



**WCASS General Membership Meeting  
November 17, 2009  
3:45 pm  
Marriott West Madison, Middleton WI**

**Executive Board Members present:**

**Phil Knobel**, Executive Director  
WCASS

**Elected Officers:**

**Gary Myrah**, President  
Port Washington-Saukville  
**Timothy Gantz**, Past-President  
Green Bay

**Dave Kwiatkowski**, President-Elect  
CESA #8  
**Ken Kassees**, Treasurer  
Kettle Moraine School District

**Dawn Western**, Secretary  
CESA #11

**Standing Committees:**

**Kurt Eley**, Legislation  
Waunakee School District  
**Nissan Bar-Lev**, Research  
CESA #7  
**Howard Kallio**, Constitution  
Oconomowoc School District  
**Kelly Kapitz**, Newsletter  
Marathon County School District

**Steve Smith**, Membership  
WI Rapids School District  
**Greg Nyen**, Conference Committee  
Stevens Point School District  
**Jan Chapman**, Social Awards  
Cedarburg School District

**Barb Van Haren**, Research  
CESA #1  
**Tammy Fruik**, Conf. Committee  
Green Bay Public Schools  
**Mardi Freeman**, CEC Rep  
Hamilton School District

**Region Chairs:**

**Diane Knudsen**, Region 4  
Eleva-Strum School District  
**Mary Cimbalk**, Region 1

**Bob Geigle**, Region 2  
Oshkosh School District

**John Peterson**, Region 3  
Fort Atkinson School District

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A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order at 3:50 pm.

**Secretary Report, Dawn Western:** General membership meeting minutes from May 2009 have been posted to the WCASS website. Motion to approve minutes made by Nissan Bar-Lev, seconded by Chris Blakely. Motion carried.

**Treasurer Report, Ken Kassees:** The books have been audited and everything has been approved. Actual budget has also been approved. A copy will be provided to you if you contact Ken via email.

Motion to approve the budget report as presented made by Steve Smith, seconded by Fred Wollenberg. Motion carried.

*Handouts: treasurer's report*

## Discussion Items:

- 1. Seclusion and Restraint – Gary Myrah and John Forester** Gary updated those present on the executive board's decision to not participate in the stakeholders' invitation. Further meetings of the stakeholders have been suspended. Kudos to John Forester and Phil Knobel for their hard work on this issue on such short notice. John updated us on the stakeholders' meeting. Our position is to wait for the federal law before developing a WI law. The tone from the other side is that districts are knowingly doing things that harm kids. Nissan Bar-Lev reiterated the importance of sending him information regarding any types of training done in districts regarding restraint/seclusion. Another member suggested also sending information on any positive behavior intervention trainings as well. Gary requested input from any members who may have differing views. Gary Deitz reviewed what was in the proposed bill. It included a certified staff member needed per building to oversee seclusion/restraint in that building. DPI would be required to provide that training. Seclusion and restraint would need to be in the IEP, and the parent would need to consent to it. The documentation required is also exorbitant. Phil suggested that we let our current legislators know what we are currently doing in our districts. Question regarding whether the Department of Family Services was invited to the stakeholders' meeting. There was no representation at the first meeting, but they will be invited to future meetings. Question regarding what direction the federal government is taking. It is not clear at this point.

