

Amended Board Meeting Agenda- February 27, 2024- 6:30pm
(This meeting will be held at Dirigo High School. The board meeting will also be available via zoom and live streamed on YouTube.)

- ## 1. Budget Overview for Special Education (Heidi Connelly)

Special Services Department RSU 56

To: RSU56 Board of Directors
From: Heidi Connelly
Date: 02/27/2024
Re: Executive Summary

Mission of RSU 56 Special Services Department:

To prepare each child from birth through 22 to contribute to their communities in meaningful and positive ways, by providing specialized instruction, allowing for individual differences and learning styles, and developing independence.

The proposed budget reflects both materials and staff to support all students identified through the IEP team referral and meeting process. The budget for the upcoming school year continues to include funds for academic intervention programs/curriculum, extended school year services, occupational, physical, and speech therapy, psychological services, social work services, supplies, professional development, behavioral and restraint training for staff, and the salaries/benefits of staff. "Uncontrollables" include things such as salaries/benefits of staff, the increased cost of out of district placements, high needs students that move into our district, and services determined by an IEP team based on student needs.

ENROLLMENT: Total enrollment in special education services for the 22-23 school year was one hundred and thirty-one. Current enrollment is one hundred and twenty-six. We have had twenty-four referrals so far this year which is up from the total of 19 for all of last year. Nine of those referrals are in progress, ten have qualified, and five did not qualify. Four students have successfully graduated from special education services into regular education this year.

STAFFING: There are currently eight Special education teachers and twenty-five Ed Techs providing daily services to students. In addition, there are related service providers that are contracted or employed by the district to meet all required IEP identified needs. Based on student needs there has been a half day reduction of physical therapist time. The other levels of staffing will remain the same to meet regulatory requirements associated with identified IEP service needs.

Out of District Placements: The 24-25 school year budget will reflect a decrease in out of district placements to MMCC due to a student who has transitioned back recently and a student that will transition back to RSU 56 by the beginning of next year. There is a projected 3% increase to the daily rate for MMCC and a 2.86 % increase to the yearly rate at WFRP.

FY 24-25 Budget – New Proposal

SCHOOL/DEPT: Special Education SUBMITTED BY: Heidi Connelly

PROPOSAL NAME: Ed Tech III/ sub bus aide at DES

PRIORITY RANK ORDER: 1 OF 2 SCHOOL/DEPT PROPOSALS

STATEMENT OF PROPOSAL (DESCRIPTION):

I would like to continue with the Ed Tech III/ sub bus aide position that is currently funded under ESSER funds.

JUSTIFICATION (SUPPORTING DATA):

We currently transport six students with high needs on a small bus to the Margaret Murphy Centers in Auburn on a daily basis. We have a bus aide that has been hired to do this role and without an aide on the bus would not be safe for the driver or students to complete the route. The route is a split shift and difficult to fill. We had one sub in the last six years for this position and that sub has now been hired as the full time bus aide due to the prior full time bus aide retiring. We have posted the sub bus aide position for several years and have only ever had one applicant.

In addition, we have recently been able to have a high needs out of district student transition back into DES requires additional Ed Tech support.

GOALS AND EXPECTED BENEFITS:

To ensure that the route to MMCC is not disrupted and ensure that all students that require this level of programming, get to school consistently and safely.

CONSEQUENCES OF NON-APPROVAL:

If the full time bus aide is out sick or must take time off for any reason and there is no sub bus aide the route would not be able to happen safely. The route would likely need to be canceled and students would miss out on their programming. If this were to happen frequently the district would be required to address compensatory education which has recently resulted in monetary settlements against districts.

LOWER COST ALTERNATIVE (IF APPLICABLE):

Combining the sub bus aide with the Ed tech position at DES is a lower cost option as neither position is a stand alone position.

RESOURCES REQUIRED (LIST AND COST OF STAFF/MATERIALS/SPACE): Ed Tech III and sub bus aide salary for the currently filled position (now covered under ESSER) is: 54,303.00

BUDGET AREA: ACCT #: DES resource room

WHERE IN THE EXISTING 2023-2024 BUDGET WILL THE FUNDING FOR THIS COME FROM? It is under ESSER at this time.

