

**BEMIDJI AREA SCHOOLS
BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA**

DATE : DECEMBER 20, 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.

As anticipated, the COVID-19 pandemic and disruptions to the educational process during the last two school years have increased the mental health needs of students. In addition, community based mental health supports have been extremely limited or completely unavailable. Therefore, it is the administration’s recommendation that an additional 1.0 FTE social worker is needed to meet the needs of students within the District’s alternative education programs.

An evaluation of an increase in disruptive student behaviors resulting in corresponding suspensions and expulsions has resulted in an increase in demand for Homebased/Homebound instruction. As a result, it is the administration’s recommendation that a 1.0 FTE Homebased/Homebound Teacher be added.

The approximate cost to add these positions is \$160,000.

ACTION:

The motion was offered by _____, seconded by _____, and carried () to add 1.0 FTE social worker and 1.0 FTE homebased/homebound teacher for the 2021-2022 school year.