*Handout: resolution to stakeholders' invitation*

- 2. Conference Report – Tammy Fruik, Greg Nyen – RtI** will be a keynote discussion. Other sections to include: standards in IEPs, RCCs, homeless services and McKinney-Vento, cyber bullying and internet safety, eating disorders, trauma response. In May, topics to include: ARRA, self assessment, school based services and attendant care services, DPI updates, graduation rates, LD criteria, discipline updates, seclusion/restraint update.
- 3. Induction Grant – Tom Balliet** – Tom explained the DPI grant. Out of 24 new directors this year, only 2 needed to go through the PDP process. Tom will develop a program using a coaching model. He is in the process of developing a manual that is quick and useful. Most of the manual is appendices. Examples of the appendices include: timelines, leadership issues, resources, standards, coaching tips. Tom asked for veterans to submit 1-2 sentence tips to include. There will be a question of the week to initiate topics of conversation between the coach/new director. There will be opportunities for networking for the new directors at future conferences.
- 4. SAA and Legislative Report – John Forester** – The current atmosphere at the capitol is all about the 2010 elections. Transportation is an issue being discussed along with allowing full categorical aide reimbursement for staff spending 15% of their time on pre-referral interventions. Question from the membership was asked about DPI's authority. This issue is around allowing DPI to intervene in districts that are failing. It is currently being delayed in the legislature. Milwaukee governance was another question raised. There is currently no agreement in the legislation regarding Milwaukee. Comment from the membership regarding mental health parody bill - it covers groups of 50+ people. The hope is to extend mental health for all group sizes. Hearings have been held and went well. Bills will likely be on the floor for votes in January and are expected to pass. Question to Stephanie Petska regarding DPI's support of the bill allowing DPI to

intervene. Stephanie said DPI is in favor of it. Tony Evers believes he should have the authority to step in when failure has become entrenched. Gary informed us that Stephanie Petska has been elected as secretary/treasurer of the national NASDE board.

- 5. Report on CASE Executive Board** – Gary represented us at the national level. Issues at the federal level included: seclusion/restraint, stimulus money is currently close to what we were promised in the law originally (38% to promised 40%). This is an opportunity for us to write to federal representatives thanking them for this funding and letting them know what we want to be able to continue with the additional funding. Gary informed us that we are currently looking for a president elect and a treasurer for May elections. Please put your name in if you are interested.
- 6. SLD Eligibility Criteria – Barb Van Haren** – Barb explained about the 4 meetings held over the course of this past year. All elements proposed as criteria were addressed based on research. This will help maintain incidence rates. The new criteria eliminate the discrepancy model and information processing. Low academic achievement and slow rate of progress will be the new criteria. Exclusionary factors will still apply. Consistency between districts was a big factor in their decisions. We need to support specificity and need for consistency as we work with staff back in our districts. It is in the cabinet level currently. Public discussions will occur in February. Question from the membership regarding the opposition of the reading specialists' viewpoint in regard to the SLD criteria - the feeling at the meeting was that they are more concerned with the art of teaching reading vs. the mechanics of reading. They don't want specificity in the law. It's anticipated that the reading specialists will oppose the bill when it gets to public discussion. Stephanie reported that the SDD criteria may not be attached to the SLD criteria. There have been issues raised at the national level regarding extending the age limit to 9.
- 7. Long Range Plan – Gary Myrah** – We anticipate 40% retirement of special education directors within the next 5 years. We need to have a plan in place to support the new people entering the field. The number of regulations is an issue. We believe this is happening because we have been complacent and adaptive to others' needs. The board is looking to the membership for feedback on what the membership wants to change and what their needs are. DPI is helping to convene a group to look at an easier way of reporting information for Medicaid. We need members to participate on this committee. Bookkeepers also need to be a part of it. More surveys will be done in regard to how we can make things better for our profession. We will no longer be complacent.
- 8. Communications – Phil Knobel** – Steve Smith handed out portfolios to the new directors present. Phil gave an overview of the communication board resource on the WCASS website. He welcomes suggestions to improve it. The 4 SAA organizations will be setting up a career center soon. Information to be coming in the next 2-3 weeks. You can look to hire administrative staff and people can post their resumes. It will be a secure site, and things can be posted anonymously. This career center will replace the individual ones for each organization. Unpaid members were reminded to please pay their dues. Joanne Grossman was thanked for her work on the mental health parody bill.

**Other areas of concern –**

**Self assessment** - Barb Van Haren explained there are a number of resources available on the WCASS website. Another member said that she was informed by DPI that the next cycle of self assessment will be different than the current cycle. There may also be a shifting of which year the districts will be in the cycle.

**Insurance for autism** - Check the WCASS website for information on this issue and share with parents on the bill that is in process.

Motion made by Steve Smith to adjourn. Gary Dietz seconded . Meeting adjourned at 5:10 pm.