



Educational Communications Board

3319 West Beltline Highway • Madison, WI 53713-4296 • 608.264.9600 • ECB.org

EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS BOARD MEETING

January 20, 2023

9:30 A.M.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Marta S. Bechtol, Executive Director

Welcome, Megan Bellini!

I am thrilled to announce the appointment of Megan Bellini as ECB's new executive staff assistant. Megan comes to us by way of the Senate Chief Clerk's office. She's been in state service since 2017 and is already very familiar with the ins and outs of the state's software programs, travel and procurement rules and records management requirements. Additionally, she impressed the panel with her genuine commitment to our mission-focused work; her demonstrated ability to remain calm under pressure; and her honest passion for public media.

We hope that you will all enjoy working with her in the months and years to come.

Annual Audit

ECB is required to undergo an annual financial audit to remain qualified for Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) funding. Baker Tilly, our external auditors, conducted their on-site work at ECB in November and completed the bulk of the work before the holidays. John Rader and Leah Wipperfurth from Baker Tilly will present their unqualified opinion at this January meeting.

I'd like to thank our talented finance team, once again, for their excellent preparation. Their detail and accuracy are credits to their profession. Our internal processes become more finely tuned with each passing year. I am deeply grateful for the superb work of Aimee Wright, Natalia Sutyagina and Dawn Okon. The agency's books are in good hands.

Federal Budget Update

On Friday, December 23, Congress passed the FY23 omnibus appropriations package that included a record \$682M in funding for public media:

- \$535 million for CPB's two-year advance funding in FY 2025 – a \$10 million increase.
- \$60 million for Interconnection – a \$40 million increase.
- \$31 million for Ready To Learn – a \$500,000 increase.
- \$56 million for the second year of funding of the Next Generation Warning System – a \$16 million increase.

The staff at America's Public Television Stations (APTS), public television's advocacy organization, said:



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After a decade of level funding, the significant increases public media has received over the past three years are a testament to the incredible work that local stations are doing every day to meet the growing needs of the communities you serve. It is clear that Congress recognizes the importance of investing in your stations and the exponential return on that investment that is delivered to the American people.

This positive outcome is the result of our multi-year effort to increase bipartisan awareness and support for the public services that local stations undertake in communities large and small and for the essential role that federal funding plays in providing seed money for those services.

APTS is grateful for all the outreach that stations, your boards and community partners engaged in to help secure this incredible level of support.

Advocacy

APTS will hold its annual Public Media Summit in Washington D.C. February 27-March 1. This event includes visits on behalf of public broadcasting to each of Wisconsin's federal legislators. I will be joined on this year's trip by Heather Reese from Wisconsin Public Media at UW-Madison and Reed Hall, president of the board of the Friends of PBS Wisconsin, a representative from Milwaukee PBS along with Mark Foley from the Milwaukee Area Technical College Board.

Meanwhile, planning is currently underway for an in-person one-day state advocacy event with UW-Madison, the Friends of PBS Wisconsin, and the WPRA. This will be held on Thursday, February 16 following the release of the Governor's budget.

Milwaukee PBS Update

ProTrack will be on site the week of January 16-20 to install the final tools necessary for the transfer. Everything went smoothly; we will be shadow-casting until go-live on January 30. Congratulations are due to the engineering staffs at both ECB and Milwaukee PBS for their hard work over the last year!

Broadband Access

I have been attending the regular meetings of the Broadband Access Task Force as well as the state Broadband Stakeholders Group. I have called internal and external meetings to ideate possibilities for expanding our outreach efforts; this work is current and ongoing.

Equity & Inclusion Annual Report

Prepared by Deputy Director Jennifer Dargan, December 2022

ECB updated our Equity and Inclusion Plan to extend it through the end of the 2023 calendar year. You can find the [updated document](#) on ecb.org. The plan guides the activities of the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (EIAC). Below are outlined the plan goals and progress.



E&I Plan goal “Foster a culture of open communication and transparency that includes discussion of diversity, equity, and inclusion.”

ECB is now holding quarterly agency conversations about equity and inclusion. We hosted the following this year:

- Breaking the Bias Habit, 1/12/2022
- The Danger of a Single Story, 4/1/2022
- Employment and Hearing Loss Prevention, 7/25/2022
- ECB’s EIAC and E& I Plan, 10/19/2022

We booked Navigating Crucial Conversations, a professional/personal development training for staff, for the first quarter of 2023 (January 10).

E&I Plan goal “Ensure all agency work spaces, technologies and requirements are accessible to employees.”

EIAC member, John Vieth prepared a report regarding our website accessibility. Member Jeff Hartmann prepared a report on meeting room accessibility. They are both included in [the minutes from the May 18, 2022 EIAC meeting](#).

EIAC member Steve Scott is in the process of visiting and auditing our worksites which have public access to determine if they are compliant with the [ADA checklist](#). When he completes this work, we will submit a report during an EIAC meeting.

E&I Plan goal “Identify and provide training on topics of bias and equity for all those participating in the recruitment process.”

All interview panel members must attend a presentation given by the Deputy Director on the recruitment process at least once per year. The presentation includes a section on bias and equity, a [video on bias in recruitment](#), and [a link to the breaking bias habits handouts](#) from our first agency E&I conversation.

E&I Plan goal “Provide opportunities and training for supervisors and managers that focus on leadership and employee development.”

ECB supervisors are convening for six conversation sessions on leadership topics using prompt such as “What is your management style?” and “Antidotes to staff burnout.” The topics are from podcast episodes of “What Great Bosses Know.” We’ve held two sessions and four more are planned.

In addition to the goals outlined above, the EIAC has taken on work of creating and conducting an online engagement survey, an in-person climate survey, and reviewing ECB policies with and equity lens.

The State of Wisconsin Bureau of Equity and Inclusion shared a report of their audit findings for ECB's equity and inclusion requirements and efforts. The report reiterated what they shared



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when the audit occurred, that we continue to make great progress on our Equity and Inclusion Plan. They flagged two required employment posters that were missing in our agency workspaces. They asked us to write a new Veteran's Plan of Action. Both issues were addressed and completed by November.

EIAC reviewed the full report and has added other recommendations for ECB to increase staff engagement in equity and inclusion in the agency to our work list.