

Minutes
MSAD #8 Special District Meeting
March 28, 2018
School Library
6:00 PM

Board Members Present: Renee Jones, Virginia Wadleigh, Laura Lazaro, Kathi Young, Rachel Noyes

Administration Present: Superintendent Roy Crawford, Principal Ann Kirkpatrick, Kathy Warren

Public present: 3

1. **Call to order at 6:10 by R. Crawford** who, as per Article I of the published warrant asked for a motion to appoint a meeting moderator.

Motion R. Noyes/second K. Young to appoint Renee Jones (6-0)

R. Jones read warrant article 2: Shall the school board be authorized to expend up to \$37,500 from Minor Capital Projects/Capital Reserve for the purpose of the school exterior painting project as previously approved by the board on December 21, 2016. **Motion K. Young/second V. Wadleigh to approve (8-0)**

R. Jones read warrant article 3: Shall the school board be authorized to expend up to \$35,000 from Minor Capital Projects/Technology Reserve for the purpose of upgrading and replacing the school phone/intercom system? Motion Kathy Warren/second K. Young to approve (8-0)

2. **At 6:15 Motion R. Noyes/second V. Wadleigh to adjourn. (8-0)**

Minutes
MSAD #8 School Board Budget Workshop
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Administration Present: Superintendent Roy Crawford, Principal Ann Kirkpatrick, Kathy Warren

3. **Guidance Budget:** R. Crawford referenced the Guidance, Health Services and Gifted and Talented budget printout distributed by Kathy Warren. He noted a requested increase of \$15,000 for added counseling services (one day/week) to meet the ever-increasing needs of our students. The Medical Center provides social worker services three days/week and we are hoping to expand that service to four days/week. Roy is discussing this possibility with the Medical Center and the \$15,000 is a placeholder pending the outcome of those discussions. He is hopeful that the Medical Center can provide the service for minimal or no cost.

Discussion included counseling services that the Medical Center can bill to the medical insurance of the parent and what services cannot be billed back.

Future decision point: Amount needed for added counseling services

4. **Health Services:** Roy pointed out an overall reduction of \$6,807 due to elimination of a one day/week school nurse position which we cannot fill, replaced by a contract with the Medical Center to provide nursing services one day/week.

In addition, the school pays for Accident insurance for all students in the amount of \$3,284/year or \$50/student. VS is the only school in the state to pay for this type of insurance which is normally purchased by the family. He proposes giving families the opportunity to purchase this insurance on their own for a cost of \$50/year.

Future decision point: Whether or not to pay for student accident insurance.

5. **Gifted and Talented Budget:** no change from the current year. Brief discussion that the program is up and running effectively, and that our G/T Coordinator meets with identified students regularly to help arrange programming to enrich their educational experiences.
6. **Special Education:** Roy outlined significant proposed changes to meet the needs of our students. 41 Students are currently identified for services: 1 extremely high needs and medically fragile student is placed out of district in a highly specialized program. 10 receive speech and language services only, and 31 are in regular classrooms and receive "pull out" specialized math and/or reading instruction. Six of these 31 students have extremely high needs and/or handicapping conditions that are not being adequately met by this pull out model. Five of these students receive one on one support and assistance from an educational technician for part or all of their day.

School administration, teachers, and outside special education specialists are recommending a self-contained classroom for these six K-6 students. This classroom has its own full time special education teacher and would be located in the current computer lab which is close to the Life Skills room, restrooms, and music, art, and the gym. It is also on the elementary wing of the building. Randy Pitts understands the critical needs of these students, we no longer use traditional desktop computers, and he can conduct his classes in the room adjacent to the library. Students in this classroom would:

- A. Have their program coordinated by their teacher.
- B. Receive academic services from that teacher.
- C. Attend mainstream classes with their peers as appropriate.
- D. Engage in "pull out" lessons with peers as appropriate.
- E. Receive coordinated counseling, social skills training, life skills training, occupation therapy, speech therapy, physical therapy and other services.

The student would have one on one support as needed plus an Ed. Tech. would be assigned to this classroom.

The second special education teacher would manage the programs of the remaining 24 students and instruction for those students would be provided by two Ed. Tech. III's. (College level education credentials.)

Cost: The out of district placement carries a projected cost of \$152,000 which may change slightly before final budget approval.

Cost: Self-contained program and other program required changes: Approximately \$72,000.

Discussion by the Board and audience present included the following points:

- This proposal is exciting to see. We have been using a "band aide" approach.
- This change is long overdue. We have children with severe challenges who need appropriate programming.
- The entire school will be positively impacted if we provide the special programming discussed.
- The stress created by the current model is "burning out" staff and children.
- Our Island Cares should be told about our counseling needs.
- We need to lower frustration levels and help teachers and children feel good about themselves.
- Residents see these impacted children around the school and town and will understand the need.

Future decision Points: Final structure and cost of our Special Education program.

Meeting concluded at 7:30.