



**To:** Brad Sellner, Superintendent, Howard Lake Waverly Winsted Board Members

**From:** Linda Wharram, Special Education Supervisor; Jen Olson, HES/WES Principal; Jim Schimelpfenig: HLWW MS Principal; Stephanie Kuehn, HLWW HS Principal

**Date:** April 4th, 2023

**Proposal:** Request a .5 FTE Special Education Assessment Teacher (SEAT)

**Purpose:** To support a workload balance for special education teachers; Reduce inconsistencies in due process compliance related to K -12 evaluations; Be comparable/equitable to surrounding districts; teacher retention

**Current Scenario:**

- All Special Education teachers are responsible for re-evaluations of their current caseload
- Initial Evaluations are determined by the Special Education Supervisor and the Building Special Education team (See Chart A for breakdown of initial evaluations per building/per year)
- Special Education teachers complete evaluations/observations/testing during their scheduled preparation time, over lunch breaks and before/after school which can be challenging with student availability matching teacher's preparation time
- Special Education teachers are given a Due Process work day each semester; however, due to the inability to find Substitute teachers and prep for behavioral concerns the teachers have not been able to utilize these days on a consistent basis (13 teachers receive this through a MOU)
- Special Education teachers have to create and implement Positive Behavior Support Plans for students that have behavioral challenges during the school day. These plans are in-depth and require additional time from teachers to have all teachers implement the plan with fidelity
- Child Count has been consistent with a slight incline the past few years; however behavioral challenges and mental health of children/families have increased which results in special education teachers spending time developing supports within the school day
- Special Education Supervisor plans the Building Child Study Team (CST) meetings (Evaluation plan dates with IEPs for year/week, review previous eval/IEP to determine concern(s), complete CST doc and send out weekly to team. These duties take away valuable time conducting file reviews for compliance, program/curriculum monitoring, third party billing management, and staff development specific to Special Education
- Of the Seven Member Districts, HLWW is the only District that does not have a SEAT position (See Chart below for comparison data)

**Benefits of a SEAT Teacher:**

- Special education teachers can be focused on instruction and teaching
- Specifically, special education teachers can focus on lesson preparation, developing curriculum/instruction to meet the individual needs of students they case manage, and increased time to connect with parents and general education teachers
- Increased time to focus on program improvements and outcomes vs. compliance (ie. child study team meetings shift from assessment to student concerns and programming ideas)
- SEAT position allows for more objective look at eligibility and criteria
- Increase compliance with regard to due process monitoring and related evaluation requirements
- Flexible scheduling options for testing and observations, which benefits the students
- Case managers can have a more balanced workload - paperwork, planning/prep time, meeting student needs, meeting with general education teachers, meeting with parents, and lunch breaks. (See Chart C for Child Count)
- Districts within MAWSECO that have implemented this model have found increased IEP and evaluation timeline compliance
- Teacher retention and job satisfaction- surrounding districts have implemented a SEAT teacher to support the work load balance for teachers and is being a staple position in many districts throughout MN (See Diagrams Below)
- Teacher recruitment- Interviewers have inquired if our district has a Due Process Teacher/SEAT Teacher
- More time for special education teachers to create and implement Positive Behavior Support Plans (PBSP)
- 2023-24: Implementation of new Achievement Tests- If the current model stays in place 8-10 teachers would need to be trained vs. One teacher (cost savings)

**Possible Challenges:**

- Scheduling due to multiple buildings (Public and Private)
- Change is difficult
- Case managers have a smaller part in evaluations and may need training to return to assessing and writing evaluation reports if the SEAT position is eliminated
- Licensure concerns

**Model:**

- Special Education Supervisor facilitates weekly team meetings with School Psychologist & SEAT & SpEd Supervisor meet weekly. Other services members could be Involved if appropriate (Speech/Language, Therapists, Low Incident, ie.)
- SEAT manages evaluations and does the testing, observations, ect. In addition to the writing of the report along with the school psychologist

- Oversight/supervision to be completed by Special Education Supervisor and the Building Principal (depending upon location of office)
- SEAT and Special Education Supervisor will keep building level special education teams up to date about ongoing assessments
- SEAT monitors evaluation timelines utilizing spreadsheet capturing all IEP/evaluation due dates to maintain due process compliance
- SEAT and Special Education Supervisor lead Child Study meetings and manage all initial referrals.
- SEAT works closely with the Special Education Secretary to manage filing of all protocols/finalized evaluations in a timely manner.
- SEAT will communicate with Special Education Secretary enrollment changes in a timely manner

**Cost Analysis:** Teacher with MA/10 years of Experience. It is worth noting that currently the Legislation has introduced //// that could potentially mandate time for Special Education teachers to have paperwork relief. Possible funding could be tied with this mandate.

	<b>.5 FTE Single</b>	<b>1.0 FTE Single</b>	<b>1.0 FTE Family</b>
<b>Pay - MA/10 years</b>	<b>\$28,987.00</b>	<b>\$57,973.00</b>	<b>\$57,973.00</b>
<b>TRA</b>	<b>\$2,478.39</b>	<b>\$5,072.64</b>	<b>\$5,072.64</b>
<b>FICA</b>	<b>\$2,217.51</b>	<b>\$4,434.93</b>	<b>\$4,434.93</b>
<b>TSA District Match</b>	<b>\$700.00</b>	<b>\$700.00</b>	<b>\$700.00</b>
<b>Health Insurance</b>	<b>\$3,353.50</b>	<b>\$6,857.00</b>	<b>\$11,387.00</b>
<b>Dental Insurance</b>	<b>\$350.00</b>	<b>\$350.00</b>	<b>\$350.00</b>
<b>Life Insurance</b>	<b>\$72.00</b>	<b>\$72.00</b>	<b>\$72.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$38,158.39</b>	<b>\$75,037.57</b>	<b>\$79,567.57</b>

**Chart A: Number of Evaluations Per Year**

Year	Number of Evaluations	Extenuating Factors
2017-18	67	
2018-19	66	
2019-20	70	No Evaluations in April/May
2020-21	88	Covid Catch-up from April/May
2021-22	65	Impact of Covid (Less No-Evals)
2022-23	61 (3 Carryovers)	Non-Evaluation and Less Re-evaluations (Seniors-7)- Impact of Covid Re-evals
Projected 23-24	56-Re-evals	This does not include Initial Evaluations

**Chart B: Mawseco SEAT Positions:**

District	12/1/22 Serving Child Count	Current SEAT FTE for 2022-23 School Year
Annandale	335	1.5 (K-12)
Dassel Cokato	285	1.0 (K-12)
Delano	396	1.5 (K-12 and 3-5)
HLWW	<b>225</b>	None
Litchfield	328	1.0 (covers K-8)
Maple Lake	<b>178</b>	.5 FTE (7-12) Proposing 1.0 for 23-24
Rockford	<b>227</b>	1.0 (K-12)
*Mawseco	N/A	1.5 (Covers all programs; Due process for IEP's and Evals)

**Chart C: Howard Lake Waverly Winsted Child Count Data (December 1st):**

<b>Year</b>	<b>December 1st Child Count (Serving)</b>	<b>Increase by Year</b>
2022	225	+6 (In seven years - 22 Students)
2021	219	-9 (Covid)
2020	228	+10
2019	218	+12
2018	206	+3
2017	203	