



# Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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To: Members, Board of Education  
Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent of Schools

From: Laurie Campbell, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources *LMC*  
Dr. Amy Warke, Chief Academic and Accountability Officer  
Dr. Alicia Evans, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations  
Dr. Carrie Kamm, Senior Director of Equity  
Eboney Lofton, Senior Director of Special Education

RE: Additional Staffing Request for FY19

Date: April 24, 2018

Introduction (connection to Vision Plan):

During the 2015-2016 school year, D97 and community members collaborated closely to develop a shared vision that represents the future we want for all of our district's students. That vision statement, above, was adopted by the Board of Education on July 12, 2016.

Our vision: *To create a positive learning environment for all District 97 students that is equitable, inclusive and focused on the whole child.*

At Oak Park District 97, we promise our students, our families and our community that we will achieve learning, growth and success for every student, without exception. Our four aspirational goals reflect that promise:

- GOAL 1 (INCLUSION): EVERY OAK PARK DISTRICT 97 STUDENT IS A **KNOWN, NURTURED AND CELEBRATED LEARNER.**
- GOAL 2 (POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT): EVERY OAK PARK DISTRICT 97 STUDENT IS AN **EMPOWERED AND PASSIONATE SCHOLAR.**
- GOAL 3 (EQUITY): EVERY OAK PARK DISTRICT 97 STUDENT IS A **CONFIDENT AND PERSISTENT ACHIEVER.**
- GOAL 4 (WHOLE-CHILD-FOCUSED): EVERY OAK PARK DISTRICT 97 STUDENT IS A **CREATIVE, CRITICAL THINKER AND GLOBAL CITIZEN.**

Our professional practices in our vision plan lay the groundwork for student learning. At District 97, we are committed to continuously improving our teaching, leadership and organizational practices (Four Pillars) – that, when implemented consistently, will sharpen our instructional effectiveness.

While this plan explicitly describes for every leader and every staff member how to champion and execute these ideals by aligning their respective intentions to our shared vision, the allocation of instructional support staff to schools has not been reviewed for a number of years. Rather, we employed a one-size-fits-all approach. Every school was allocated a full time social worker, full time school nurse, full time language arts specialist, and full time instructional coach regardless of the number of students who attended the school. Five of the eight elementary schools have a Student Support Specialist with the two larger schools being assigned full time Assistant Principals.

Given our deep commitment to addressing historical disparities in student outcomes and realizing our compelling vision of educational equity for every student, we believed now was the time to reexamine the staffing levels to account for the varying enrollments and student needs at each school. At the same time, the state of Illinois approved a new model for funding based on equitable school funding program.

Governor Bruce Rauner signed into law Public Act 100-0465 or the Evidence-Based Funding for Student Success Act on August 31, 2017. This law enacts evidence-based funding (EBF) and comprehensively changes the way that school districts receive the bulk of state funds. EBF sends more resources to Illinois' most under-resourced students. EBF takes the necessary first steps toward ensuring all schools have the resources they need to provide a safe, rigorous, and well-rounded learning environment for all students. EBF demonstrates new mindsets for understanding the relationship between equity, adequacy, and student outcomes.

Taking into consideration guidance from the EBF, the changes in enrollment at the various schools, and expansion of the co-teaching pilot for special education, the Administration is recommending the following staff changes and additions for the 2018-2019 school year.

#### **Replacement of Student Support Specialist with Assistant Principal at Holmes Elementary School**

**Background:** Holmes has a Student Support Specialist assigned to the school. The Student Support Specialist is a member of the Oak Park Teachers Association (OPTA) whose responsibilities include student discipline, supervision, lunchroom, and operations but not does not evaluate staff. In the past five years, the enrollment at Holmes has exceeded 500 students. The number of general education classroom sections at Holmes is increasing from 28 to 30 for the 2018-2019 school year. Based on the student enrollment of the school and the the number of staff evaluations that need to be completed, the administration is recommending that the Student Support Specialist position be replaced with an Assistant Principal. The assistant principal can assist with principal with management and operations of the school along with evaluation of staff. Currently, Lincoln Elementary School (K-5 enrollment 671) and Longfellow Elementary School (K-5 enrollment 640) have assistant principals. The remaining elementary schools, with the exception of Hatch, have support from a Student Support Specialist.

