



A Community of Learners

Information and Action Item: Adventures Summer 2017 Program and Fee Approval

TO: School Board
Trisha Kocanda, Superintendent

FROM: Meghan Warner, Site Director
Gregory Kurr, CFO

January 24, 2017

Overview & Background

The District has hosted a successful summer program, *Adventures in Learning*, for over seventy-five years. The last two summers, Meghan Warner, a teacher at The Skokie School, continued the tradition. Meghan has agreed to continue to serve as Site Director for the 2017 *Adventures in Learning* Program.

Adventures in Learning has a long standing tradition of providing engaging experiences designed by certified teachers and staff. Students may find themselves-testing their survival skills and fire-building abilities in Wilderness Survival class, bonding with, and later adopting, a live animal in Animal Care, or designing and making their own clothing in Fashion Design class. These are just a few of the experiences that make Adventures special. This year we are excited to include new offerings such as Drone Flying School, Greeting Cards, and Community Helpers. We are proud to offer these classes as part of our commitment to enrich the lives of our community of learners.

The Adventures program served 685 students last summer with 104 students enrolled in the primary program (grades pre-k to 1), 525 students in the general program (grades 2 to 8), and 56 students enrolled as part of an Extended School Year (ESY) experience for special education students. There were 119 class offerings and field trip enrichment opportunities for students over the duration of the 5-week program.

Participation in last year's program was lower than the summer of 2015 by nearly 60 students, more closely approximating the volume in recent years other than the

summer of 2015. The summer of 2015 program is believed to be an outlier as to participation for no apparent reason. The 2016 summer program participation was based primarily on the higher level of 2015 participation, believed to be the new standard, which in turn drove the decision not to increase fees. The 2016 shortfall in participation, after factoring in the compliance cost of special services, resulted in a monetary shortfall of approximately \$23,000.

In planning for and structuring the 2017 summer program, an estimated participation of 650 students was used, in consideration of what is now perceived to be more representative participation levels achieved in 2016 and years prior to 2015. An evaluation was also made of the program offerings that had grown in number but not necessarily in participation over the years. As a result, 11 program offerings with low historic participation have been eliminated along with the related staff and supply costs. However, in an appropriate attempt to keep the program current and fresh, 5 new offerings have been added. This net reduction of 6 programs results in 113 program offerings for 2017. At this level Administration believes Adventures will operate more efficiently and will provide quality programs in a sufficient quantity to meet community expectations.

As a result of the review of program offerings Administration will also attempt to implement more operational flexibility in running the programs. If demand is higher, some of the eliminated programs may be reinstated. If demand is lower, there were an additional 12 programs that have been identified as potentials for elimination which could be removed from the offerings. This approach could assist in fiscal management and management of the participation in program offerings.

In addition to pursuing the cost reductions, Administration is also recommending an approximate 1% or a \$5 tuition rate increase for the 2017 summer program. This increase approximates recent annual increases in the Consumer Price Index which, a factor which impacts program costs. The resulting recommended fee structure for the 2017 program is; a resident fee of \$560 and a non-resident fee of \$610, versus 2016 respective fees of \$555 and \$605. After implementation of these changes, the 2017 summer program is anticipated to operate at an approximate breakeven.

Administration believes that the 2017 Adventures program will continue to offer exciting and meaningful student experiences. The program will run from June 12 to July 14, 2017. The plan is to distribute program offering material on February 1, 2017, and open registration in March for the 2017 Adventures summer school program. Families will be able to continue to register for Adventures online, which provides convenience for parents and efficiency for scheduling classes. The online registration has been improved to ensure the server can support the high demand at peak times. Based on suggestion by parents, we are also offering a one-week pre-registration access to

Winnetka residents only.

Scholarships are available to families with financial need.

Recommendation

The recommendation is that the Board approve the continuation of the Adventures program during the summer of 2017 with updated offerings and an increase in fees to \$560 for residents and \$610 for non-residents.