



April 21, 2011

APPENDIX MMM-10-1  
April 25, 2011

TO: Board of Education

FROM: Daniel A. Nerad, Superintendent

RE: Phase I: Alternative School Redesign to Address Mental Health Concerns

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### I. Introduction

- A. **Title/topic** –Alternative Redesign to Address Mental Health Concerns
- B. **Presenter/contact person** – Sue Abplanalp, John Harper, Pam Nash and Nancy Yoder

**Background information – The Purpose of this Proposal:** Research shows that half of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14.<sup>1</sup> Scientists are discovering that changes in the body leading to mental illness may start much earlier, before any symptoms appear.

Helping young children and their parents manage difficulties early in life may prevent the development of disorders. Once mental illness develops, it becomes a regular part of a child's behavior and more difficult to treat. Even though doctors know how to treat (though not yet cure) many disorders, a majority of children with mental illnesses are not getting treatment (National Institute of Mental Health).

**II. Summary of Current Information:** *Success is defined as the achievement of something desired and planned.* As a steering committee, our desire and plan is to promote a strategic hub in three sites (Hoyt, Whitehorse and Cherokee) that connect, support and sustain students with mental health issues in a more inclusive environment with appropriate professionals, in order to maximize students' success in middle school and help them achieve their aspirations in a setting that is appropriate for their needs. The new site will also offer mini clinics from a community provider

- A. **Current Status:** Currently, there is one program housed at Hoyt that serves 28-30 students in self contained settings. There is currently a ratio of 1:4 with 4 staff and 4 special educational assistants assigned to the program. In addition, there is a Cluster Program housed at Sherman with 2 adults and 6-7 students in the program.
- B. **Proposal:** This proposal leaves approximately half of the students and staff at the current Hoyt site (those students who pose more of a danger to self or others) and removes all of the students and staff from Sherman (no program at Sherman) to the new sites. Students will attend either Whitehorse or Cherokee Middle Schools with a program that provides ongoing professional help and is more inclusive as students will be assigned to homerooms and classes, with alternative settings in the school to support them when they need a more restrictive environment with support from a smaller student ratio and a psychologist or social worker that is assigned to the team.

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The new program will have 2 teachers, 1 SEA and 1 psychologist or social worker (most of the resources will be reallocated). Students will have all day programming and we will have up to 20-24 students in each unit, depending on the needs of the students.

Based on the effectiveness of the program, Phase II may be proposed for the 2012-13 school year for Blackhawk and Jefferson.

**C. Recommendations**– To continue to support the planning and implementation of the new Phase I proposal with the addition of 2 psychologists or social workers to the units and additional resources to spearhead a mini clinic (on site) with a community provider.

**D. Link to supporting detail** – NA

### III. Implications

**A. Budget:** 2 FTE (\$79,915 x 4= \$159,830)  
\$50,000 for contract with a community provider for mini clinic for students

**Total Budget:** \$209,830

**Funding Source:** Administration will use unallocated allocations to hire these positions within the 2011-12 budget and the special education budget..

**B. Strategic Plan – Learning is enhanced when...**

- Expectations for achievement are clear
- Standards for performance are consistently high for all students
- The educational process reinforces the joy of learning
- The focus is child by child
- Schools help focus student effort around a demanding, research-based curriculum

**C. Equity Plan** – The equity plan identifies key factors needed to ensure equity for student success. These factors have provided insight into the development of the guiding principals and the process plan.

**D. Implications for other aspects of the organization** – N/A

**IV. Supporting Documentation:** None