**Feedback from Staff/Community:** Holmes school staff members have expressed concern about the size of the school and have been requesting additional administrative support.

**Evidence-Based Funding Model for Student Success:** According to the Illinois State Board of Education's Evidence-Based Funding Model for Student Success, the prototypical school with an enrollment of 450 students should have a principal and an assistant principal. The current enrollment at Holmes of 583 students far exceeds the 450 student threshold in the model.

**Financial Implications:** This is a new building administrative position. However, the Student Support Specialist position will be eliminated. Therefore, this represents a reallocation of dollars. The average salary for a Student Support Specialist is \$78,513. The average salary for an Assistant Principal is \$87,435. Thus, the increase of \$8,922 is minimal.

#### **Replacement of Student Support Specialists with Assistant Principal at Irving Elementary School**

**Background:** Irving Elementary School also has a Student Support Specialist assigned to the school. The Student Support Specialist is a member of the OPTA whose responsibilities include student discipline, supervision, lunchroom, and operations but not does not evaluate staff. Irving's enrollment, currently 468, is less than Holmes but Irving houses several special education programs that require additional teaching, support, and itinerant staff. As a result, the principal at Irving is responsible for evaluating close to 60 staff members. In addition, Irving is a Title 1 school and placement for students from Hephzibah. Based on the size of the school, the number of staff evaluations that need to be completed, and the special programs at Irving, the administration is recommending that the Student Support Specialist position be replaced with an Assistant Principal. The Assistant Principal can assist with principal with management and operations of the school along with evaluation of staff. Currently, Lincoln Elementary School (K-5 enrollment 671) and Longfellow Elementary School (K-5 enrollment 640) have assistant principals. The remaining elementary schools, with the exception of Hatch, have support from a Student Support Specialist.

**Feedback from Staff/Community:** There has not been specific feedback from the staff or community on this topic other than questions about how one principal can manage the programs and size of Irving.

**Evidence-Based Funding Model for Student Success:** According to the Illinois State Board of Education's Evidence-Based Funding Model for Student Success, the prototypical school with an enrollment of 450 students should have a principal and an assistant principal. The current enrollment of 468 students exceeds the 450 student threshold in the model.

**Financial Implications:** This is a new building administrative position. However, the Student Support Specialist position will be eliminated. Therefore, this represents a reallocation of dollars. The average salary for a Student Support Specialist is \$78,513. The average salary for an Assistant Principal is \$87,435. Thus, the increase of \$8,922 is minimal.

**Addition of a Student Support Specialist for Hatch Elementary School**

**Background:** The enrollment at Hatch Elementary School (334) has been approaching Beye's enrollment (371). According to Dr. Kasarda's Demographic Study (p. 53), Hatch is one of the four schools with expected increases to enrollment. The principal at Beye evaluates staff and manages the operations of the school. Currently Beye has received support from a Student Support Specialist. The Student Support Specialist is a member of the OPTA whose responsibilities include student discipline, supervision, lunchroom, and operations but not does not evaluate staff. The administration is recommending the addition of a Student Support Specialist at Hatch.

**Feedback from Staff/Community:** On April 11, 2018, Dr. Kelley held a listening session at Hatch Elementary School. She asked staff to provide feedback on what should be continued, done differently and accomplishments according to the four pillars of the District's Vision Plan. At this meeting, staff requested a student support specialist for Hatch. Currently all other elementary schools in District 97 have either a Student Support Specialist or an Assistant Principal.

**Evidence-Based Funding Model for Student Success:** According to the Illinois State Board of Education's Evidence-Based Funding Model for Student Success, the prototypical school with an enrollment of 450 students should have a principal and an assistant principal.

**Financial Implications:** This is a new OPTA position which represents one additional FTE. The average salary for a Student Support Specialist is \$78,513 which will be an added as a salary expense to the budget.

