

Business Services Committee
Tuesday, April 27, 2021

Members Present

Jim Bowman, Gary Jahnke and Kristine Sauter

Meeting called to order by Jim Bowan at 7:30 am.

1. Virtual Meeting Notice

A. This meeting will be conducted as a virtual meeting due to the active COVID-19 public health emergency situation, meaning that multiple Board members may be participating in the meeting from remote locations through the use of communications technology and/or that public access to the meeting may be arranged through the use of technology. The District discourages the public and/or media from attending the meeting in person at its noticed location due to concerns with health and safety and encourages use of the alternative method(s) of access that the District is providing.

B. Members of the media or general public may access the meeting via the live stream broadcast on the Appleton Area School District YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChO-l09YGgt4uKnCWYvt8Pw>. For remote attendance via telephone, please dial: 1-312-626-6799 Meeting ID: 964 0141 2542

C. Any special needs or any requests for accommodations related to accessing this meeting should be sent to Kelly Vandenberg at vandenbergkell@aasd.k12.wi.us or (920) 997-1399 ext. 2032, at least 24-hours in advance of the meeting. This would include any person for whom it would be burdensome or infeasible to use the primary method(s) of remote access established by the District.

D. With respect to the gravity of the current public health emergency, we have made every effort to streamline this meeting as much as possible while still focusing on items that are essential to the current and future operations of the District. As such, there will be no opportunity for public comments. If you have comments relating to any item on the agenda that you wish to share with the Committee, you are welcome to submit them in writing. Comments can be submitted to Kelly Vandenberg at vandenbergkell@aasd.k12.wi.us (preferred) or mailed to 131 E. Washington Street, Suite 1A, Appleton, WI, 54911. All written comments submitted will be distributed to all members of the Business Services Committee. We appreciate your understanding during this unprecedented time.

2. Approval of Minutes

A. Business Services Committee Minutes from March 23, 2021

No Action Taken

3 Discussion Agenda Items

A. Draft Letter to Legislators

Greg Hartjes stated that the District's current budget expires on June 30th, 2021. Governor Evers released his biennial budget on February 16th. The Joint Finance Committee, which is made up of a group of our Representatives and Senators, has been holding Public Hearings around the State to get input from the community to find out what they think. On April 28th, Kay Eggert plans to attend a virtual hearing and speak at the meeting since there aren't any local opportunities. Following these hearings, the Joint Finance Committee will give a recommendation to the Legislators based on what has been shared with them. This process can sometimes go into the fall. In a good year, it might get done by July. That really helps us as we try to build our budget for next year. As can be expected, Holly and Greg are making decisions and putting plans in place for next year's budget without knowing what type of revenue increase, if any, we will receive from the State. This is why we put together some contingency plans. The sooner the State Budget gets to us, the better.

We try to communicate to our legislators what the budget pieces will mean to us in the AASD. To that end, we have sent them a letter asking them to meet with us. We did this a few years ago and met with various representatives. We are hoping to have that type of response. Last week we had the opportunity to meet with Rep. Snodgrass. She reached out to us.

The letter is two pages. The first page explains how we are spending our ESSER dollars. Some believe we are getting money from the Federal Government and really don't need this money. The District is spending ESSER dollars as they were intended, on helping students recover from their interruption in learning and addressing what happened during the pandemic.

The second page goes into what it means to us relating to the State budget. We want to explain the budget needs outside ESSER. The ESSER dollars will be spent as intended, not on Health Insurance or other inflationary expenses. Inflationary costs go up 3-5% each year and health insurance goes up about 8% each year. We are hoping since we moved 60% of our employees over to a more affordable health care plan we won't see that increase. We will find that data out later in the summer or early Fall. These costs have to be covered by an increase in revenue by the State. We also hope to do some sort of compensation each year for our employees, trying to keep up with inflation.

Budget needs outside of Esser:

1. A Minimum increase to revenue limits by \$200 per pupil in the first year and \$204 in the second year of the biennium. This would allow us to maintain our current level of services and cover inflationary increases.

This is what Governor Evers projected. It means about 2.8 million increase in revenue. This will cover Health Care and those inflationary costs, putting a little money toward compensation. In the second year it is projected even higher. Greg Hartjes doesn't believe

the amount will be that high. If it remains \$175 or \$179 per pupil, that would be fine. If it goes much lower, we would be concerned. This per pupil number is a number that is very important to us.

2. Raising the categorical aid reimbursement rate for special education to 45% in the first year of the biennium and 50% in the second year. The current rate is approximately 28%

Over a course of time, it has decreased. In that last few years the legislators have been listening to our pleas, and it has gone up slightly. It didn't get to 30%, where it was projected this current year because the State didn't budget enough to reimburse for that.

We hope it has reached the lowest and will work its way back up. If we were to go up 5%, that is a million dollars more reimbursement for those costs. Those needed funds are currently coming from other funds in the District. The needs of those students have increased, making it more costly.

3. We need to be allowed to replace 2020-2021 pupil count with our 2019-2020 pupil count for revenue limit calculations.

Greg has heard legislators will consider this as reasonable. He has heard good feedback on replacing this number. We went virtual for the betterment of our community, our students and our staff. We felt it was the best for the health and safety of our community.

4. We strongly support the Governor's \$46.5 million proposed expansion of the School Mental Health Categorical Aid program.

We believe we need to put more into mental health.

