Teachers**

Defiance Middle School- Kimberly Engel, Emily (Clark) Henry  
Hicksville- Carrie Bussing, Emily Sell

**Van Driver**

NwOESC - Kim Kiefer

•Approved motion to set the annual Tuition Reimbursement Budget for 2025-26 per board policy #3450

**INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

- The NwOESC Organizational Chart has been updated to reflect current positions/titles, roles, and relationships.
- NwOESC was recently designated as a “High Performing ESC”, demonstrating cost savings in key service areas. This information will be shared with our member districts.
- The Administrative Team’s Departmental Priorities/Goals for FY25 were finalized with the Board.
- The Administrative Team is investigating a new budgeting tool through PowerSchool, Allovue, to help allocate and manage budgets and resources, including real-time access to all budgeting information, and analytics and dashboards to track and manage spending. More information will be forthcoming.

•**SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:** Mrs. Kerri Weir reported on several items. The NwOESC BAC is proud to host Director Stephen Dackin at the upcoming December 19th meeting in Archbold. Director Dackin will share his vision for K-12 public education in Ohio and bridging the gap between business and education sectors. Council members are being encouraged to bring a “plus one” representing a business or community partner. Middle School and High School Principals are also being invited. Annual tuition reimbursements were recently processed. Reimbursements made this fall were based on coursework taken during the 2023-24 school year and offset a portion of staff’s tuition expenses. 10 staff members took advantage of coursework reimbursement through this policy. A Treasurer/CFO search will be underway in the next few months as the Montpelier District will have an opening at the end of this school year. NwOESC is facilitating the search process with the Board and Administration. The Defiance County Sheriff’s Office continues to provide part-time SRO support at the Independence Education Center/Opportunity School as well as several other districts in Defiance County. We appreciate the work of Deputy Sheriff/D.A.R.E. Officer, Jim Hall, on our IEC/Opp School campus. An Energy Credit has been applied for and is anticipated for the Solar Project and other building energy efforts. Special thanks to Abby Lorenzen, Chad Rex, and Larry Davis for their work on this. The State Teachers Retirement Board has approved two benefit changes for active members retiring between June 1, 2025, and July 31, 2027. The required years of service for an unreduced retirement benefit is lowered to 33 years from 34 years at any age. Eligibility for a reduced retirement benefit is lowered to 28 years of service from 29 years of service at any age. The current eligibility for reduced retirement at age 60 with five years of service remains unchanged.

•As all the business of the evening was complete the meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m. The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, December 17, 2024, at 6:00p.m. at the Northwest Ohio Educational Service Center, 205 Nolan Parkway, Archbold, OH 43502.