



Independent School District #146
Finance Committee Meeting
5:00 PM on May 10, 2021
Barnesville High School
302 3rd Street South
Barnesville, MN 56514

1. FY 2021 Budget Revisions
2. FY 2022 General Fund Capital Purchases
3. Transfer Staff Development Reserves to Community Service and General Fund
4. School Resource Officer (SRO)
5. Addendum
 - A. Second Preschool Teacher

Dr. Ellerbusch and the finance committee,

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about the early learning programs in Barnesville. As you know, I took the program over in July of last year. Over the last 9-10 months my para partner (Gloria Lee) and I worked together to ensure the school readiness program was age appropriate and met the MN Early Learning Standards. A few of the changes made this past year was moving to a more hands-on experience based approach. Research shows children under the age of 5 learn best through hands on real world experiences. In other words, they learn by doing.

A child's brain develops more during the first four years of life than any of the proceeding years. It is because of this we need to ensure we are offering a high quality developmentally appropriate program. I hope to do this by becoming a four star quality rated program through Parent Aware MN. The first step in applying for this accreditation is adopting a Minnesota Department of Education approved curriculum and assessment tool. Over the past several months I was in touch with different curriculum publishers to find one that will be the right fit for our community.

When we achieve our four star rating the benefits include but are not limited to; grants to purchase training, toys, learning materials and equipment, technology, or other materials tied to the program's quality improvement goals. As well as scholarships for families that qualify. For each family qualifying for a scholarship our program receives \$7500. In addition to the financial benefits continuing education is offered to teachers. This will assist in ensuring our program stays up to date with the latest research on how young children learn best.

My goals for the program are many but starting this year we are expanding the days and hours offered. In the fall we will have full days for the first time. Our full day option will be on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. During registration the full days filled up before any of the other options. By expanding the program to two classrooms we can offer more opportunities to fit each family's lifestyle. Next summer I hope to offer one or two summer camp opportunities for preschool age children. These would run for one week and would have a theme or focus each week.

In addition to expanding the school readiness program, I have plans to introduce the young families in Barnesville to ECFE classes. From what I've heard ECFE hasn't been highly attended in the past few years. I'd like to restart that program. One of the classes I plan to offer in the fall is for infants through age two in the late afternoon after nap time but before supper. This is a class that has been offered in other districts and fills up quickly. I could go on and on with my hopes for the program but I think you have an understanding of the starting point.

This year has been a wild ride filled with ups and downs. Through it all I found my love for teaching again. I have passion to ensure our youngest kiddos are getting the best possible start to school. I can only do that with the support of the finance committee. During this year of transition to possibly hire another teacher, move to a new school, additional classroom, new programming, etc. we will experience growing pains. Through my dedication to early learning programming and the support of the community I know it will be successful.

Laura Lempe
5/8/2021