

Additional Information Concerning the WEST40 Program:

West 40 Regional Safe School – Middle School offers thirty elementary school districts and one unit district an opportunity to provide alternative educational and social services to students. District 97 has a longstanding relationship with the West 40 Regional Safe School – Middle School, sending an average of two students per year to the program.

Currently, the middle school and high school programs are in jeopardy of closing for FY11 due to a financial deficit. The financial deficit is not a result of mismanaged funds, but funds have been withheld by the comptroller's office. West 40 has been told that payment is not projected for release until December 2010. West 40 Regional Safe School Programs cannot continue to provide daily educational services in grades 6-12 for West Cook County without partnership and financial support from serving districts. At least \$600,000 is needed to open the doors in September 2010.

To ensure continuation of the Regional Safe School Programs, West 40 has created the following options for the West 40 districts:

Option One: West 40 Districts given an opportunity to pre-pay for the full school year at a lower tuition rate for any returning students.

Option Two: West 40 Districts given the opportunity to reserve seats for the full school year at a pre-paid lower tuition rate for any possible students needing the service; if no students are enrolled during the year, this money is kept by West 40 and not returned to the District.

Option Three: West 40 Districts asked to contribute funds that establish a district credit based on the past use of Regional Safe School Programs.

Option one and two ensure the continuation of the Regional Safe School Programs. Schools are given the opportunity to lock in a lower tuition rate of \$1,200 a month by pre-paying the \$11,400 annual cost. This would be offered to districts that have returning students starting in the Regional Safe School Programs at the beginning of the school year (August/September). This would also be offered to any district that wished to reserve seats for students. The total amount of \$11,400 is due to West 40 by September 30, 2010.

The third option is for districts to contribute funds that establish a district credit based on past use of the Regional Safe School Programs. Over the past three years, District 97 has had seven students enrolled at West 40 Regional Safe School- Middle School. Therefore, to establish a credit, District 97 would need to pay \$21,000 to West 40 by September 30, 2010. The dollar amount of \$21,000 represents 7% (based on seven students out of 98 students served by West 40) of \$300,000. This is half of the \$600,000 needed. The other \$300,000 would come from high school districts.

Should we choose to use the third option, we would receive tuition credit based on the lower rate of \$1,200. Also, any additional tuition owed would be based on the regular, higher rate of \$1,300 as well. The tuition credit does not expire at the end of FY11.

Recommendation

It is our recommendation that District 97 plan to pre-pay for one seat using Option 2 in the West 40 Middle School next year at a cost of \$11,400.