



NSSEO September 2023 Governing Board Brief

Superintendent's Welcome Note - Dr. Meg Schnoor



It has been a beautiful fall so far and we are enjoying the start of the 23-24 school year with our amazing students and staff. Seeing students arrive at school each day and the big smiles on their faces as they reunite with their favorite staff members has been my favorite way to start the day! Recognizing so many staff at our recent board meeting for their attainment of tenure was truly a highlight of our back to school season, as was welcoming dozens of new NSSEO staff members during our New Staff Orientation. I'm sure you will enjoy reading this month's board briefs and the details of all of the wonderful things happening at NSSEO.

Warmly,
Meg

September Shining Stars - Michelle and Jack Reynolds

One of the highlights of our NSSEO Summer Transportation Workshop was our opening speakers and tonight's Shining Stars, Jack and Michelle Reynolds. Jack and Michelle delivered a heartfelt speech to attendees that provided a touching glimpse into their journey of raising their son Owen and sending him to school every day on a school bus. Their words highlighted the essential role our bus drivers and aides play in the lives of our students and left a lasting impact, fostering a greater awareness of their lives of a family with a child with special needs.

In addition, Jack and Michelle have been wonderful supporters of both the Kirk and Miner Programs and have presented at previous NSSEO events including our NSSEO Opening Day celebration. Kirk and Miner administration and staff describe the Reynolds as supportive, collaborative and amazing school partners.

Michelle and Jack Reynolds



Tenure - Special Recognition



Nineteen staff members were approved for tenure or non-probationary status by the NSSEO Governing Board after the successful completion of four consecutive years or three years of excellent summative ratings. The following staff members are committed to building promising futures for students and are recognized for their outstanding achievements.



Jessica Andriesen - D/HH Teacher, DHH Itinerant
Sean Casserly - LBS1, Timber Ridge
Gregory Ciufo - Transition & Career Specialist, Kirk
Carly Cummings - Occupational Therapist, Kirk
John Freeman - LBS, Timber Ridge
Amy Gallinger - Instructional Coach, Timber Ridge
Katherine Grueb - LBS1, Kirk
Kasey Jauch - Adaptive PE Teacher, Kirk
Pamela Koerkel - Social Worker, Timber Ridge
Samantha Kopley - Social Worker, Timber Ridge
Elizabeth MacNamara - Vision/O&M Teacher, DESC
Rebecca Masucci - LBS1, Miner
Alyssa Reynolds - Occupational Therapist, Kirk
Jane Rhee - LBS1, Kirk
Amy Roehl - SLP, Kirk
Triseygeni Rogaris - Behavior Specialist, Kirk
Christina Spizzirri - LBS1, Kirk
Shannon Sweezy - Vision Teacher, DESC
Kaitlyn Thallemer - LBS1, Kirk

New Staff Orientation



The NSSEO new staff orientation always has a contagious level of excitement with a dash of trepidation. It essentially is a springboard for the new school year, specially designed to welcome new staff and connect them with supporting staff, mentors and leaders across

NSSEO. While most NSSEO staff are still wrapping up summer activities or putting finishing touches on their classrooms, a few dozen staff are thrilled to introduce this new group of amazing staff members to the world of NSSEO. The other essential component that sets the incredible tone for the work together is the special setting for the orientation. For anyone who has been fortunate enough to visit Sunrise Lake, the warm welcoming, and embracing outdoor education center creates a magical experience. SLOEC's magnetic Bryan Bolger leads every group through a sophisticated exercise that immediately bonds the group members together through collaborative problem-solving with a fun-loving yet competitive edge. There is often some hesitation in starting something new, especially for staff fresh out of college or others starting a completely new career path or district or community. Bryan Bolger and his amazing SLOEC staff set the positive, enthusiastic tone for the year and new staff quickly embraced the wonders of the morning session. There was a heightened level of excitement on the sunny August morning as we welcomed our new NSSEO superintendent, Dr. Meg Schnoor. She shared touching stories of her family and how a beloved family member sparked her initial pursuit of special education at a young age. Several years of schooling later Dr. Schnoor began her educational career in one of NSSEO's classrooms as a teacher's aide.

New staff orientation is a significant kick-off for the school year. There are many dedicated central office staff who have tirelessly worked to find, recruit, assist and hire these unique and talented new educators. While we know they are excited to join our NSSEO family, it is mutual as the NSSEO family is just as thrilled for our new team to form new friendships and begin to partner with others for the common goal of helping our students succeed and reach all of their goals.

Opening Day Highlights



The opening days of school were a resounding success, marked by a palpable sense of excitement and anticipation. Dr. Meg Schnoor visited each of the programs and delivered opening remarks filled with promise as she set the tone for what promises to be a remarkable and enriching year ahead. Here are some pictures and highlights from the opening days with staff and students.

