

**BEMIDJI AREA SCHOOLS
BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA**

DATE : AUGUST 16, 2021
TO : BOARD OF EDUCATION
FROM : JORDAN HICKMAN, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
SUBJECT : REQUEST FOR LICENSED STAFF

COMMENTS:

In March 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was signed into federal law. The ARPA included a third round of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding. A portion of the funds allocated to Bemidji Area Schools must be spent on activities that address “learning loss” due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The remaining funds may be used for specific purposes, including, providing mental health services and supports and continuing to employ existing or hiring new school staff.

It is expected that the COVID-19 pandemic and disruptions to the educational process will increase the mental health needs of students. In addition, it is anticipated that community based mental health supports will be extremely limited, if available as all, when school resumes. Therefore, it is the administration’s recommendation that an additional 2.0 FTE social workers are needed to meet the needs of students.

An evaluation of enrollment and registration data indicates that several elementary schools are projected to have class sizes at certain grade levels that meet or exceed School Board Class Size Policy targets. As a result, it is the administration’s recommendation that five (5) additional elementary sections be authorized. Therefore, an additional 5.0 FTE elementary education teachers and related specialists are needed. The locations and grade levels will be determined based on class size projections.

The approximate cost to add these positions is \$640,000.

ACTION:

The motion was offered by _____, seconded by _____, and carried () to add 2.0 FTE social workers and 5.0 FTE elementary education teachers and related specialists for the 2021-2022 school year.