

CROSBY-IRONTON SCHOOLS
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY
April 12, 2021

Item 7.2a

The finance committee met in the Forum Room on April 12, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. with the following present: Abby Geotz, Kim Coughlin and Mike Domin. Jamie Skjeveland, and Bill Tollefson were also present.

2021-2022 Planning

2021-22 Staffing -

Health Paraprofessional Position Briefing – Hanna Bushard, School Nurse, had been invited to attend and was attending this portion of the meeting. Nurse Bushard provided the committee with information on how the school district was currently staffed with a licensed school nurse and an LPN-certified health paraprofessional. She indicated that, based on her discussions with other school nurses, the school district is very fortunate to have two full-time positions within the nursing department. She also discussed the work load of the nurses, including medical management (8 daily meds at CRES and 12 daily meds at the high school) and three diabetics that need assistance in monitoring their blood sugar levels; and also indicated that there were a number of special education student IEPs that called for nurse time. She also discussed the potential difficulties and issues that might be encountered in trying to develop a schedule to cover both school buildings with an f.t.e. of 1.5 rather than 2.0. The committee inquired about delegating administration of meds and the level of paperwork that was necessary in the nurse's office. After Nurse Bushard left the meeting, the committee further discussed the potential of a reduction of half of the nurse paraprofessional position, which would not result in the employee in that position losing half their position but in a reassignment to a regular special education paraprofessional position for the remainder of the work day. The committee considered potential options for where to place the health para so that the individual might be able to respond to health emergencies in the office, should they arise. The committee agreed that it would be up to the principals to develop an acceptable schedule and placement, an office staff delegation order for medication administration, as well as clear criteria for when the health paraprofessional would be called from special ed to nursing in an "emergency". The committee also heard that State statute called for one full-time nurse for schools with an enrollment exceeding 1,000 students, putting Crosby-Ironton on the verge of not even needing 1.0 f.t.e. in this department. After considering the options and looking at the extent of the projected budgetary shortfall, the committee opted to recommend that the health paraprofessional position be reduced by half.

COVID Leave Under the American Rescue Plan Legislation – The committee received an updated on provisions of the recently passed federal government American Rescue Plan Act legislation. The Families First Coronavirus Recovery Act (FFCRA) that was enacted in March 2020 created the so-called COVID leave that provided up to ten days of emergency paid sick leave for eligible employees who met one of five qualifying COVID-based reasons identified in the law and expanded partially paid family and medical leave. This leave expired as of December 31, 2020. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, in December 2020, provided for this leave to be extended, at the employer's discretion, to March 31, 2021. The School Board extended the leave, the extension just expiring at the end of March. The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), again at the employer's discretion, allows for extending and expanding certain provisions of these two types of leave. The committee reviewed the options available, including granting nothing, granting benefits to the full extent of the law, or granting a hybrid plan. The committee is recommending a hybrid plan that allows employees to use any remaining unused emergency paid sick leave balance that they may have from the FFCRA and not used through March 31, 2021 to be eligible for use between April 1 and June 30, 2021; to expand the use, as authorized by the ARPA, to include use while in quarantine awaiting COVID test results and time taken to receive and recover from the COVID vaccination; and to extend the deadline for any remaining, unused hours/days of partially paid expanded family and medical leave to June 30, 2021. A resolution spelling out these criteria will be presented for adoption at the April 15, 2021 Special Board meeting.

Enrollment Report – The committee was provided with the standard enrollment reports, which had been updated through the first week in April, 2021. Following a couple months of small enrollment growth, the counts as of April 1, 2021 reflected a slight decrease from the March 5, 2021 count. The average monthly enrollment, however, remained the same at kindergarten through 12th grade average enrollment of 973 for the eight month period since the start of school. The committee was reminded that the 2020-2021 Revised Budget would be based on this average monthly enrollment count and that the enrollment for the 2021-2022 Preliminary Budget would be based on taking a current weekly enrollment count and advancing and adjusting it by grade level to arrive at an estimate.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully prepared and submitted by William Tollefson