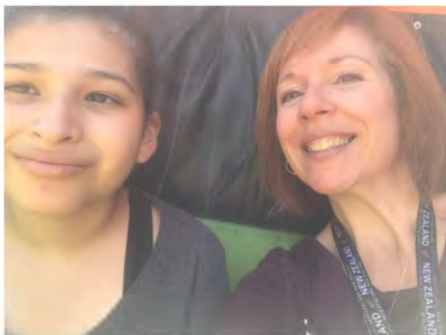


Meet The Principal - Dr. Tiffanie Jeffrey

Miner parents and students were able to meet their new principal, Dr. Tiffanie Jeffrey, as they dropped off supplies for "Meet the Teacher " earlier in August. Smiles and laughter filled the hallway as Dr. Jeffrey introduced herself to the proud Miner community. A special thank you to Andy's Frozen Custard for donating delicious desserts for the entire community to enjoy.



Remembering Julie Hollamby



During the September Governing Board meeting, Principal Brian Weems led the audience in a moment of silence in honor of Julie Hollamby. Julie, a beloved member of our NSSEO and Kirk Campus family, passed away on Friday, September 1st after a courageous battle with cancer. All of us deeply feel this loss, as she was not just a dedicated occupational therapist, but also a cherished friend and mentor to many.

In this difficult time, we want to offer our heartfelt condolences to Julie's family, students, and colleagues whom Julie has positively impacted. Our thoughts and prayers are with them as they navigate through this challenging period. We recognize Julie's profound impact on all of us, and we are here to support one another during this grief.

Julie will be deeply missed, and the legacy of her dedication to students with special needs will continue to inspire us all.

Harvest Fest at SLOEC

It is one of the most exciting times for our NSSEO families and students. The 7th Annual Harvest Fest takes place on Saturday, October 28th, and is jam-packed with good fun for all ages! Pumpkin carving, hot chocolate, apple cider making, archery, hiking, music, hotdogs, s'mores, and our huge trebuchet where with the right amount of teamwork we can launch pumpkins into the lake. This is the first of two special events hosted by our Sunrise Lake Camp and all our family and friends are invited to come enjoy the festivities.



NSSEO's Seventh Annual  2023

Harvest Fest

October 28th
11:30am - 3:30pm
Sunrise Lake Outdoor Education Center
401 S. Route 59, Bartlett, IL 60103

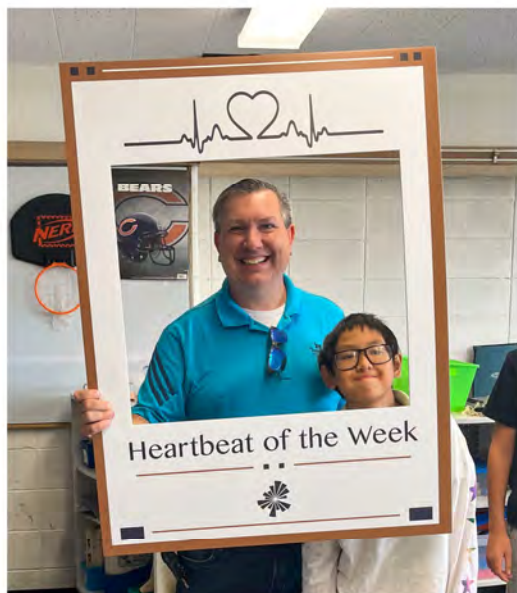
FOOD | PUMPKIN LAUNCHING | PUMPKIN CARVING | HIKING | MUSIC
APPLE CIDER MAKING | ARCHERY | S'MORES



Food will be provided - corn on the cobb, hotdogs and apple cider.
If language translation support is needed please contact:
Bryan Bolger - bbolger@nsseo.org



Heartbeat of the Week is Back



NSSEO is in its fourth year of celebrating amazing staff members nominated by their peers and recognized at the beginning of each week for their heart and compassion, making a difference for students every day. The celebration team continues to honor our “NSSEO Heartbeats” every week with a surprise visit from members from Central Office, a special shout-out via email, Twitter, Facebook, and a small token of our appreciation - from the heart.

NSSEO’s first Heartbeat of the Week this year is none other than Miner’s very own, Ryan Callahan. Ryan is a brilliant intermediate teacher who

tirelessly helps his students achieve their personal goals. We are so thankful for the passion, dedication, and leadership he brings to the profession!

Continued Focus on Recruitment and Hiring

NSSEO has continued the recruiting and hiring efforts and there are still a few available positions for the upcoming year that are posted for the upcoming 2023-24 school year. [Click this link to check out any job vacancies.](#)

Upcoming NSSEO Events:

Kirk Fall Dance

NSSEO Governing Board Meeting

Indigenous Peoples' Day - All Buildings Closed

School Improvement Day

-Students Not in Attendance

End of First Quarter

Harvest Fest @ SLOEC

Date/Time

9/29/23 from 6:30-8:30 PM

10/4/23 @ 7:00 pm

10/9/23

10/16/23

10/20/23

10/28/23 from 11:30-3:30 PM

Making a Difference

NSSEO is continually looking for ways to expand partnerships with parents, districts, community leaders, and legislators to join together as a community committed to deepening understanding and positively impacting NSSEO students and families. To learn more about how to make a difference visit us at [Make A Difference](#) as well as on our social media platforms:

Twitter

@NSSEO_org

Facebook

@NSSEO

Instagram

NSSEO_org

[NSSEO.org](https://www.nsseo.org)