

**REGION III SPECIAL EDUCATION COOPERATIVE
EXECUTIVE MEETING
November 19, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Rob Miller, Chairperson, at 10:08 am. Roll Call was as follows:

Present: Dr. Patrick Anderson, Dr. Jill Griffin, Mrs. Nancy Werden, Mr. Rob Miller, Dr. Todd Dugan

Not in attendance: Dr. Kevin Bowman

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS:

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Adopt-A-Family

Mrs. Lenger shared with the Board that Klaudia Taul is organizing the Adopt-A-Family program again this year. The program will support 16 families by providing gifts for the holidays.

Donations for Families

Mrs. Lenger reported that one of her teachers from the Journeys program recently made a Facebook post expressing concern for families struggling due to the current economic climate. Following the post, a friend reached out offering financial support, which led to additional community members contributing as well. As a result, the teacher received approximately \$2,300 in donations to support families in need.

The teacher asked each student in the program to provide a list of supplies their family needed. Staff then used the donated funds to purchase the requested items. These supplies were delivered to families last week.

Mrs. Lenger also noted that Marcy Tegel, a teacher in the high school program, received a monetary donation from a parent of one of her students. The parent requested that the funds be used to support any student in need during the holiday season. Mrs. Tegel is using the donation to assist a family participating in the Adopt-a-Family program.

Region Recognition

Mrs. Lenger reported that she recently presented Region Recognition Awards to the COTAs in acknowledgment of their efforts in collaborating with Dr. Kara Williams to expand understanding of the occupational therapy scope of practice within educational settings. This work has included exploring additional roles COTAs can support, such as fine motor tasks, sensory needs, and executive functioning skills. Mrs. Lenger noted that change can be challenging and emphasized that the process has been a learning experience for everyone, with continued growth underway.

Mrs. Lenger also recognized the district coordinators, commending their outstanding work, dedication, and ongoing efforts to make improvements, accommodate needs, and support necessary changes. She expressed her appreciation and wanted the superintendents to be aware of the high-quality work the coordinators are doing.

Art Gallery and Pictures with Santa

Mrs. Lenger informed the Board that the Art Gallery with Santa event will be held again this year. The event is scheduled for December 11th from 5:00–6:30 p.m. at East Alton Wood River High School in the Student Success Center.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Financial

Mrs. Lenger provided a budget update, reporting the percentage of funds expended in each area of the budget. She noted that a significant portion of professional development funds had been utilized for the recent attorney-led

training session. Dr. Anderson commented on the presentation, stating that he was very impressed with both the quality of the session and the information provided.

Personnel

Mrs. Lenger informed the Board that she is still seeking to hire several paraprofessionals. She noted a particular need for an additional paraprofessional in Marcy Tegel's classroom, which currently serves nine students. She reported that during a crisis situation last week, both the teacher and one paraprofessional were required to assist, leaving the remaining paraprofessional responsible for the other eight students. Mrs. Lenger commended the paraprofessional for handling the situation effectively, but emphasized that adding another paraprofessional would provide needed support.

Mrs. Lenger also shared that her ideal staffing addition at this time would be a Social Worker/BCBA dedicated to working directly with parents. She explained that families need increased support and education in areas such as managing behaviors, toileting, and reducing excessive screen time. Dr. Griffin added that she has observed an increase in elementary students entering school without being potty-trained, without attending pre-kindergarten or kindergarten, and with limited parental engagement.

Mrs. Lenger inquired whether it would be possible to mandate parent education for families whose children attend a Region III program. Dr. Griffin stated she was unsure whether such a requirement could be mandated. Dr. Anderson agreed and suggested that if parent education opportunities are offered, providing childcare and transportation could improve participation.

Current Programs

Mrs. Lenger reported that there are currently 54 students enrolled across all programs. She noted four students are pending placement: one East Alton student for Lewis and Clark Junior High in Brittany Rabe's room; two East Alton-Wood River High School students, one for the Journeys program and one potentially for the Transition program next semester; and one Southwestern student for Klaudia Taul's room at Bethalto East. She also informed the Board that a student from Bunker Hill has returned to the district, and the transition appears to be going well.

Dr. Griffin asked about plans to address the elementary behavior classroom, which is currently full. Mrs. Lenger shared that she met with the coordinators last week as a group and is meeting with them individually this week to discuss their needs for the remainder of the year and for next year. She is considering whether it will be necessary to split the elementary behavior room, but expressed concern about having sufficient staffing and classroom space to add another room.

Mrs. Lenger also noted a potential need to split the middle school classroom, as some students require more academically focused instruction while others need more functional-skills support. She stated that she has already posted an additional teaching position after speaking with Dr. Anderson regarding available space in his building, but she has not received any applicants.

Mr. Miller asked whether adding a teacher referred to moving an existing teacher or hiring a new one. Mrs. Lenger explained she is considering moving one of the two teachers currently in the co-taught behavior room, noting that it is difficult to place a new, unfamiliar teacher into that type of setting. Mr. Miller then asked about the financial impact on the districts if a new teacher were hired. Mrs. Lenger stated she is unsure but noted that the current class has seven students, while she typically caps classrooms at six. Dr. Anderson mentioned he has a few students who could potentially be placed in that room.

