

Regular Board Meeting – March 15, 2011

SUBJECT: 2011-12 STAFFING ALLOCATIONS**Overview**

Effective with the 2011-2012 school year the Administrative Team is recommending the following staffing allocations:

- Up to seven full-time ELL/Bilingual teachers
- A pre-school special education teacher and instructional assistant
- A police officer for afternoon traffic control at Old Orchard Junior High
- Additional technology staffing to be considered in April

These increases in staffing are partially offset by the elimination of all K-5 ELL tutors, reduction of the K-5 Instructional Coach from full-time to 60%, and the reduction of one custodial and one clerical position. Additionally, the Administrative Team recommends the elimination of the School Resource Officer at Old Orchard Junior High, the elimination of our sub caller position in exchange for an automated sub calling system, and a transition to a bi-annual Fall Fest celebration.

The total cost of proposed staffing allocations is \$754,500 while the total savings from proposed offsets is \$387,500, resulting in an estimated net annual cost of \$367,000.

Rationale

State and federal law require public schools to provide ELL and/or bilingual services using certified ELL/Bilingual teachers. For many years, District 68 has generally met this requirement through the use of K-5 ELL certified staff members who have been hired as at-will employees, meaning that they are not part of the collective bargaining agreements for either certified or classified employees. However, recent reviews of our ELL Title III grant applications have revealed that we are no longer considered compliant with the law by utilizing at-will employees, albeit ELL certified employees, to fill the requirement for ELL/Bilingual certified teachers. Therefore, we are recommending that we release all our K-5 ELL tutors and hire ELL/Bilingual certified teachers to meet the requirements of the law and to address our growing need for bilingual services.

In order to reduce expenditures to NTDSE and better serve our students, the Administrative Team is recommending that we absorb some of 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 our blended program, special needs children would be 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. Speech, social work, and psychological services would be provided by existing District 68 personnel. By providing educational service to our own special education pre-school children, we will significantly reduce overall NTDSE expenditures and provide a smoother transition for our youngest students into our Kindergarten programs.

During the current school year, we have utilized a job-share arrangement to fill the full-time position of K-5 Instructional Coach. With the recent resignation of one member of the job-share arrangement, we are recommending that the job be reduced to a 60% part-time position.

For the past three years, we have participated in an intergovernmental agreement with the Village of Skokie under which we pay 67% of the costs of a School Resource Officer (SRO) at Old Orchard Junior High. In our first year of the agreement, we shared the SRO position with Skokie School District 69, resulting in a half-time SRO at each of our respective schools. The second year, District 69 requested a full-time SRO, requiring us to either abandon the SRO position at Old Orchard Junior High or expand our position to full-time, as the Skokie Police Department could only provide officers to fill an SRO position on a full-time basis. After careful review of the SRO role at Old Orchard Junior High, the Administrative Team is recommending the elimination of the full-time position. Should the Skokie Police Department be able to provide a half-time SRO officer for the schools in the future, we would likely recommend a review of the benefits of part-time SRO services at Old Orchard Junior High.

One of the custodians at Old Orchard Junior High who retired this past February will not be replaced and through streamlined operations at the central office, one clerical position will be eliminated at the conclusion of the current fiscal year.

Prior to the current school year, District 68 employed an off-duty police officer during the afternoon departure period at Old Orchard Junior High to control the heavy traffic on Kenton Avenue in order to permit the school buses to safely exit the school parking lot. This school year, we have used the SRO to handle afternoon traffic control. Should the SRO position be eliminated, we would need to rehire the traffic control officer.

Cost savings and efficiencies can be gained by using an automated sub-calling system in lieu of secretarial hours for this position, and cost savings, especially over time, can be gained by transitioning the annual Fall Fest district-wide celebration to a bi-annual event.

Conclusion

The recommendations for staffing allocations for the 2011-2012 school year are designed to enhance our existing ELL and special services programming and bring them in line with legal requirements and best practice considerations. The proposed reductions are designed to help offset the significant cost increases the staffing allocations represent.

Post Meeting Notes:

The Board voted to continue to hold Fall Fest annually.