

NORTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Office of the Superintendent
Memorandum

TO: Board of Education
FROM: L. Chris Richardson, Ph.D., Superintendent
RE: Table File Items for February 9, 2015, Regular School Board Meeting

VI. Items for Discussion and/or Reports.

3. Information on the General Fund Basic Formula.

VII. Superintendent's Report

B. Items for Consent Grouping

3. Personnel Items.

a. Appointments *

12. Rosemary Fink, DCD SP Teacher at the High School for 8 hours/day beginning 02/02/2015 – 06/05/2015; MA, Step 14.
13. Anthony Seidl, Eagle Bluff Coordinator for Community Services beginning 02/13/2015 – 09/01/2015; \$1,500 Stipend.

b. Increase/Decrease/Change in Assignment

5. Christa Danielson, Kindergarten Teacher at Bridgewater, add Targeted Services Recruitment Specialist at BW for up to 35 hours/year beginning 02/06/2015 – 08/10/2015; Year 11, \$28.22/hour.
6. Zach Greenlund, SpecEd Bus EA-PCA at Longfellow, change to Substitute SpecEd Bus EA-PCA beginning 01/05/2015 – 06/05/2015.
7. Alisha Jamshidi, SpecEd EA-PCA at Sibley, add Targeted Services Club Leader at Sibley for up to 4 hours/week (M-Th) beginning 02/09/2014 – 04/16/2015; \$18.68/hour.
8. Yolanda Loken, SpecEd EA-PCA at Longfellow for 24.25 hours/week, increase to 30.75 hours/week beginning 01/19/2015 – 06/05/2015.
9. Lori Malecha, Temporary Child Nutrition Manager I at Sibley, change to Child Nutrition Manager I at Sibley for 7 hours/day beginning 02/01/2015.
10. Abraham Zamora, SpecEd EA-PCA at the High School for 6.75 hours/day, decrease to 6.0 hours/day, add SpecEd EA-Bus PCA at the High School for 1.5 hours/day beginning 01/05/2015 – 06/05/2015.

d. Resignations

2. Bill Sonnega, Alpine Ski Team Head Coach, resignation effective 02/12/2015.

* Conditional offers of employment are subject to successful completion of a criminal background check.

VIII. Items for Information

3. Upcoming Transformational Technology Listening Sessions.

Please refer to the enclosed handout provided by Kimberly Briske, Director of Technology Services.

Support for Increasing the General Fund Basic Formula

- The General Fund Basic Formula is the per pupil amount that every school district receives from the State of Minnesota for each student attending school in that district.
- Unlike any other funding stream, increases in the General Fund Basic Formula positively impact every student, every classroom and every school district in Minnesota.
- The Basic Formula is the critical state funding source that supports the State's Constitutional mandate in Article 13, Section 1.
- Once all the formula roll-ins and adjustments of the last two decades are accounted for, the actual Basic Formula percentage change since 1991-92 has ranged from -1.4% to +4.5% per year and averaged 1.4% per year with no increase in 9 of the last 23 years.
- The rate of inflation (Implicit Price Deflator) since 1991-92 has ranged from 0.8% to 6.0% per year and averaged 3.0% per year, more than double the rate of Basic Formula growth.
- The current Basic Formula per pupil amount would have to be increased by almost \$2,400 per pupil unit to have the same purchasing power as the Basic Formula had in 1991-92.
- This growing gap has eroded education opportunities for every Minnesota student.
- The increasing gap has forced 95% of the state's school districts to pursue operating levies funded by their local taxpayers to make up some of the difference.
- We appreciate the 1% per year increases currently being proposed in the Governor's FY16-17 budget but this level of Basic Formula increase does not even address current inflation levels and has no impact on the growing gap. It does not square with the proposed 1.8% annual inflationary increase proposed for the Minnesota Department of education for "continuation of services" or the automatic \$1.5 billion increase for Health and Human Services Programs already embedded in statute for the next biennium.
- In Northfield, insufficient increases in the Basic Formula have resulted in:
 - Cutting our budget by 10% in one year and an additional 5% in the next year resulting in the loss of 15 staff positions and reductions in programs.
 - Facing a \$2 million budget shortfall and entering Statutory Operating Debt.
 - Passing two operating levies in the last decade paid almost totally by local property taxpayers in order to simply maintain the remaining staff and educational programs in place after two rounds of budget cuts.
- In Northfield, the impact of insufficient increases in the Basic Formula continues with:
 - Large secondary class sizes averaging 30 to 33 in grades 6-12 with some classes approaching 40 students.
 - Larger intermediate class sizes of up to 29 students while number of high needs students in poverty and English Language Learners increase toward 40-45% of the primary classroom population.
 - Increases in cost for new underfunded mandates like yearly comprehensive Teacher Development and Evaluation (TDE) while receiving only a small one time per teacher allotment to fund an ongoing and complex process.
 - Continuing increases in special education costs and a growing cross subsidy from our General Fund to cover these mandated special education costs.
- With the proposed 1% Basic Formula increase each year, our district and most others will be forced back into a cycle of making painful staff and program cuts year after year.
- To simply maintain the staffing and programs we have, the Basic formula must at the very least keep up with the current 2% inflationary rate per year for FY16-17.
- A 3% Basic Formula increase per year would allow our district and others to begin to address staffing and program needs and the underfunded mandates we all currently face.

2015 Transformational Technology Feedback Plan

As we move through the second year of our Transformational Technology initiative, we are in the process of collecting feedback and planning for the next steps in integrating technology for teaching and learning.

Our goal during the month of February is to gather as much authentic feedback as possible regarding both school and home use of iPads and technology in general. To this end, we've scheduled listening and feedback sessions for staff in each of our schools, as well as two evening sessions for families. The goal of these sessions is to gather experiential feedback from those who most closely interact with our technology.

Please see a full listing of listening sessions below:

Greenvale Park Elementary Staff: Tuesday, February 10, 3:20 pm

Northfield ALC Staff: Wednesday, February 11, 2:45 pm

Sibley Elementary Staff: Tuesday, February 17, 7:40 am

Bridgewater Elementary Staff: Wednesday, February 18, 8:35 am

Northfield High School Staff: Wednesday, February 18, 3:00 pm and Thursday, February 19, 7:30 am

Northfield Middle School Staff: Thursday, February 19, 3:00 pm

Family Listening Session: Thursday, February 26, 7:00 pm, NMS Media Center

Family Listening Session: Monday, March 2, 7:00 pm, NMS Media Center

In addition to the scheduled listening sessions, families and staff have received a digital feedback form to share their input, as well as an invitation to converse in a smaller setting than the scheduled sessions. The goal is to provide as many options as possible for sharing feedback.

Our goal for the coming weeks is to gain the best possible understanding of the experiences, needs, and suggestions of those using technology for teaching and learning. As we move into March, we will review information gathered during conversations, through the feedback form, and during listening sessions and begin problem solving and planning for the future.

The District Technology Steering Committee will meet in early March. With input from families, teachers, administrators, and our previous BrightBytes survey, we will develop recommendations for moving into year three of Transformational Technology. We will plan to present those recommendations to the School Board in April.

If you have questions, concerns, or suggestions regarding this feedback and planning process, please contact Kim Briske at kimberly.briske@nfld.k12.mn.us or 507-664-3399.