B. Student Meal Debt

This has a dollar amount of \$62,126, accumulating over the past 18 years. Greg Hartjes gave a brief background describing that when a student comes through the food line, they punch their number in at the checkout. If they have a zero or negative balance, we do not tell them to put their food away. They pass through and their account is charged. We believe it is not the student's fault. It is normally an intermittent period in their life. They may not qualify for free or reduced at that time, but later do, or they need to take care of that paperwork. Sometimes they have extenuating circumstances that may alter their financial situation.

Diane Wittman, Director of Auxiliary Services joined the meeting to explain further how the debt accumulates. She stated that over the past 18 years, our policy changed, and we provide a full meal allowing the kids to go through the line. Part of it is the interim of when the school year starts to filling out the paper work, there is also a carry-over from the middle of October. Student's status for free and reduced gets extended 30 days into the new school year. If they don't fill out a new application, then their status expires, but they continue to receive meals. There are many reasons why it accumulates. We spend a lot of time trying to recoup this debt. We send letters, emails, and call.

Holly Burr explained that when looking at dollar amounts, earlier years appear to have smaller debt, those numbers are net from anything we have already written-off. If a student has left the District, or hasn't returned in a number of years, we write those off annually, so those numbers don't continue to accumulate. A lot of the accounts have been cleaned up. These amounts we are referencing, reflect active students.

Greg said that we would like to pay off the full \$62,126, taking it from Fund 10, our general fund and moving it to Fund 50, our food service fund, eliminating any debt for those individuals or families. We do try to get payment prior to a student graduating. That debt carries over to multiple students in a family.

We have an opportunity to pay this off now, because at the beginning of the year we had budgeted for COVID expenses and are now having those COVID expenses covered by Esser money. It has freed up some money to put in other areas. We feel like the timing is right because we have those resources and we've applied for a waiver to allow all students to receive free meals again next school year. This debt will just sit on the books, and we will expend resources trying to get the money when really it becomes a contentious situation with families. We would like to use this money this year and pay this off. Everyone would be a zero balance and nothing would accumulate next year if we get the waiver. About 40% of the debt are those who qualify for free and reduced meals now per Diane.

Greg asked if this is a Board issue, we could move it there or if it is reasonable, we can take care of the debt this year.

We have had some interest in donors through Facebook and some through word of mouth. Committee members discussed that it is worth the effort to reach out to organizations to see if there are other options for payment. It was agreed that we will reach out to organizations for assistance before we pay the meal debt outright.

4. ACTION AGENDA ITEMS

A. Leasing Additional Space at the Welcome Center

Greg Hartjes talked about leasing additional space at the Welcome Center. He referenced a previous meeting that discussed this potential lease and its use for training, to launch events and for professional development (AC & I). He displayed a map with the areas already in use by AASD for Attendance and Enrollment, our Homeless Coordinator and the 4K offices.

The additional space that will soon be available and is now also being looked at for the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Department and Community Engagement offices. Pa Lee Moua, from Diversity, Equity and Inclusion spoke as to the importance of having a centrally located, inclusive space and all the programming and services that could occur there. Julie Bargholtz from Community Engagement also said that she is excited about this opportunity. She said the accessibility offered there is so important, allowing us to host numerous things. This will serve a lot of different purposes.

The 1300 sq. ft. area, now in the back of the building, will still remain available for the programs and activities discussed previously. The shared space will use the front entrance, but employees can also access the conference room area in the back with their FOB. We need to be using and maximizing that space if we are going to be paying rent. The idea is it will be used all the time. We will have a calendar so that groups can sign up for this space. Joe Sargent will coordinate the work of building the offices. This would be a 3-year lease. We don't see much additional cost for equipping this space being that we already have offices there.

Recommendation to approve Leasing Additional Space at the Welcome Center

Motion by Gary Jahnke, second Kristine Sauter

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Jim Bowman, Gary Jahnke, Kristine Sauter

An Item for Consideration will be presented to the Board of Education on Monday, May 10, 2021.

B. Collaborative Response Graphics

This came to us from the APD and they requested an AASD/APD meeting with the Critical Response Group, the company that does this work. They create CRGs. They provide accurate floor plans, high resolution imagery, and gridded-overlay into one map. The purpose is to look at how local law enforcement and fire protection are able to respond to emergencies in our buildings. Right now they rely on our maps created from Tech Services and Facilities, which are created for our purposes, not emergency response. The CRGs would be able to be accessed by phone or laptop. They could quickly pull up those graphs. They are electronic and are the next generation to how emergency responders respond to crisis situations.

The cost would be approximately \$1,200 per floor per school for them to come in and lay out one floor of our school. That is a one-time fee. If it is 3 floors that would be \$1,200 x 3.

Their company is taking technology that is currently used in the military and have moved it to the private sector, bringing it to all different facilities. They put together a map and can click between levels. They can use GPS to locate officers on scene. They will know things such as entrances, access points, AEDs, First

Aid Kits, and parking areas.

Most likely access to this would be given only to those in a building who need it. Other local agencies would have access, so they could respond in a more coherent way, making this a more collaborative effort.

The cost is \$86,043 to create the initial maps. Annually, implementation and maintenance will be \$12,610. If we don't do the updates, they don't allow us to use their GPS for how officers respond. If we want an updated GPS option, we have to keep our maps updated annually.

Recommendation to approve the Collaborative Response Graphics

Motion by Kristine Sauter, second Gary Jahnke

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Jim Bowman, Gary Jahnke, Kristine Sauter

An Item for Consideration will be presented to the Board of Education on Monday, May 10, 2021.

5. Adjourn

A. Adjourn Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 AM

6. FUTURE BUSINESS SERVICES MEETING

A. May 25, 2021