

BEA Bobcat Tracks and ESSER Funding Potential Use Feedback

Feedback was collected in response to the proposals for the Bobcat Tracks back to school plan and ESSER funding as BEA was not consulted in the creation of either plan. As shared stakeholders, we want to share this information.

Bobcat Tracks Plan 21-22

50% of members support the back to school plan. There is concern for “business as usual” as we are still in a pandemic. K-5 learners are not eligible for vaccinations so masking would be reasonable. We also have learners with underlying health conditions who are not able to get the vaccine. We followed CDC guidelines last year which proved to be successful so following the recommendations this year would be appropriate as well. Considerations need to be made for those staff members who go into homes. At the very least, masks should be recommended, not optional.

Comments from Survey

My concern is about the expectation of staff (K-5) in regards to optional masks. How will staff be responsible for ensuring that parents' wishes are met (masking) - what liability will fall on staff if students are not wearing masks but parents expect them to be? How much can we expect of staff to keep track of who "should" be wearing a mask, and how fair is it to make staff the enforcers of this for only a select group of students. Also, with the majority, or all, K-5 students not being eligible for vaccinations, as well as the CDC recommendations for non-vaccinated youth to be masked indoors, why are we not following those recommendations, when we followed CDC guidance last year?

I continue to be concerned about masking. Masks are the reason we were able to stay in person last year. None of the elementary students are able to be vaccinated yet and I feel it is important that we continue to be masked until a majority of people are vaccinated. The new variants are very transmissible and children are vulnerable.

I am concerned about students who are under the age of 12 who cannot be vaccinated. The Delta variant is more contagious. How do we protect those who are too young for the vaccine?

Optional masking for kids up to age 12 when no vaccinations for COVID are available for them yet is insane...have any MDs been consulted on these revisions!?! Yes, we are in Level 1 now BECAUSE WE ARE NOT IN SCHOOL YET. Making masking optional will not help inspire these parents to get their kids vaccinated, even for free. Right now, the pandemic is an “epidemic of the unvaccinated” with the the Delta variant it’s coming back to SD stronger and more infectious than ever. Do we want the kids to be in school? We saw how it was possible last year. If we let up now, it’s much easier for over half of our student population to get infected, sick, and pass it on to others, including staff and students who are vaccinated. Over 5,000 kids from SD, ages 0-9, have had COVID already, so to say it won’t affect kids is not true. There are a lot of doctors on the administrative team, but they are not the type of doctors that are qualified to make this decision on their own.

I don't believe both of these items were clearly communicated to the public. They need to be put into the hands of the staff and public, not just shared at the school board meeting.

Will we be collecting vaccination cards to determine who has been vaccinated?

How will this plan change with the new variant?

We were in "substantial spread" for most of the school year last year. Will we actually follow this plan this year?

Masks should be required for K-5 as they are not eligible for vaccinations yet. Learners with underlying health conditions who can't have the vaccine would appreciate the concern for their safety and well being.

I disagree with phase 1 seemingly being "business as usual" especially with students younger than 12 not eligible for a vaccine and no masks required. This seems very risky to me and worries me.

Masking should be required for k-5.

I am not sure if I support this we didn't follow the guidelines last year.

I think they need to look at the recommendations from the CDC/Pediatric group and follow the Delta variant. I also am concerned, even though I am vaccinated, about bringing it home to younger children who do not have the opportunity to be vaccinated at this time.

If you're vaccinated, you shouldn't have to wear a mask.

Per the CDC Guidelines, masks should be worn by all in K-12 settings. If one of our district goals is for all to feel safe, masks should be a minimum. I will not feel safe about myself, my children, the students in the school or my colleagues without masks. Plus other community members who we may infect.

The health/safety of medically compromised learners and staff is not taken into consideration. Please address proper sanitizing protocol at a minimum prior to approving this plan. Covid is still here and "back to normal" is not reality for everyone at this time.

Change mask to recommend on all phases

While I support that they are starting the year off with masking/vaccine choice, I implore the district and our organization continue to allow the medical freedom to choose what is best for each person and for each family. That right and that freedom must be honored throughout the year, regardless of what comes ahead. The freedoms, rights and liberties of all must be honored.

I think they need to be aware that the younger students are at a higher risk for new strand and those vaccinated should only be ones allowed no masks.

I don't think there should be one because we didn't follow it last year. So why out the effort into another one?

