

HOS Report 6/18/24

Sabbatical Leave

A staff member requested sabbatical leave, or more so inquired about whether or not BMS offered such a leave. After consultation with our attorney, having found no mention of sabbatical leave in our handbooks or policies, it was decided that BMS cannot offer a sabbatical leave at this time. Without it in policy or a handbook process, there is no guarantee of uniform administration of such leave. To develop this in policy would take until at least the August 2024 Board meeting. The staff member asked this on 5/17/24, requesting an answer by 5/20/24. This dictates that, unless policy is developed and approved relative to sabbatical leave, such a request will be denied in this and in future cases. The Board may choose to develop such a policy at any time.

Title I & II applications

The Title applications in MEGS were submitted on 5/23/24. Traditionally this application was due on September 1 each year. This year, MDE chose to move the due date up to July 1. Thanks to Halley at Creative Planning for the advance notice of this date change, and her work with me on the application.

A request for small revisions and clarifications was received on 5/31. Changes were completed the next day and resubmitted. Federal applications were approved by MDE on 6/3/24.

ADSIS budget

We are entering year 2 of the 2 year ADSIS cycle. Shelly and Halley at C.P. got the FY25 budget submitted on 5/15/24.

Read Act

The new Local Literacy Plan, aligned with the Read Act, has been submitted to the MDE (and is in the consent agenda folder). This plan replaces the Local Literacy Plan that was required under Read Well by Third Grade. The new plan aligns with a data survey that they collected also, relative to the new requirements. The plan is in the consent agenda for review. If there are changes the Board would like, we can pull this from the consent agenda and dig in. The plan was posted and the survey submitted to MDE on 6/5/24 (due 6/17/24).

After a virtual meeting with a CORE rep, and a meeting with the teachers, we have requested a 9/9/24 start date for the first window of 3 modules to open, leading to an October Live meeting. We are being cohorted with others, and requested the schedule that offers the most flexibility.

Staffing

Resignations-Shelby Wagner has resigned. Interviews are ongoing for E2, BI, paras. We are also working to cover a maternity leave in early/mid September. Jobs are posted in the usual places including the new statewide job board, Minnesota School Jobs or MSJ and ads will be in the paper soon.

Amy, the Speech Language Pathologist we contract with, is moving on to a new job, so we are working to find her replacement as well.

Jodi Monerson has been hired as the teacher in E2C. Three BI interviews have taken place as well. We have a few applications to look at yet, and want to ensure the newspaper ads have time to reach candidates.

VOA conference

Henry and Shelly attended the VOA conference in Bemidji this week. It's a great opportunity to network with other directors, other charter school staff, vendors, and authorizer personnel (VOA invites other authorizer personnel as well). State officials attend as well from MDE, PELSB, as well as some of our contracted partners from Creative Planning and the MN Association of Charter Schools. Bluffview was awarded all three awards (Governance, Finance, and Academics) for the second year in a row.

New Board member training

Both onboarding Board members have been given a few options for fulfilling the Board training that is required. One completed the 3 sections on June 10th. The other may attend an August 6th session with MSBA, (if not) we are working to find other options.

Disciplinary Incident Reporting (DIRS)

The annual DIRS report was submitted on 6/6/24. The school reported 1 half day in school suspension, 1 full day in school suspension, and 2 habitually truant students.

Food Service vs DHS Certified License Exempt Center

Please see the formal MDE response in the consent agenda folder. Essentially, if we maintain the DHS status that allows families to access CCAP (County funding) for the pre-k, then we have to run them on a separate food service program with MDE called the CACFP (see below). The balance here is access for low income pre-k families with CCAP (none in the last 3 years) and adding another food service program, or dropping the DHS classification and keeping all Bluffview students on the same food service program. Here is their initial email as a primer before reading the MDE letter:

Thanks for reaching out to our office with this question. No. Per USDA memo FNS-GD-1988-0013, child care centers are not eligible to participate in the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. Child care centers may operate the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

Please ensure that you are compliant at the beginning of the 24-25 school year by doing the following:

- 1. Discontinue claiming meals served to children in the licensed childcare under the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program.*
- 2. Determine if your school would like to utilize CACFP, Special Milk, or not participate in a nutrition program at all for the meals/milk served to PreK children in the licensed childcare.*
- 3. If your school would like to participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, there is a streamlined application process for sponsors that are already participating in the School Nutrition Programs. Please let us know if you would like information on the streamlined application process and we can have our applications team send you that information. If you are planning to operate CACFP, please begin working on this streamlined application process now so you are ready to go for the 24-25 school year.*

4. *If your school would like to participate in the Special Milk Program, complete the 24-25 Milk Program application in CLICS and indicate that you are planning to participate in Special Milk. Begin claiming the milk served to these PreK students under Special Milk in the 24-25 school year.*

The decision is to terminate the status of Certified License Exempt Center with DHS so our pre-k families may remain on the same food service program as the rest of the school-here is my email to MDE:

There are a bunch of folks CC'd here so that I don't have to communicate with them individually on this as I have given this a great deal of consideration.

This is my formal notice to you and MDE that Bluffview is terminating our status as a Certified License Exempt Center effective today (I just need to figure out how to do so in the software). There is just no space in our professional lives to add one more checklist, program, etc. I want all of our Pre-K families to have access to the same food program as the rest of the school. This is coming at a cost as we are now walking away from the benefits listed here by our DHS licensor:

Benefits of being a certified childcare program:

- *Participation in the Child Care Assistance Program*
- *Grant opportunities that only certified or licensed program are permitted to receive.*
- *Equitable access for all children and families.*
- *Market your program as a certified and CCAP eligible program.*
- *Certification helps protect the health and safety of children by requiring that providers meet minimum standards for care and physical environment.*

Thanks to those of you that have taken the time to converse with me on this subject. Your input is valued and appreciated.