



February 16, 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Michael J. Martirano, Ed. D.
Superintendent

Subject: Digital Education Center (DEC) Proposal

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a requested proposal for the HCPSS Digital Education Center (DEC) program. The DEC is a virtual, alternative learning option for students to take classes and earn credits toward graduation in collaboration with their assigned, home school.

Proposed Structure:

- The DEC would operate as an education center; students are still assigned to an HCPSS home school to receive services and electives; students could participate in clubs, extracurricular activities with their home school
- Courses would be offered during three “semester” blocks (fall, spring and summer) to provide year-round education and enrichment options
- Courses would be offered on a flexible schedule from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
 - The program would operate under a block schedule for secondary students but would also provide some full-year options for certain subjects (e.g., English, math and world languages)
 - The program would operate under a full-year schedule for elementary students
- Enrollments would be based on parent survey data collected during March 2021. The attached budget projection is based on a projected K-12 enrollment of 1,250 students. If there is more demand, staffing would be adjusted to increase the number of teachers or to offer an alternative teaching model for specific courses (e.g., fully online instruction only for AP courses, etc.)
- Instructional staffing would be pulled from existing schools based on that school’s DEC enrollment projection. Additional staffing, including resource teachers, special education staff and paraeducators could be provided through additional budget lines
- Courses would be offered through multiple delivery methods: synchronous video instruction, fully online instruction, Extended Day instruction, Evening School instruction

- New course needs would be identified in collaboration with Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. A scheduling guide would be developed that would identify courses available through the DEC and the electives and services available through the home school

Limitations of the Current Digital Education Model:

There are limitations with existing digital education offerings which include:

- The program budget and course schedule are based on a traditional, brick and mortar school instructional model
- The resources for digital instruction are currently not centralized; they are distributed among schools, curriculum program offices and Digital Education
- There are some course options that are not currently available due to the virtual nature of the program (for example, Career and Technical Education courses that require specialized hardware, software or equipment)

Policies:

The Digital Education Center program would operate under [Policy 8200- Digital Education](#). This policy references other HCPSS policies including Grading and Reporting: High School, Attendance, and Responsible Use of Technology, Digital Tools and Social Media. As these policies are revised, adjustments to Policy 8200 implementation procedures would need to be made.

Staffing and Professional Learning:

As staffing needs will be based, in part, on the number of students selecting a virtual learning option through a proposed March 2021 parent survey, it is critical that the HCPSS be able to attract highly qualified HCPSS staff to fill DEC positions this spring. As we learned during virtual instruction, there is a specialized skill set needed to excel in virtual learning. Staff will be provided with enhanced professional learning that builds upon the Digital Teaching and Learning resources provided to all staff this school year. These topics include: building online community, planning virtual teaching, feedback and assessment, and supporting students with special needs. Lastly, filling the DEC staffing needs may impact other school-based vacancies.

Budget Estimate:

The estimated budget for the DEC, based on a projected K-12 enrollment of 1,250 students, is \$6,231,622 and presented on the following table.

If you have any questions, please contact Robert Cole, Coordinator of Digital Education, and Caroline Walker, Executive Director of Program Innovation and Student Well-Being.

Program Name/Number	Item	Amount	Cost Per Unit	FICA/ Pension/		Total Cost	Description
				Health	Benefit Cost		
Salaries and Wages							
	Administrators	2.0	\$150,000		\$68,030	\$368,030	HS (1), ES/MS (1)
	HS teachers	17.0	\$63,000		\$391,162	\$1,462,162	physical education (1), science (2), social studies (2), special
	MS teachers	15.0	\$63,000		\$345,143	\$1,290,143	physical education (1), special education (2)
	ES teachers	16.0	\$63,000		\$368,152	\$1,376,152	education (2), special education (2)
	Paraeducators	23.0	\$27,000		\$424,477	\$1,045,477	1 per two teachers; HS (8), MS (7), ES (8)
	School counselor (11-month)	2.0	\$63,000		\$46,019	\$172,019	HS (1), ES/MS (1)
Digital Education (2601)	Professional learning	2190	\$20		\$5,541	\$49,341	Workshop wages for 73.0 staff (30 hrs per staff)
Contracted Services							
Digital Education (2601)	Apex Learning	1250	\$150			\$187,500	Digital content licenses
Digital Education (2601)	Actively Learn	700	\$12			\$8,400	English/Language Arts eText licenses
Digital Education (2601)	Online course providers	200	\$700			\$140,000	Fully online course enrollments
Supplies and Materials							
Digital Education (2601)	Staff technology	73	\$1,300			\$94,900	Device and other AV supplies
Digital Education (2601)	Instructional materials	1250	\$30			\$37,500	CTE kit, science lab kit, hard copy text, etc.
Total Estimate						\$6,231,622	

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Salaries and Wages						
Administrators	2.0	\$150,000		\$68,030	\$368,030	HS (1), ES/MS (1)
HS teachers	17.0	\$63,000		\$391,162	\$1,462,162	Art (1), CTE (1), English (3), ESOL (1), health (1) math (3), physical education (1), science (2), social studies (2), special education (1), world language (1)
MS teachers	15.0	\$63,000		\$345,143	\$1,290,143	3 per grade level (Grades 6-8); art (1), health (1), music (1), physical education (1), special education (2)
ES teachers	16.0	\$63,000		\$368,152	\$1,376,152	2 per grade level (Grades 1-5); art (1), music (1), physical education (2), special education (2)
Paraeducators	23.0	\$27,000		\$424,477	\$1,045,477	1 per two teachers; HS (8), MS (7), ES (8)
School counselor (11-month)	2.0	\$63,000		\$46,019	\$172,019	HS (1), ES/MS (1)
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