**Addition of Four Social Workers - Longfellow, Holmes, Irving, Lincoln, Julian, and Brooks**

**Background:** Given the complexity of need that currently exists within the larger district population alongside current enrollment trends, the additional social/emotional support requested in the form of four additional social workers would allow support staff to effectively and flexibly support students who present with IEPs as well as general education students who may be in crisis, may need short term therapy, and/or who require intensive individual and/or group services. The current model for students who require social/emotional support relies solely on social workers – whether the students present with disabilities or not. The additional positions would allow for one social worker per grade level at each middle school and an additional 0.5 FTE at Longfellow, Holmes, Irving and Lincoln Elementary Schools.

**Feedback from Staff/Community:** Between September and December of 2017, currently assigned social workers reported between 175 and 185 “walk-in” instances for students who did not present with disabilities. The current support model that is meant to provide services to both students with and without Individualized Educational Programs is reported to be unsustainable. Without additional resources, social workers will need to narrow their focus and serve only the students who are legally entitled to social work services per student IEPs.

**Evidence-Based Funding Model for Student Success:** According to the Illinois State Board of Education's Evidence-Based Funding Model for Student Success, the prototypical middle school has an enrollment of 600 and one guidance counselor. District 97 employs social workers instead of guidance counselors. In addition to the one guidance counselor/social worker, at risk students, however, generally have more non-academic needs that should be addressed by additional pupil support staff, which could include more guidance counselors, as well as social workers, family liaison individuals, and psychologists. Thus, in addition to the core guidance counselor and nurse positions provided to every prototypical school discussed above for Element 8, the EB model provides additional pupil support position at the rate of one for every 125 DHS students and every 125 EL students.” Illinois currently uses Department of Human Services (DHS) counts (as opposed to Free and Reduced Priced Lunch counts) when determining targeted aid. The DHS count is the count of children eligible for at least one of the following low income programs: Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, TANF, or Food Stamps, excluding pupils who are eligible for services provided by the Department of Children and Family Services. Below are the DHS counts at the schools targeted for additional support. Below are the total enrollment, DHS, and EL counts for each of the schools.

School	K-5 Enrollment as of March 2018	Average School Factor of 450	Department of Human Services	DHS Factor of 125	English Learners	EL Factor of 125	Current Social Worker Staffing	EBM Staffing	Proposed Staffing
Holmes	583	1.30	68	0.54	43	0.34	1	2.18	1.5
Lincoln	671	1.49	76	0.61	29	0.23	1	2.33	1.5
Irving	468	1.04	89	0.71	13	0.10	1	1.86	1.5
Longfellow	640	1.42	104	0.83	29	0.23	1	2.49	1.5
Brooks	961	2.14	108	0.86	7	0.06	2	3.06	3
Julian	1023	2.27	131	1.05	8	0.06	2	3.39	3

**Financial Implications:** The four positions will be new beginning in the 2018-2019 school year. The average salary for Social Workers is \$73,046 representing a total increase of \$292,184. Although these positions cannot be grant funded, there has been a reallocation of special education administrative positions into the grant to offset these salaries.

#### **Addition of One School Psychologist**

**Background:** Given the complexity of need that currently exists within the larger district population alongside current enrollment trends, the additional social/emotional support requested in the form of four additional social workers would allow support staff to effectively and flexibly support students who present with IEPs as well as general education students who may be in crisis, may need short term therapy, and/or who require intensive individual and/or group services. The addition of one school psychologist would allow for 1.0 FTE to exist at each middle school to provide additional special education support, increased support for the continued implementation of MTSS and to align with the current Evidence Based Funding models proposed by the Illinois State Board of Education. This will bring the total number of District 97 school psychologists to six.

