

HIGLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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February 22, 2023 - Board Meeting Agenda Questions & Responses

Will we have any study sessions related to the budget?

The district has presented a number of reviews of the FY2024 budget including two information items on December 14th and January 18th with another presentation on the agenda for February 22nd.

With the budget presentation, I'd like to get the schedule of events that have taken place and will take place in preparation of the budget. (Strategic Plan for the budget).

Please reference the above answer. In addition, the Finance Department has worked diligently throughout the last several months with all School Administration, District Departments, and Cabinet in preparation of the FY2024 budget.

The district does not have a separate strategic plan for the budget, we follow the recently adopted strategic plan for Higley Unified.

Can we please get information as to what modifications have been made to the original budget? (Original Plan vs Forecast).

All information regarding modifications to the FY2024 budget have and will continue to be presented publicly and are available on BoardDocs.

Do we have a budget committee? If so, who is on that committee? Has this committee met? If so, when and do we have recordings or minutes that we can review?

The district does not have a budget committee for the annual Maintenance and Operations and Capital budget. The district does have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Higley Education Association (HEA) and Higley Unified School district. The district does not record these meetings.

Do we have a list of all the committees within the district and who serves on those committees?

District committees are established as needed and qualified individuals are asked to participate. Examples of ad hoc committees include Chinese New Years, the Fine Arts Festival, Code of Conduct, District Calendar, and textbook adoption committees, etc.

5.4 Voucher 1063

Contracted CrossCat Teacher at Chaparral-What is a CrossCat Teacher and what type of service do they provide?

A cross-cat teacher is a certified special education teacher that provides a level C of services; these are students who spend at least 80% of their time in the special education classroom due to their individual academic and behavioral needs. The cross-cat teacher is the teacher of record, who provides the academic instruction for those students and works towards each student's individual IEP goals. As needed we will contract for this position when there is a lack of qualified candidates.

CDW Government LLC-Sossaman and Cooley-Data cable installs. What are these for?

This was for a planned network enhancement to the wireless network at Sossaman and Cooley Middle School.

Coconino High School-Late Fees-Why are there late fees? Because we registered late?

Yes, the registration fee was late due to an invoice processing error from Coconino High School.

Membership Fees for Ed Rising CTSO-Who is this for and which CTE program is this for?

The CTE program is the Early Childhood Education, and this is for membership in the State and National CTSO (Career and Technical Student Organization), as required by ARS15-391.

HOSA Membership Dues-What is this for?

HOSA (Health Occupations Student Organization) is the CTSO (Career and Technical Student Organization) for the Biotech and Sports Medicine Programs and these dues are for membership in the State and National CTSO, as required by ARS15-391.

EverDriven Technologies-Transportation to ACCEL-What is this for?

EverDriven Technologies is for contracted transportation to and from the State approved Special Education Private Day School, ACCEL, for special education students.

██████████-Health Insurance NTE-What is NTE?

This employee was on Cobra insurance for 18 months; and is no longer on Cobra. NTE means -Not to Exceed

5.4

I like that it is cost saving to pay parents to transport SPED students but is that common practice? Also, legally, can the district be held liable if an accident occurred during the time of transport?

Paying parents to transport SPED students is not the norm, it is the exception. When parents agree to transport their child, they assume liability if an accident were to occur.

5.4 Also, do we get an attendance report to confirm that parents who get mileage reimbursements are actually driving their students to the facilities?

Attendance verification is required as part of the reimbursement process when this option is utilized.

5.6 Just as an FYI, I will be asking to pull this item for further discussion. I'd like more information on this camp, the curriculum, and sleeping arrangements.

Thank you for letting us know, we will be prepared to answer your questions. Here is the link to our governing board policy, [IJOA Optional Student Travel](#) that details the process used for overnight field trips.

5.10 The committee and our consultant agreed that the potential cost savings did not outweigh the cost of the disruptions. This recommendation is a one-year contract, that can be extended for up to an additional four years, there is nothing preventing us from looking at other providers again next year and re-evaluating based upon a cost-benefit analysis.

Correct, and the intention of the district is to re-evaluate next year. In addition, our ERATE consultant has told us that the State of Arizona is in the process of negotiating new state contract pricing for WAN that we may be able to take advantage of next year. The contract pricing is not going to be available in time to use this year.

Are you saying that it is better to stay with Lumen to prevent having to do all the trenching and that will be cost effective?

Changing from Lumen to COX, the least expensive option saves HUSD \$1760 per month. Changing providers may result in a lower cost per month, but there are costs associated with switching including downtime, staff costs, consultant costs, and likely paying for both WAN contracts for several months during the transition.

Can you share what the savings would be based on the RFP's?

Reference above answer.

Agenda Item 5.10

Changing provider would likely require trenching to install new fiber to all sites as well as significant disruptions at all our sites during the year." The installation of the new fiber, if we end up going with a different contract in a year, can we assume that this upgrade will still be beneficial come a year from now? Or is this installation tied to this specific provider? Also will we be able to notify each school

site of the length of disruption in advance, as far in advance as possible, so all staff can make sure their lesson plans do not require any systems that they may not have access to?

Hypothetically it would be our understanding that the new installation would have belonged to COX (if they were selected). The fiber that they put on our property would belong to us, but it would tie to their fiber infrastructure.

We always try to communicate the time and duration of the disruptions, but technology isn't always predictable and at this time, due to these multiple factors our team recommends that is best not make changes. Next year, we can anticipate new State of Arizona pricing for WAN and that may be the right time to make a change.

