



Date: April 3, 2023  
To: Finance Committee  
From: Jamie Bente, Superintendent  
Re: Expanded Grant Writing/Grant Management – and Youth Programs Coordinator

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**Rationale:**

- Faribault Public Schools currently receives a number of external grants. Management of these grants presently is scattershot. Ensuring there is a clear understanding and oversight of the process – from application to award to program delivery to fund expenditures to reporting – is critical. Not only does this increase the likelihood of the grants having their desired impact, it also positions Faribault Public Schools to remain in good standing with funders, thereby increasing the chances of future awards.
- With the State's current priorities, budget surplus, and leadership (and the State's preference for grant programs), there will undoubtedly be a sizable wave of additional grant funds available this spring and summer. Faribault Public Schools should be competitive for many of these.
- Wading through grant opportunities – to ensure that they align with the district's goals and are worth the time investment – is important. Otherwise, the risk of "mission creep" or applying for mismatched grants is real.
- National data shows that only 10-20% of submitted grant applications are typically funded. Professional grant writers can significantly increase these odds.
- Our current Community Education & Engagement Director's experience in grant writing (\$20 million+ in grants secured and managed) is an asset that would be smart for the district to maximize.
- Already, dedicating a much smaller percentage of time to this, the Director has brought in grants that will lead to over \$90,000/year in district budget salary savings in both FY24 and FY25, as well as provide more than \$1 million in additional resources for programming in the district and community.
- Hiring a separate independent grant writer and/or grant manager would prove significantly more costly to the district.
- Faribault Public Schools' youth programming has increased notably in recent years with the growth of Summer STEAM, Faribault Community Schools, and Falcons After School, as well as the addition of Little Falcons and the Faribault Youth Center at the FEC.
- With more human capacity, the district is also positioned to be able to add (and fund through competitive grants) additional out-of-school-time and youth programs moving forward. These would provide further opportunities to Faribault youth, help grow participation in our district's school-sponsored sports/activities, and help promote increased school engagement.
- The expected return on investment from the General Fund commitment to this proposal should be at least 10 times in the first year (as a result of grant revenue generated by additional grant focus).



**Proposal:**

- The Community Education & Engagement Director will devote at least one-third of his time moving forward to grant writing and grant management.
- Community Education will add a Youth Programs Coordinator position to oversee the department's youth development programming (such as full-service community schools, Summer STEAM, Falcons Afterschool, and Little Falcons).
  - Cost = \$69,508 for 240 days; maximum costs with payroll taxes & benefits = \$103,000
  - Funding =
    - \$41,814 – Savings in Behavioral Health Coordinator position (through grants secured to cover portion of the role)
    - \$40,000 – Reallocation of a portion of the Achievement & Integration grant (with emphasis on Goal 2 of the A&I plan to increase the number of secondary students participating in activities, clubs, and leadership opportunities)
    - \$21,186 – General Fund commitment
- After the start-up, additional revenue sources for the Youth Programs Coordinator position could include:
  - **Targeted Services** – If we can continue to grow Targeted Services revenue, a portion of the Youth Programs Coordinator salary could one day be charged there.
  - **Grants** – After the initial start-up, we can continue to explore writing portions of the Youth Programs Coordinator role into future grants (like 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center, Full-Service Community Schools, etc.).
  - **Revenue-Generation** – The Youth Programs Coordinator will be charged with exploring whether additional revenue-generating programs (particularly during the summer months) can be added to the community education menu in order to grow revenue.