Those unvaccinated should wear masks. Or at least those that are too young for the vaccine yet should wear them. The new variant is running rampant and those with vaccines are still getting covid. The pandemic isn't magically gone now.

Requirement of masks- I work with the unvaccinated population. I feel like this age should have to wear them. Although I am vaccinated- I can still get COVID. Teaching in the Pre-k-5 I also have concerns about children coming into the classrooms at 7:30 am. Will we have the opportunity to adjust our hours again? I am a morning person who does her out of contract work daily before school starts. Children in the room

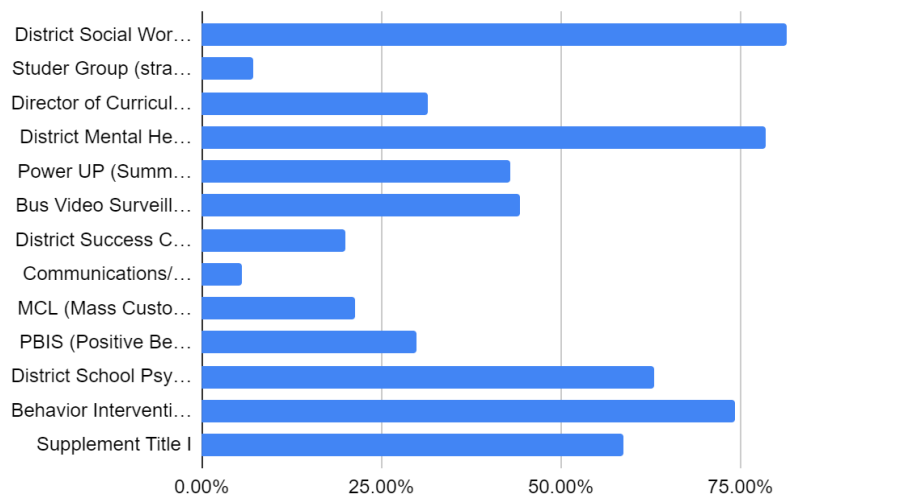
has a huge impact on what I can do. I did provide supervision last year and want to know if that is still an option. I do like that children will not be eating in the classroom.

ESSER Funds

In regards to the ESSER funding proposal, BEA asked for feedback on the proposed positions once we learned this was on the agenda for tonight. Members showed strong support (50% or more) for the following areas: social worker, district mental health counselors, district school psychologist, behavior intervention resources, and resources to supplement Title I. There is concern for adding administrative positions that won't directly impact learners. Members feel that there is not enough information and details on many of these positions. Cuts were made and positions weren't filled this past spring. We need to hire more teachers, even if it means 3 yr positions, to keep class sizes manageable. None of this will help with learning loss more than smaller class sizes.

Strong Support	Some Support	Minimal Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Social Worker (currently on staff) • District Mental Health Counselor (2.0 FTE) • District School Psychologist (1.0 FTE) • Behavior Intervention Resources • Supplement Title I 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Curriculum K-5 (1.0 FTE) • Power UP (Summer School provided by Boys & Girls Club) • Bus Video Surveillance • PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Support) Coordinator (.5 FTE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studer Group (strategic plan work) • Communications/Public Relations (1.0 FTE, 192 days) • District Success Coordinators (8.0 FTE) • MCL (Mass Customized Learning) Coordinator (.5 FTE)

BEA Support Level for ESSER Funding



Some suggestions offered by staff members are: an additional social worker, more classroom teachers, before/after school tutoring programs, support for early childhood education, summer school programs, (outside of special education) taught by certified staff, staff mental health, and other Covid needs that come up.

Comments from Survey

ESSR Funds: I support using funds to address the impacts of Covid, as listed in the description, "ensuring that all students have access to teachers, counselors, and other school personnel to support their needs" and supporting students "most severely impacted by the pandemic." Many of the items on this list do not appear to meet this criteria. Further, as far as I know, stakeholders (mainly staff) were not consulted on any needs of the district, especially related to the needs and deficits that we are seeing in our schools and with students.

What's the hurry?! Wasn't the first reading just last Monday? So from proposal to approval is 8 days!! We are talking over \$5,000,000!