FY 24-25 Budget – New Proposal

SCHOOL/DEPT: Special Education	SUBMITTED BY: Heidi Connelly
PROPOSAL NAME: ED Tech III for DHS	
PRIORITY RANK ORDER: 2 OF 2 SCHOOL/DEPT PROPOSALS	
STATEMENT OF PROPOSAL (DESCRIPTION): I am requesting that we add an Ed Tech III position to the staff at Dirigo High School.	
JUSTIFICATION (SUPPORTING DATA): A student will have fully transitioned back to DHS from a Margaret Murphy Special purpose private school and the needs of the student are to a degree that requires additional adult support.	
GOALS AND EXPECTED BENEFITS: The goal of this position is to ensure that a student who will have transitioned back from a very highly staffed out of district special purpose private school receives the level of support needed to ensure the transition back into the public school is successful and longstanding. An additional benefit to this being a successful transition is the savings that will take place. Placement at MMCC is approximately 82,070.40 per year and the cost of an Ed tech III per year is approximately 54,303.00 with salary and benefits.	
CONSEQUENCES OF NON-APPROVAL: The success of the transition could be jeopardized due to not having the appropriate support to meet student needs and the need for a high cost out of district placement would be likely.	
LOWER COST ALTERNATIVE (IF APPLICABLE): Not applicable.	
RESOURCES REQUIRED (LIST AND COST OF STAFF/MATERIALS/SPACE): Ed Tech III salary and benefits: 54,303.00	
BUDGET AREA: DHS self contained staff	ACCT #:
WHERE IN THE EXISTING 2023-2024 BUDGET WILL THE FUNDING FOR THIS COME FROM? The out of district placement for the student is in the local budget at this time under the administration-out of district placement line.	

The board had a few questions for Heidi. After some discussion it was decided to do a thumbs up consensus to put the Ed Tech III position into the budget. There will be savings in the budget from not having an out of district placement and hiring an Ed Tech to work with the student transitioning back from out of district placement. The consensus was unanimous to have this position in the budget.

2. Budget Overview for Buildings, Grounds and Transportation (Kenny Robbins)

Mission:

The mission of the RSU 56 Buildings, Grounds, and Transportation department is to maintain safe, clean buildings and athletic fields and to provide safe and reliable transportation for students. There are 12 daily bus runs in-district, 4 daily van runs to deliver students to the Western Foothill Regional Program in Rumford, and 1 daily bus run to deliver students to the Margaret Murphy facility in Auburn. Two mechanics maintain the fleet of 21 buses, 5 passenger vans, 1 food van, 2 plow trucks, and 3 tractors used for mowing and snowblowing. The district has 23 acres of athletic fields to maintain.

Transportation Budget

- A. Our insurance company (Maine School Management Association) has estimated a 15% increase for vehicle insurance for 2024-2025.
- B. We have not locked in the price for diesel fuel for 2024-2025 yet, but it is looking like the price per gallon will be less than \$3.239 per gallon which we are currently paying.

Add-ons to be considered:

- 1. We have one custodian/bus driver position which was added during the pandemic and is currently being paid with ESSER funds. This position is still needed. The annual salary and benefits for the position are estimated at \$72,500.
- 2. GPS system for buses at a cost of \$25,000.

Maintenance Budget

- A. Our insurance company (Maine School Management Association) has estimated a 15% increase for property and liability insurance.
- B. There is an increase in the electricity lines in the budget. As you know, our contracted price per kilowatt hour increased from 6 cents to 10 cents in November of 2023. Also, we need to budget more for the electricity being used to run the new air conditioning system at DES and the air conditioning system that is being installed at DHS.
- C. We have not locked in the price for oil for 2024-2025 yet, but it is looking like the price per gallon will be less than \$3.089 per gallon which we are currently paying.
- D. The only site improvements included in the proposed 2024-2025 budget are \$10,000 for carpet at DHS.
- E. There is an increase of \$12,000 in the DES Sewer/Water account in the proposed budget. In order to stay compliant with PFAS regulations, we have budgeted for additional water filters that will have to be replaced periodically.