Transportation 6.1

Slide #7

1. How are factors not controlled by the bus driver taken into consideration for the calculated idling score?

- For example:
 - special events at the schools that can affect departure time
 - unforeseen circumstances at schools and bus stops
 - unforeseen traffic obstacles/accidents
 - the train (how many schools does it affect?)
 - does this apply for sporting events?
 - safe driving

Drivers are scored on harsh braking, harsh turns, idling during on-time performance. On-time performance is only calculated as a negative if they leave a bus stop early. There is no deduction for running late as we do not want them rushing. Idling is only triggered after 5 minutes and the parking brake must be set, so sitting in traffic etc. are not deducted. Yes, trips are included for idling, braking, turns but not on-time performance.

2. How does the score affect the driver professionally? Are there disciplinary actions for certain scores?

Speed reports are subject to discipline, we focus more heavily on 5+mph over and 65mph maximum. Other metrics are for professional growth.

3. What training and practice do the employees receive for this monitoring?

All drivers receive 14 hours of classroom and 20 hours behind the wheel with a minimum of 6.5 hour per year in refresher training.

4. What idling data was used and calculated to determine the scoring parameters for this implemented tool?

Through your research/studies, what are the causes for the highest idling durations?

The idling score will begin decreasing after 5 minutes of idling with the parking brake set. We adjust the score on high heat days so the buses can idle for A/C. We do not see a high idling rate; it has decreased since this program was implemented. The highest idle times are typically buses waiting for their next route to start and idling after their morning pre-trip before they leave the yard.

Slide #11

How many hours per week do bus drivers work?

The average low and high for our drivers so far this year is 20.0 hours to 54.6 hours per week. Federal law prohibits school bus drivers from working more than 15 hours in day or 60 hours in a week.

What is the hourly range for bus Aides?

\$14.72 to \$15.43

Do Paraprofessionals or Special Education Aides ride the bus with their students? If so, is there a salary adjustment?

They typically do not. In extreme shortages we have had a classroom aide ride the bus, but few and far between.

All hourly employees are paid per hour according to their position.

If there is a need for Bus Aides, has hiring Paras or Special Education Aides been an avenue that has been looked at to meet the need? (I assume so, but am asking to confirm)

We have in extreme shortages had a classroom aide ride the bus, but few and far between. Our SPED drivers transport for 3 or 4 schools with no time to swing by the schools to pick up aides and/or drop them off after a run. It would be costly to have them stay on the bus for other schools (using the afternoon as an example).

Do the districts used in the comparison have longer bus routes?

Most districts use a 3-tier schedule like Higley does

Can you provide the difference in drive/work time between Higley and those districts?

Most public districts are the same. Drivers are on a split shift, only paid for pre and post trip, cleaning and route time.

6.2 2nd Review of 2023/2024 Maintenance and Operations Budget

6.2 M&O Budget: Is it possible when looking for new plans to look at plans that are an improvement beyond just the employees themselves? My understanding is our

most recent change, while beneficial to staff, still is currently financially not feasible for many of our staff to have additional members of their family insured.

All benefit improvements are being considered and assessed financially including employee spouse/dependent costs.

6.2 Page 7

Can we please not use acronyms such as BBCF, ADM, BSL ASRS? I don't think it's fair to the public to have to decipher what it all means.

The district has added an acronym slide for the public to reference for all budget presentations at the beginning of the presentation.

6.2 Page 8

What are the contracted services being removed?

Contracted custodial and contracted grounds.

6.2 Page 9

Who is included in Other Certified Staff?

Please refer to [salary schedules](#) for this information.

Who is included in Classified Staff?

Please refer to [salary schedules](#) for this information.

Slide 10 shows Higley employee pay compared with neighboring districts. Do we know if those neighboring district salary numbers also include CSF and/or pay for performance or are their numbers their base salary?

Yes, the neighboring district salary numbers do include CSF and pay for performance in the number presented. However, we do not know what compensation increases the neighboring districts are proposing for FY2024 with the exception of Queen Creek Unified. Their increases are already included in the presentation.

6.2 Page 11

What are these fixed cost decreases?

The fixed cost decreases are highlighted on slide 8 and are largely related to the removal of contracted services.

Item 6.3 Marketing Plan

Slide #8

The photo is very pixelated. Can that be fixed for the public presentation?

This has been corrected and was due the fact that this was a video.

Slide # 12

Has the district reached out to developers (apartments/real estate,businesses)?

If so, what is their response? It is a two way relationship for district/local growth. I would hope they are excited to be involved and supportive of the academic institutions that bring in and together families and customers.

Yes, we have begun to reach out to these various partners and invited many of them to our business partner breakfast to start building a relationship. At our last business partner business partner breakfast, we had a handful of real estate agents in attendance. We will keep engaging with real estate agents to ensure we are building that two-way relationship.

Regarding apartments and developers, right now, we have been working to update the list of apartment complexes in the neighboring areas that we can reach out to with enrollment packets/brochures. Our first step is reaching out to them to determine the best way to send information. For example, we've learned that many apartments stopped providing welcome packets, or information is only available online/sent through newsletters. We will be working to find the best ways to share information with these families moving forward.

In addition to this list, we have also been working with HOAs to share information about upcoming events, like Kindergarten Round Up and Arts Festival. We are hoping to expand this list with the new developments in the area.