

CROSBY-IRONTON SCHOOLS
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY
January 19, 2022

Item 7.2a

The finance committee met in the Forum Room on January 19, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. with the following present: Barb Neprud, Tom Nixon and Kim Coughlin. Jamie Skjeveland, Lea St. Onge and Bill Tollefson were also present.

Enrollment – The committee received the fifth enrollment report of the 2021-2022 school year. Enrollment remains stable especially during the period from November through January. The average enrollment still remains artificially high because of the reported enrollment on the first week of school. The average will become more useable as additional monthly enrollment counts are added to the report.

2021-2022 Modifications – The committee reviewed two modifications for the 2021-2022 school year.

Teacher Substitute Rate of Pay Change – In an attempt to alleviate some of the shortage of teacher substitutes, the committee heard a proposal to increase the daily rate of pay for substitute teachers from \$125 to \$135. This rate of pay would, if approved by the Board, be effective for all substitute teacher days worked on or after January 25, 2022. In addition, an incentive for working more days at Crosby-Ironton in the second semester of the 2021-2022 school year was added. Second semester runs from January 24, 2022 to the end of the school year. At the end of the school year, the number of days in second semester that each substitute teacher worked will be counted. Every substitute teacher who worked 30 days or more will get an additional \$10 per day, with the incentive paid in June 2022. Every substitute teacher who worked 60 days or more will get an additional \$20 per day, with the incentive paid in June 2022. Every substitute teacher who worked 90 days will get an additional \$30 per day, with the incentive paid in June 2022.

Approve Overloads for Social Studies Teachers (3) – The committee was reminded that the 2021-2022 Preliminary Budget included three one-semester overloads in Social Studies, one for each Social Studies teacher, which was necessary due to a reduced number of Social Studies teachers starting in 2021-2022 and also needing to teach Human Geography to 12th graders and Civics to 9th graders based on changes to the Minnesota graduation standards that are in transition. These overloads, as indicated, were included in the Preliminary Budget and are all happening in the second semester, therefore they will appear on the January Board agenda for approval.

2022-2023 Planning – The committee received a number of items relating to the 2022-2023 school year.

2022-2023 Enrollment Projection – The committee reviewed a very preliminary enrollment projection for 2022-2023 that advances students by grade level in the same manner that has been used in previous years. The issue in using that methodology this year relates to whether all of the new students who enrolled from other neighboring school districts this past fall will continue to stay enrolled at Crosby-Ironton. There may be attempts to collect additional information from the parents of those students to learn their plans for where their children will be enrolled in 2022-2023. Even with the increased enrollment in 2021-2022, the trend is toward a decline of 15 pupil units leading into 2022-2023 which, at a General Education formula allowance of \$6,863, will result in just over \$100,000 in revenue loss.

2022-2023 Basic Skills/Compensatory Revenue Student Counts – With the Fall MARSS reporting process now completed, the free and reduced student counts on October 1, 2021 have been finalized. Those counts provide the basis of the Basic Skills/Compensatory revenue for the 2022-2023 school year. Free and reduced student counts are down from the prior year and down as a percentage of the total student population. Specifically, Compensatory revenue will decrease by just under \$80,000 for 2022-2023, declining from \$369,299 in 2021-2022 to \$291,923 for 2022-2023. For reference, six years ago, in the 2017-2018 school year, Compensatory revenue was \$715,321. During that same time period, the Reserved for Basic Skills Fund Balance has been used to cover that revenue loss and maintain ongoing expenditures, and the result is that the reserved fund balance is now almost depleted.

Impact of Compensatory Counts on Other Programs – The same free and reduced student counts used for Basic Skills/Compensatory revenue also are used as part of formulas that drive other funding streams, including Title I, Title II and e-Rate. It will likely be a safe assumption that these funding streams will result in decreased revenue for 2022-2023 as well. On a positive note, the Title I program at CRES, which operates in a model called Schoolwide (as opposed to Targeted Assistance) can continue to be operated in a similar manner even though the percentage of free and reduced students has dropped below the 40% threshold that was required to establish and implement the Schoolwide model.

2022-2023 AFTT Modifications – Academic Family Teacher Teams (AFTT) is a new offering for grades K-3 at CRES starting in 2021-2022. This process seeks to engage parents and families as partners to enhance and support the academic work done daily in the classroom. The model uses three AFTT evening events spread over the course of the school year to update parents about what students are studying and provides ways for parents to enhance and support those studies by engaging their children at home. After experiencing the first two evenings of AFTT for 2021-2022, a proposal to change the 2022-2023 school calendar to accommodate the model is being proposed. Under the new proposal, in exchange for working the three AFTT evenings, there would be one less student contact day and students and teachers at CRES would not come to school or work on Thursday, April 6, 2022. Work schedules for the classified staff are still being worked through and will include those personnel either working on April 6, 2023, working during the three AFTT evenings, or some combination of both. This modification will be included on the 2022-2023 school calendar being considered for adoption at the January regular Board meeting.

2022-2023 Staffing – The committee reviewed several staffing requests for implementation in 2022-2023. They included the addition of one section of first grade based on a current kindergarten enrollment of 83 students who would advance to first grade in 2022-2023. This addition would keep class sizes lower and work to improve student learning outcomes, such as Reading Well by 3rd Grade. A math instructional coach opportunity might also be considered for 2022-2023 to seek to assist homeroom teachers at CRES in improving delivery of math instruction. These processes will be facilitated by the potential reassignment of staff in regular education, special education and Title I as needed. The committee endorsed the plan for the addition of 1.0 f.t.e. of teacher time at CRES. The other staffing request was from the secondary building, where there has been a need identified for more teacher time for 9-12 math and 9-12 elective opportunities for students. The committee also agreed to forward to the January Board meeting a proposal to increase the teacher allocation at the high school by up to 1.0 f.t.e. to fulfill these opportunities. These additions are for 2022-2023 and will be considered annually in the future, weighing student enrollment and the financial condition of the school district in determining their continuation.

Personnel Items – Alternative Staffing Options – The committee discussed alternative staffing options that might be considered starting in the 2022-2023 school year. Additional information will continue to be collected and a roll-out model developed as the committee continues to review this information.

Other Items- Choir Robes – The committee received an update on a citizen concern regarding choir uniforms. The committee was provided with information about the process that had been used to facilitate a decision on the choir robes, which included choir member surveys, a presentation of samples from a vendor, and a student vote which was used to finalize the decision and facilitate the purchase.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully prepared and submitted by William Tollefson