

#### **IV. Presentation and Approval of Audit:**

After our conversation about concerns with Clifton, Larson, Allen, the scheduling and communication throughout the audit went much better than prior years. Craig Poppenhagen will be here to present. He was not on site for our audit, so we met last week to ensure he had a good understanding of factors impacting the Southern Plains budget. There was only one finding, which is found by the majority of school districts. A big thank you to Dawn Becker and Laura Teveldal for their hard work.

- V. Guest Speaker:** We have a parent from the Bridges program that is willing to tell her story of the impact of the setting IV programs for her son and their family.

#### **VI. Director's Report:**

- A. **Recruitment Fair:** We have been working with the University of MN Mankato to develop a relationship. The most successful piece we have developed is a career fair where they have their students come to meet with our regional directors. We hired two teachers two years ago, but last year we only had two teachers attend the fair. This year we arranged for a fall fair, and we had a great turnout with many open to moving anywhere in the state. I will work with the districts when decisions start being made about openings for 2018-19.
- B. **Staffing:** We have one teacher out on leave. We are still seeing how she will recover from her stroke. At this point we are filling with our short-call substitute and direction from permanent staff/consultants. We continue to reevaluate this long-term. At this point we are planning on her return December 1.
- C. **Absences:** I have spent a significant amount of time examining staff absences. It feels as though we have had a significant increase in absences; however, as you will see on page 2 of the attached Staff Absence sheet, absences have actually been fairly stable with a slight decrease over the past 10 years. However, we are continuing to examine these absences, solutions, and strategies.
- D. **Second floating substitute:** Winnebago has a very hard time finding substitutes, particularly substitutes that can help meet student needs. I would like thoughts on adding a second floating substitute position. Last year there were 11 days with no one absent, 13 days with one staff absent and 131 days with three or more people absent. One the days when there is no one gone, the substitutes either observe in classrooms so that they can easily step into other roles. Additionally, there is a lot of additional paperwork with food service requirements, so the floating substitutes would be very helpful to help with these requirements.

#### **VIII. Personnel**

##### **A. Hiring**

1. Julie Beemer, Paraprofessional at FES, Step 6. I recommend Julie for a paraprofessional position to replace Cristina Gonzalez. She comes with many years of experience working in a setting IV program in Windom.
2. David Shoen, Paraprofessional at FES, Step 6. I recommend Dave for a new paraprofessional position at FES which was requested by Michelle Rosen and Sue Nelson due to new student needs. Dave comes with many years of experience working in a REM house in Mankato. He is also a football coach for Fairmont Area.
3. Ashley Kabe, Paraprofessional at FES, Step 3. I recommend Ashley for a position in ECSE at Fairmont Elementary per a request from Michelle Rosen and Sue Nelson. This position in three half days. Ashley has been substituting for Fairmont Area, and Michelle spoke highly of her skills.

4. Barb Duffey, long term substitute for Speech Language Pathologist. I recommend Barb to fill an FMLA leave for Stephanie Andersen. Barb is a retired SLP and has been a great asset to substitute for the SLPs on a regular basis.
5. Julie Stoltz, Alternative Programs Secretary. Stephanie Schmitz recommends Julie as a secretary. Julie is from Winnebago and has recently been working at the hardware store. This position requires both office skills and the ability to work with students. The interview committee spoke highly of her skills to be able to address both of the aspects.

**B. Leaves of Absence**

1. Michele Anderson, Fairmont Elementary Paraprofessional. Michele is a paraprofessional at Fairmont Elementary School. The doctor recommended a two and a half week leave. Michele does not qualify for FMLA and has exhausted all sick leave; I recommend approving this leave.
2. Judy Andersen, Fairmont High School Paraprofessional. Judy has requested a discretionary leave until the end of the school year. Judy has been a reliable paraprofessional for 11 years, and she would like to take a leave to try being a daycare provider. I recommend approving this discretionary leave.

**C. Reclassification of Peg Rock**

Joelle Thomas will be resigning as a floating substitute as soon as the short-call substitute position she has been filling ends. Peg has a four-year degree and will qualify as a short-call substitute; she is familiar with the classrooms from her work as a secretary and a paraprofessional prior to the secretarial position. Stephanie and I recommend Peg for the position as a floating substitute.

**IX. Old Business**

**A. Second Reading of Policies**

**a. 550-Service Animals**

This is the second reading of this policy which is a unique policy not yet part of MSBA policies.

**X. New Business**

**A. Assurance of Compliance for Minnesota Department of Education**

This is the annual required assurance of compliance report.

**B. Approve Service Agreements with South Central Service Cooperative**

- 1. Audiology Services Agreement between South Central Service Cooperative and Southern Plains**
- 2. Vision Services Agreement between South Central Service Cooperative and Southern Plains**

I recommend these agreements with SCSC. These are annual, ongoing services we receive from SCSC. Southern Plains covers the costs of these for the member districts. A portion of these costs are covered by federal low incidence dollars; however, those funds are declining and the MN Department of Education does not encourage using these funds for staffing such as this. So, I am anticipating these costs to increase over time. Audiology services did increase by \$7,605.98, but we experienced and \$800 decrease in vision costs.

**C. Approve Seniority Lists**

- **Classified Staff**
- **Certified Staff**

This is the annual approval of the seniority lists. These have been reviewed by staff.

#### **D. Revised Policies**

- 102 - Equal Educational Opportunity
- 401 – Equal Employment Opportunity

There was a change that now includes gender in these policies.

#### **E. Revised 2017-18 Budget**

- The budget had few changes overall. We moved more of the ECSE expenses to “SPEC General” as we transition these services to the member districts. As a reminder, this will result in an increase in bills to the districts, but districts will see a reduction in tuition billing and an increase in state aid directly to the districts.
- Additional costs are being moved around to meet student needs and fluctuations.
- Typically our revenue matches our expenditures, but we are off-setting building costs out of the fund balance. Although we had an increase in the fund balance this year, we had an increase in expenses. So, we will not be able to cover much of the building costs from the fund balance. The good news is that in 2018-19 we should be able to use more of the fund balance because we will be reducing the overall budget by about \$1,000,000 when Fairmont hires the paraprofessionals.