



TO: ISD 656 Finance Committee
FROM: Shawn Peck, Roosevelt Elementary School Principal
RE: Full-Time Somali Family and Community Engagement Specialist at Roosevelt
DATE: November 6, 2021

Roosevelt Elementary School is seeking board approval to hire a full-time Somali FACES position for the 2021-2022 school year. This position would significantly enhance our ability to meet the district goals around Family and Community Engagement, Equity, School Climate, and Mental Health. The importance of clear communication, strong relationships, and sustainable partnerships has intensified over the past two years. Roosevelt is in need of additional support to help us meet these responsibilities with all families that we serve. Roughly 28% of the Roosevelt student body is Somali and we need focused help with communication and support for Somali students and families. This support will provide intentional strategies to rebound socially, emotionally, and academically from the global pandemic.

ISD 656 remains committed to ensuring academic excellence and college/career readiness for all students. We continue to see significant gaps in achievement between our black and white students as well as those who receive free/reduced meal benefits and those who do not. Research shows that the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted our families of color and those living in poverty the most. The significant level of hardship and trauma these students have experienced are leading to an increase in inappropriate behaviors which is making it more challenging for our existing teachers and staff to adequately meet student needs. Failure to respond strategically will cause gaps in learning to grow and could cause damage to the strong culture of our school.

Our FACES professionals currently add tremendous value to our schools. Our teachers have been stretched thin and are requesting additional support. The Roosevelt Site Team recently voted unanimously that a Somali FACE Specialist was a "significant need". The RISE program at FHS and FMS has served as a model for how the hiring of multilingual and multicultural non-licensed professionals can lead to amazing positive outcomes for all learners. Roosevelt is requesting approximately \$37,574.00 to staff this position for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year.

On behalf of our staff, students, and families, thank you for your consideration.

Shawn Peck
Principal - Roosevelt Elementary School