



Sharon Williams, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

To: RIMSD 41 Board of Education
From: Dr. Sharon Williams
Cabinet Champion: Dr. Dominique Moore, Assistant Superintendent of HR
Date: May 27, 2025
Re: We Dare to Teach

Rock Island High School (RIHS) currently has more than 43 students who qualify for Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) services in Swahili. Additionally, Rock Island Academy (RIA) serves over 100 English Learners who speak Swahili, with each grade level (K-5) having at least 12 students who meet the criteria for TBE services. Based on these numbers, TBE programming is required at both RIHS and RIA in accordance with Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) guidelines.

Despite multiple postings by the Human Resources Department for EL/Bilingual teaching positions, we have not received any applications from Swahili-speaking candidates currently residing in the U.S. Compounding the need, one of our Swahili-speaking teachers at RIHS has submitted their resignation, effective at the end of this school year.

To meet student needs and remain in compliance with ISBE requirements, we are requesting Board approval to enter into a service agreement with *We Dare to Teach* (Peoria Public Schools) for four (4) Swahili-speaking teachers. This partnership will allow us to fill the vacancy at RIHS and implement the required TBE programming at RIA. The total cost for recruitment, screening, transcript translation, and J-1 visa processing services is \$4,000 per teacher, for a total of \$16,000 for the 2025-2026 school year. Each subsequent year that the teacher is employed with the school district the district would incur additional cost of \$2,000 per teacher for the renewal of their J-1 visa.

It is recommended that the Board of Education approve the contract for service with We Dare to Teach (Peoria Public Schools) in the amount of \$16,000.

Investment Period: May 27, 2025 - June 30, 2026
Initial Investment: \$16,000
Funding Source: District Funds/Human Resources