The board had just a couple questions for Kenny regarding his budget.

3. Second Reading of Policy BEDB-R Board Agenda Format

Motion: C. Lueders

Seconded: K. Szostek

Motion Carried

OLD BUSINESS

- 1. Region 9 Updates (Bruce Ross/Brian Keene/ Wayne Thurston)
Pam heard from Bruce, the board has not met since the last report out. Brian Keene reported they are working on budget
- 2. Strategic Planning Update (Pam Doyen)- Next meeting is March 18 at 5:30, DHS Library

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

Superintendent's Report:

Last week was vacation week. Staff & students seemed to really enjoy the time off. We have an upcoming teacher workshop day on March 15th. The time will be used to do professional development work in each building.

Administrator Report: Brian Keene, Technology Director

RSU 56 Technology Department

To: RSU 56 Board of Directors

From: Brian Keene

Date: 2/27/2024

Re: Administrator's Update

October 1st Enrollment

EPS Oct. 1 Count Summary for Subsidy Allocation Calculation :

Search: <input type="text"/>											
Attending School	Counts Attending	Counts Subsidy	Equiv Instruction	Counts Economic Status	Counts SPED	Counts EL	Counts PK	Counts K-2	Counts K-8	Counts 9-12	Counts PK-12
Dirigo Elementary School	351	355	0.00	178	47	1	32	141	323	0	355
Dirigo High School	231	228	2.50	101	32	0	0	0	0	228	228
T W Kelly Dirigo Middle School	161	164	1.00	93	43	0	0	0	164	0	164
Grand Totals:	743	747	3.50	372	122	1	32	141	487	228	747
Previous Next											
	Counts Attending	Counts Subsidy	Equiv Instruction	Counts Economic Status	Counts SPED	Counts EL	Counts PK	Counts K-2	Counts K-8	Counts 9-12	Counts PK-12
October FY 2023 Totals	753	760	2.00	348	133	1	26	149	504	230	760
Difference (October FY 2024 to October FY 2023)	-10	-13	1.5	24	-11	0	6	-8	-17	-2	-13
% Difference	-1.33%	-1.71%	75.00%	6.90%	-8.27%	0.00%	23.08%	-5.37%	-3.37%	-0.87%	-1.71%

Grants Update

- RSU 56 collaborated with RSU 10 and other surrounding districts to apply for the USDA RUS Grant last year. We were notified a couple of months ago that we received the grant. RSU 56 will be receiving 20 Promethean Interactive Panels to go in classrooms, along with some other technology. RSU 56's portion of the grant was approximately \$151,370.
- Cybersecurity Performance Grant MLTI - We are in the process of spending the \$54,828 grant that we received from the Maine DOE back in the fall for CyberSecurity.

Project Update

- Vape Sensors - The Vape sensors have been installed in DHS and the installation has been started at DMS with hopes to have them completed by the March Workshop day.
- District Newsletter - The RSU56 District Newsletter is back and the first edition will be posted on Friday.
- Kiosk iPads - We are working on using some of our old iPads for student and visitor sign in/out in

our buildings to eliminate the need for paper forms in the future.

Other Items

- Banners - We have designed and printed the senior sports banners, and the tournament banners using the banner printer that we purchased during COVID.
- Cyber Security - We are currently preparing for a Cyber Security Audit to see where we are at in terms of cyber security and what we need to work on.
- Artificial Intelligence in Education - I attended the elevAtlon Summit at South Portland High School back in January. The event was hosted by ACTEM and METDA. The event included International speaker Amanda Fox, a pioneer of AI in education the workshop sessions gave an understanding about both the value and challenges of A.I. use in schools. After lunch there was a “Playspace” session that provided hands-on experiences with A.I. products and a great discussion on how AI will impact teaching and learning.

# of Students as of 2/27/24	
PK	32
K	42
1	51
2	46
3	56
4	61
5	64
Dirigo Elementary School	352
6	58
7	52
8	57
T.W. Kelly Dirigo Middle School	167
9	60
10	59
11	54
12	58