**Feedback from Staff/Community:** In a proposal submitted by the five school psychologists who are currently employed by the district, they indicated:

*School psychologists are highly trained professionals who are equipped to support school districts in numerous ways, including social-emotional groups, academic interventions, parent education, program evaluation, crisis support, expertise in multi-tiered systems of support, etc. The significantly higher full case study evaluation numbers within District 97; make it extremely difficult for the existing school psychologists within the district, to fully optimize and apply their skill set and training. The National Association of School Psychologists does recommend that a school psychologists daily job consist of the following: (a) 30% assessment, (b) 30% Intervention, and (c) 30% counseling & (d) 10% consultation. However, within District 97, school psychologist spend more than 30% of the daily time conducting assessments/evaluations. It is also recommended that school psychologist average 30-35 full case studies, yearly when working in multiple buildings.*

*District 97's current school psychologists are exceeding the recommended number of full case study evaluations conducted on an annual basis. During the 2016-2017 school year, excluding all early childhood evaluations, the total number of case studies conducted by D97 school psychologists was 392. Therefore, the average amount of case studies conducted per school psychologist for the 2016-2017 school year was 78 full case study evaluations. While each school psychologist in District 97, may not have conducted 78 full case study evaluations (some psychologists conducted more some slightly less); the average of 78 full case study evaluations does indicate the need for more school psychologists to be hired within District 97.*

**Evidence-Based Funding Model for Student Success:** According to the Illinois State Board of Education's Evidence-Based Funding Model for Student Success, one psychologist should be allocated for every 1000 students. Currently the District employs five full-time school psychologists for 6100 student enrollment. The additional psychologist will bring the District into the range recommended by the new state Funding Model.

**Financial Implications:** This is a new position beginning in FY19. The average salary for a District 97 school psychologist is \$72,373. This position will add \$72,373 in salary expense to the budget.

#### **Addition of Four Special Education Teachers (Expansion of Co-Teaching Pilot)**

**Background:** By law and best practice, students with disabilities should be afforded the opportunity to learn alongside their general education counterparts with access to the supports needed to realize academic success. Federal law (IDEA 2004) requires that "to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in the regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily." 20 U.S.C. '1412(a)(5)(A).

Teachers (special education and general education) identified the need for providing more inclusive service delivery models to support students with disabilities both academically and functionally. A tentative structure was devised and ultimately teachers were supported by district administration in designing pilot programs , first in the middle schools (2013) and then, this year in two elementary schools – Whittier and Irving- that were aligned to current research and best practice. Moving forward, there is a desire to fully implement co-teaching at Whittier and Irving Schools which would require three additional full-time special education teachers.

<b>Whittier</b>	<b>Current Staffing</b>	<b>Proposed Staffing</b>
K-2 Instructional Program	0.0	1.0
3-5 Instructional Program	1.0	1.0
Co-Teaching Supports	5.0	6.0

<b>Irving</b>	<b>Current Staffing</b>	<b>Proposed Staffing</b>
Primary Multi-needs Program	1.0	1.0
Intermediate Multi-needs Program	1.0	1.0
Upper Grade Multi-needs Program	1.0	1.0
Co-Teaching Supports	2.0	3.0

Additionally, the administration is recommending implementation of a pilot at a Julian feeder school to ensure equity of experience for students. The implementation of a pilot focused on supporting the implementation of a kindergarten co-taught classroom would result in one additional special education teacher.

<b>Julian Feeder School</b>	<b>Current Staffing</b>	<b>Proposed Staffing</b>
K-2 Instructional Program	1.0	1.0
3-5 Instructional Program	1.0	1.0
Co-Teaching Supports	1.5/2.0	2.5/3.0

**Feedback from Staff/Community:**

A focus group was held with elementary teachers on December 12, 2017, to solicit feedback on the co-teaching pilot. The following was noted as benefits to students:

- All students are benefitting from the supports implemented, such as the use of visuals.
- All students are displaying more empathy.
- Students aren't being labeled as general education vs. special education and all students feel more included. This is especially seen at recess when students are on the playground.
- Students are growing at a faster pace particularly in their functional performance.

On December 18th, the special education administration met with elementary parents to solicit feedback. Parents shared a range of experiences; yet, there were some common themes:

- Inclusion is not based on merit. Everyone deserves to be there.
- There should be a dedicated teaching pair for each grade level across the district.
- Children are experiencing increased social connections.