Mr. Miller asked whether financial implications and possible tuition increases were being considered before posting new positions. Mrs. Lenger clarified that she is not planning to split the classroom until next year and that her current meetings with coordinators are intended to determine program needs for the next school year. Mr. Miller expressed concerns about rising out-of-district tuition due to an increasing number of students with significant needs moving into the district. Mrs. Lenger acknowledged this challenge, noting it is difficult to anticipate needs across program levels due to frequent district-level student move-ins.

Dr. Griffin asked whether permanent substitutes are utilized. Mrs. Lenger stated that Region III employs one permanent substitute and that Tammy Pickerill occasionally fills in as a paraprofessional and will be covering Jenna Massey's maternity leave. She added that staff are very flexible and willing to float to meet coverage needs.

Mrs. Lenger concluded by stating that her goal is to continue educating and supporting district staff so that students can remain in their home districts whenever possible, while also ensuring appropriate placement options are available for students who require a more specialized setting.

FOR DISCUSSION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

RBT Training Program

Mrs. Lenger informed the Board that the RBT program is fully up and running and reported that Genevieve met with the Bethalto staff this week. She noted that four paraprofessionals are currently enrolled in the program. Mrs. Lenger shared that she has received positive feedback from staff who completed the training last year and expressed her hope to continue strengthening and improving the program.

Dr. Griffin commented that she is confident participation will continue to grow each year because the program is effective and consistently improving.

Mrs. Lenger also stated that she will be seeking Board approval for the employment of a paraprofessional, Hannah Weid, who is already RBT certified. Ms. Weid will be placed at Bethalto East with Klaudia Taul.

Cyclical Monitoring Preparation

Mrs. Lenger shared with the Board that the cyclical monitoring process is ongoing. She reminded districts to continue working on their Behavior Intervention Policy and Procedures and expressed her hope that all are making progress.

Behavior Intervention Policy and Procedures, First Reading

Mrs. Lenger asked the Board if there were any questions regarding her Behavior Intervention Policy and Procedures and offered assistance to superintendents who may need support in completing their own. She noted that several districts have already finalized their policies and received board approval.

Dr. Griffin inquired whether Bethalto's policy had been board-approved. Mrs. Lenger clarified that while the MTSS manual has been approved, the Behavior Intervention Policy and Procedures have not yet received board approval.

Mrs. Lenger also informed Dr. Todd Dugan that she has not received any updates from Suzanne Spickerman regarding their district's policy and recommended that he check with her to determine whether it is completed and ready for board approval.

Special Education Procedures, First Reading

Mrs. Lenger stated that she received the Special Education Procedures Manual from the attorney's office and has made all recommended additions and changes as suggested by the attorney.

Transportation Times

Mrs. Lenger stated that she wanted to review all transportation times to ensure shared responsibility among staff. She noted that in the Journeys program, the IEPs reflect five hours of daily instruction, but occasionally this instruction time falls short. She acknowledged that, at times, districts may have drivers unavailable, making it unavoidable to pick up students early.

RIF Committee Meeting

Mrs. Lenger informed the Board that the RIF Committee will meet on Monday, November 24, 2025, to hold it before the required timeframe of December 1st.

AUDIT REPORT

Mrs. Lenger informed the Board that she did not invite Donna from the accountant's office to present the audit findings to alleviate that cost. She shared that the audit resulted in a clean opinion on the regulatory basis of accounting and confirmed there was sufficient cash to begin the year. On page 7, the other sources not classified elsewhere are \$48,250, and that is for the additional leased premises at Journeys for our Transition Program. The offsetting expense shows as capital outlay on page 10. On pages 9 and 10 are the details of the expenditures. Salaries were up 23% from FY24, as well as benefits of 26%; however, purchased services were down 11%. Overall, the budget was marginally overspent by \$371.00.

CLOSED SESSION

Dr. Pat Anderson moved to enter into a closed session at 10:51 a.m. Dr. Todd Dugan seconded the motion. Roll call was taken with Members Voting, Yes, 5-0. Motion carried. Dr. Pat Anderson moved to come out of the closed session at 11:01 a.m. Mrs. Nancy Werden seconded the motion. Roll call was taken with Members Voting, Yes, 5-0. Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA/ACTION ITEMS

Dr. Jill Griffin moved to approve the consent agenda, including the bills, regular board minutes, and closed session minutes. Dr. Pat Anderson seconded. Roll call was taken with Members Voting, Yes, 5-0.

Dr. Todd Dugan moved to approve the employment of Hannah Weid, Paraprofessional with RBT certification. Mrs. Nancy Werden seconded. Roll call was taken with Members Voting, Yes, 5-0. Motion carried.

Dr. Jill Griffin moved to approve the maternity leave of Jenna Massey, SLP, and Nichole Clowers, Teacher. Mrs. Nancy Werden seconded. Roll call was taken with Members Voting, Yes, 5-0. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Pat Anderson moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:03 am. Mrs. Nancy Werden seconded. Motion carried with Members Voting, Aye-5, Nay-0.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting for the Region III Executive Board will be held on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, at 10:00 am.

Respectfully Submitted,



Katie Wieckhorst, Administrative Assistant



Mr. Rob Miller, Chairperson