

## **Executive Summary: ROE Student Achievement Mentor Program**

The administration recently met with officials from the Regional Office of Education #47 (ROE) to discuss the possibility of implementing the Student Achievement Mentor Program for the 2026-2027 school year. This program, established under the Alternative Learning Opportunity Program (ALOP) framework, provides intensive support for students in grades 4 through 12 who are at risk of academic failure.

Currently, administration is proposing the implementation of one mentor at Monroe Center Grade School for the 2026-2027 school year. This proposal was reviewed by the Education Committee on March 25, 2026, where members reached a consensus to bring the recommendation to the full Board for approval.

### **Program Overview**

The program places a full-time ROE employee within our district to serve as a dedicated mentor and advocate for a caseload of 25 to 40 students. These mentors focus on the Four Pillars of Service:

- Academic Support: Improving grades and credit completion.
- Behavioral Intervention: Reducing disciplinary incidents.
- Social-Emotional Learning (SEL): Building resilience and coping skills.
- Attendance: Addressing chronic absenteeism and truancy.

The mentor acts as a go-to adult for students, bridging the gap between home and school while supporting administrative decisions.

### **Proven Impact**

Data from neighboring pilot districts (Amboy, Forreston, and Rock Falls) demonstrate significant success:

- Attendance: One district saw attendance for at-risk students rise from 78.7% to 92.5%.
- Academics: In Forreston, 57% of students in the program improved their grades, with 75% of junior high participants passing all classes by the second quarter.
- Behavior: Amboy Junior High reported a reduction from 53 fall discipline incidents to 26 year-over-year.
- Administrative Relief: Principals report that mentors allow them to focus on curriculum and high-level discipline by managing minor student issues and relationship-building.

### **Financial Analysis & District Responsibility**

The ROE #47 ALOP model is designed to be highly cost-effective for the district:

- ROE Obligations: The ROE pays over 90% of the mentor's salary and benefits. They also cover

travel, professional development, and all supplies, including a laptop.

- District Obligations: Meridian must provide a small classroom space, administrative support, and access to student information systems.
- EBF Funding Impact: Due to the dynamic nature of the Illinois Evidence-Based Funding (EBF) formula, a definitive impact is difficult to project. However, logical assessments based on current data suggest a current year impact of \$2,329.87. A hypothetical three-year cumulative impact is estimated between \$7,000 and \$8,000. This is not a direct cost, but rather a potential minor shift in future Tier funding based on enrollment counts.

### **Timeline for Implementation**

To ensure a start date in August 2026, the district must adhere to the following timeline:

- Hiring: May/June 2026 (with district involvement in the interview process).
- Contract Signing: Must be finalized by June 30, 2026.

### **Recommendation**

Administration recommends the Board consider the approval of the contract with ROE #47 to implement the Student Achievement Mentor Program at Monroe Center Grade School for the FY27 school year. This program benefits students by pairing them with a dedicated, full-time mentor who provides consistent, individualized support across the four pillars of academics, behavior, attendance, and social-emotional learning to ensure students stay on track and successfully complete their education.