

# Zionsville Community Schools

## Board of School Trustees Meeting “Item for Consideration”

New Business Item 6e • Date: January 12, 2026

### CountryMark Reimbursement Agreement

#### Category:

<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources, Personnel/Staffing	<input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Finance, Budgeting, Accounting	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Board Policy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Facilities, Transportation, Nutrition	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Relations	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

#### Type of Board of Trustees Consideration Sought:

Action	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Facts of this Matter:

In August 2025, the Board of Trustees authorized the Leadership Team, Skillman, and Fanning Howey to award contracts for the construction of the new Early Learning Center/Educational Services Center, planned to be open for students in Fall of 2027. One known challenge of the site selected for this facility is the existence of the Countrymark pipeline that runs southwest to northeast through the site. Countrymark is the sole owner and user of that pipeline, and their easements give them great and absolute discretion over plans, projects, and use of both the land within their easement and land surrounding it. After months of planning, negotiation, and meetings with Countrymark, ZCS was granted access to drive construction vehicles over the pipeline in select locations, and was given approval for work outside the pipeline easement width itself to do the work that has been happening for months. The Leadership Team now recommends to the Board the agreements necessary for utility work and other essential construction tasks through the pipeline easement itself. These processes and documents are required of us by Countrymark in order to progress to next steps of engineering on their part and construction on our part and to preserve the proposed timeline for construction of the ELC/ESC as previously approved.

#### Objective POSITIVES related to this item or approach:

Approval of these agreements will allow the pipeline work to be performed in the first half of 2026 so that construction of the ELC/ESC can proceed on the originally proposed timeline with the intended opening of that facility in Fall of 2027.

#### Objective Negatives related to this item or approach:

Cost. The project is not fully engineered by a qualified contractor, and so costs are only an estimate at the time. However, Countrymark has indicated that they will not proceed with engineering or any further work without ZCS agreement to these documents. Additionally, while higher than preferred, costs in this order of magnitude were included in preliminary planning and total project estimates by our construction management partner Skillman.

#### Financial Implications:

The preliminary cost estimate for this work provided by Countrymark totals \$637,182.71. This total includes a subtotal cost of \$554,071.92 and a 15% contingency, and entails the work being performed by a contractor on behalf of Countrymark. Due to the need for further engineering and Countrymark's enlistment of a contractor still in the future, the Leadership Team recommends including an additional "approval contingency" for a total recommended Board approval amount not to exceed \$700,000.

**Opinion/Recommendation:**

This pipeline work at the ELC/ESC site is necessary for the construction and use of that future facility. While the cost for this pipeline work is higher than desired, it was estimated in this order of magnitude and included in overall budget estimates for this project. Funds to perform the work are available and would be paid from the 2025 bond proceeds as previously described for the ELC/ESC project.

**Suggested Wording for a Motion, if any:**

I move to authorize the Leadership Team and Skillman to execute the agreements necessary to complete the work as depicted within the scope of the Countrymark pipeline project and at a cost not to exceed \$700,000 as presented.