

Regular Board Meeting – February 15, 2011

**SUBJECT: 2011-2012 PRE-SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASS AT THE
EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER**

The proposed new NTDSE funding formula will increase the per pupil instructional cost to approximately \$50,000 per year while physical plant costs, which are shared equally among member districts, will decrease. Other services will be billed as a membership fee based on 6th day enrollment or as fee-for-service. Because District 68 is the largest user of NTDSE services among the member districts, our overall NTDSE expenditures are expected to increase by approximately \$220,000 per year.

In order to reduce expenditures to NTDSE and better serve our students, the administrative team is recommending that we absorb our special needs pre-school students into a District 68 pre-school special education class beginning with the 2011-2012 school year. By utilizing an available classroom at the Early Childhood Center and hiring an early childhood, special education certified teacher, we could offer both a half-day blended program for three-and four-year olds and a self-contained half-day program. In blended programs, special needs children are included for selected portions of the school day into regular ECC pre-school activities. Our Director of Special Services would oversee the special education pre-school program, and speech, social work, and psychological services would be provided by District 68 personnel.

To date, we are providing pre-school educational services to nine three-and four-year old District 68 children through NTDSE. Special needs children become eligible for public school educational services at three years of age, so it is likely that we would serve more than nine children throughout the 2011-2012 school year. By providing educational service to these children through our own special education pre-school classroom, we will significantly reduce overall NTDSE expenditures and provide a smoother transition for our youngest students into our Kindergarten programs.