**Evidence-Based Funding Model for Student Success:** According to the Illinois State Board of Education's Evidence-Based Funding Model for Student Success, the District should have 1.0 special education teachers per 141 students. With a District enrollment of approximately 6,100 students, the District should have 50 special education teachers. Due to the Federal law (IDEA 2004) and the District's desire to expand the co-teaching model approach, additional staff would be required to support students in the general education setting per the Federal Least Restrictive Environment mandate referenced above. There are currently 50 special education teachers on staff in District 97. The expansion of the co-teaching model would require four additional special education teachers.

**Financial Implications:** These are new positions. The average salary new teacher salary is \$62,038. Therefore, four positions would add \$248,252 to the budget.

**Addition of Three Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Interventionists**

**Background:** Currently, the district has one Language Arts Specialist for each elementary school, regardless of the size of the school. Language Arts Specialists provide intervention support to students who have been identified for assistance through the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) process. The equal staffing regardless of school size represents a staffing inequity that exists between our small schools (i.e. Hatch, Beye) and our larger schools (i.e. Longfellow, Lincoln, Holmes). Our Language Arts Specialists caseloads at Longfellow, Lincoln, and Holmes currently exceed the typical and recommended caseload numbers of 25-30 students (45, 43, and 57 students, respectively). The administration is recommending three additional staff to serve as MTSS interventionists at the following schools: Holmes, Longfellow, and Lincoln. These additional staff members will provide Tier 3 interventions to students in reading and/or math and will provide for more equitable staffing at our largest elementary schools. These interventionists will provide 1-1 or small group instruction (no larger than five) for students in grades K-5.

**Feedback from Staff/Community:** The inequity in staffing between our larger and smaller buildings has been named as a concern at our Administrative Leadership meetings, as well as at our Education Council meetings, a partnership committee that includes District 97 administration and representatives from OPTA.

**Evidence-Based Funding Model for Student Success:** According to the Illinois State Board of Education's Evidence-Based Funding Model for Student Success, a prototypical school of 450 students should employ one core

Tier 2 and 3 Interventionists (licensed teachers who, during the regular school day, provide 1-1 or small group (no larger than five) tutoring to students struggling to meet proficiency in core subjects. Currently, District 97 employs a Language Arts Specialist for each of the eight elementary schools to serve in the role of Intervention Teacher. In addition to the one interventionist per prototypical school, DHS (poverty) counts and EL counts factor into the formula for allocation of staff. The calculations for the schools being recommended for additional staff are displayed below.

School	K-5 Enrollment as of March 2018	Average School Factor of 450	DHS Count	DHS Factor = Count/125	English Learners Count	EL Factor = Count/125	Current Interventionist Staffing	EBM Staffing	Recommended Staffing
Holmes	583	1.30	68	0.54	43	0.34	1	2.18	2.0
Lincoln	671	1.49	76	0.61	29	0.23	1	2.33	2.0
Longfellow	640	1.42	104	0.83	29	0.23	1	2.49	2.0

**Financial Implications:** These are new positions. The average salary new teacher salary is \$62,038. Therefore, three position would add \$186,144 to the budget.

**Financial Implications of Additional Staff**

District 97 received additional funds from the Illinois State Board of Education. These funds are designed to assist schools in applying the recommendations from research regarding effective schools. The Evidence-Based Funding Model for Student Success contains 27 elements for staffing and provision of resources for schools in Illinois.

In addition to the new funds from the State, District 97 administrators have reviewed their individual budgets to find funds to pay for the additional staff members. There is a firm commitment from the administration to provide these additional resources to the schools.

Expense:

Student Support Specialist	1	\$78,513
Student Support Specialist	-2	(157,026)
Assistant Principal	2	174,870
Social Worker	4	292,184
Psychologist	1	72,373
Co-Teachers	4	248,152
MTSS	3	<u>186,114</u>
Total Salary	13	895,180
Benefits (based on average)		<u>165,100</u>
Total Cost		\$1,060,280

Funding:

IDEA Reallocation	(247,000)
Additional Funding	(421,736)
Reallocation of other district resources	(249,000)
Local dollars	(142,544)

**Administrative Recommendation:**

The Administration recommends that the Board approve the addition of the positions listed above for the 2018-2019 school year.