



NORTHERN YORK COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD PROPOSAL

Tracking ID: 2016-3

Date: May 26, 2016

From: Shelly L. Thomas

Re: Addition of 2 part time aides

Board Committee: Personnel Committee

Background: We have two autism support/emotional support teachers at the elementary level and they currently share one aide (6.5 hours per day). We have one autism support teacher at the middle school that has 2 part time aides (5 hours per day and 5.75 hours per day). We have one autism support teacher at the high school that has 2 part time aides (6 hours per day and 5 hours per day).

Issue: Students identified as autistic and in need of special education services, continues to grow. At the middle school and high school, both autism support teachers have 2 aides that assist students throughout the day. At the beginning of the 16-17 school year, the middle school autism teacher will have a caseload of 12 students, the high school autism support teacher will have a caseload of 22 students.

The two autism support teachers at the elementary level, share one aide (6.5 hours per day). Each elementary autism teacher's caseload is split between 2 elementary schools, one teacher (Schmick) serves Northern Elementary and Dillsburg Elementary and one teacher (Barry) serves South Mountain Elementary and Wellsville Elementary. Schmick's caseload at the beginning of the 16-17 school year will be 21 students and Barry caseload at the beginning of the 16-17 school year will be 14 students. The shared aide helps support students when the teacher is in another building, as well as, assists with functional behavioral assessments data collection, behavior plan data collection, and classroom observations.

There have been several students who have required intensive (1:1) and immediate support. This intensive assistance has been provided by the elementary autism support/emotional support aide. When this occurs the elementary autism support/emotional support teachers have no aide support.

During the 2014-2015 school year, the elementary aide began the school year supporting 3 students, who historically required support transitioning to each new school year, at South Mountain Elementary School. These 3 student's behaviors included, refusing to enter the building, eloping behaviors, hiding under desks, crying, screaming, slamming materials, yelling at the teacher, etc. The aide stayed with these 3 students until November of 2014. In November 2014, the aide moved to Dillsburg Elementary School to support a move in student, who was requiring emergency safety

physical interventions due to a high level of aggression and harm to self. While at Dillsburg Elementary another student's behaviors intensified, behaviors including yelling/cursing at staff, hitting and kicking staff, and property destruction, which also required the support of the autism support/emotional support aide. Starting in December of 2014, the aide began to travel to Wellsville Elementary to support a student who was eloping, refusing to complete assignments and displaying physical aggression towards adults. This student also required several emergency safety physical interventions. The aide remained supporting those 3 students between Dillsburg Elementary and Wellsville Elementary from November 2014 until June 2015.

During the 2015-2016 school year, the elementary aide began the school year at South Mountain Elementary and Northern Elementary supporting 3 students, one student was displaying tantrum behaviors in kindergarten, the second student required assistance establishing social and organizational routines, and the third student was refusing to enter building, eloping, crying, and physically aggressive toward staff and students. The aide remained at South Mountain Elementary until January and has remained at Northern Elementary until March. In March, the aide was moved to Wellsville Elementary due to student who was displaying verbal aggression, property destruction, and suicidal/homicidal ideation. Therefore additional supports needed to be added to Northern Elementary while the aide remained at Wellsville Elementary until the end of the school year.

Options: Option 1. To continue with the employment of one elementary aide to assist with behavioral and social needs for those students identified as autistic or emotionally disturbed across 4 elementary buildings.

Option 2. To hire 2 additional part time aides (5.5 hours per day, each position) to assist with behavioral and social needs for those students identified as autistic or emotional disturbed. This will allow the current aide to continue intensive supports across the District for individual students.

Proposal: My recommendation is Option #2. To hire 2 additional part time aides (5.5 hours per day, each position) to assist with behavioral and social needs for those students identified as autistic or emotional disturbed.

Due to the specialized training of the current elementary autism support/emotional support aide and the intensive interventions the aide is able to provide; we are able to modify behavior and create effective interventions to allow students to remain in their general education buildings. Without this intensive support, most of these students would have required an outside placement in the intermediate unit. The average cost of an intermediate unit placement is \$45,000.

Impact: The cost to hire 2 part autism support/emotional support aides (5.5 hours per day) would be \$25,000 for the 2016-2017 school year.