First, how many "stakeholders" were involved in these decisions?? Second, it's not that I don't support the positions I didn't check in the above question, I just don't know what their exact roll would be (and I don't know what a district success coordinator is- and then to have 8?). HOWEVER, what about "offer crucial evidence-based summer, afterschool, and other extended learning and enrichment programs; support early childhood education"? Power up is the only program (I believe) in that category. Also, last spring, I was told that it shouldn't be any problem to purchase additional PPE supplies since that was what the money was partially for. As of today, I haven't heard anything and there is nothing in this proposal that indicates anything will go for such supplies. Thanks for your work on this!

More teachers and staff would be a better use of our funds in order to serve the needs of our students. Offer three-year teacher positions to lower class sizes.

I'm struggling with all of the emphasis put on MCL. What about traditional learners?

This plan does not address the understaffing at the high school and the potentially devastatingly large class sizes and reduction in course offerings that students will experience. I also anticipate significant understaffing in our TA positions due to lack of competitive wages. These are the positions that are going to have the greatest impact on students who have experienced learning loss 6-12.

Seems like some of the ESSR plan has already been in place in our district so why add it (Power Up). We have been needing a second curriculum director for years - how would ongoing funds for this position take place. There is no mention of traditional teaching coordinator so why an MCL coordinator other than the district keeps dropping the ball. Communication Director? That's a joke right?

This is not an effective use of short term money. Our district admin refuses to address the possibility of another more reasonable opt-out. These same positions went before the community and failed. As a result, we are drastically understaffed but these short term positions won't "fix" any COVID related instructional loss. Now several years and numerous budget cuts later we need teachers, teaching assistant's, hallway supervisors, and behavior techs. Our current TA's/techs are paid horribly- give them a living wage with this money.

Additionally, the board needs to know that no teachers were involved in either plan.

The high school is severely understaffed. How can the admin turn their head to cutting advanced placement course and foreign language to hire a PR admin!!!!

I think we are missing an opportunity to address staff mental health. There is nothing outlined in the plan to support or acknowledge all out SUPPORT staff. We are providing a lot of opportunity's for teachers and in a round about way the students. But they have forgotten about the BTs, TA, (currently have 14 openings-there is no incentive for them to stay like the bus drivers), our child nutrition workings (4 currently open-again not incentive to stay), and the custodians (2 positions open- no incentive to stay) that have continued to clean to make the schools a safe place for us and our students. The longer I look at this list the more I think this is help out at the Administration level and not to help out teachers and students.

The Behavior program in the school district has been using the Boys Town model going on its 3rd year and all materials needed for the implementation of this program had to come out of the teachers budget or their own pocket. It upsets me that a district wide program such as PBIS comes in and the district is ready to throw money at it but will not help out special education.

Can we get more clarification on the Studer Group??? I am not sure what that is?

Communications/Public Relations (1.0 FTE, 192 days) Experience and/or training in public relations and communications/marketing-the description does not tell me what they are going to do. Is it just a PR person when we have discrimination issues or are they going to work for 192 not doing a whole lot and move on?

If we have the funds to help out the curriculum director, then why don't we have an Assistant Sped Director to help out with the 600 students that need to be tested, meetings held for, and provide extra support for teachers managing large caseloads.

I am somewhat distressed in the creating of new positions that do not help in reducing teacher-student ratio while we continue to eliminate positions from retiring instructors that continue to raise our teacher-student ratios AND eliminate educational opportunities for students. Pretty soon teachers will no longer be the backbone of this district.

What will help children the most is to fill the four positions lost at the high school at the end of last year: four more teachers/adults in the building.....smaller/doable class sizes leads to more teacher/student positive connections

I want manpower to help directly with students in small groupsno more coordinators...aka Administrators! Thanks for asking! So many of these things have nothing to do with helping students directly

Our District needs to provide additional pay to educators and let them provide after school/before school help to those students who have fallen behind because of the pandemic, especially in the areas of math/reading. You are putting more responsibility/communication on the teachers to communicate with the PowerUp program or after school programs that are not in the district buildings.

Would the \$500,000 for student devices have come out of our other budget already or is this in addition to currently planned devices? (same regarding BHS 1:1)

Is the money for strategic planning really fitting under this category? Wasn't strategic planning already planned for this to happen without these funds?

We have been doing the power up program with the boys & girls club for years. Why would this funding

now be coming out of the ESSER funding?

Balancing class sizes in all elementary buildings should be a priority. It's unfair that some levels in buildings are at 15-16 and other buildings are at 22-23 or more. One to One technology should be a priority for all grade levels as well. I think it's absurd that we plan to spend \$150,000 in the next three years on the Studer Group. We seem to be really stretched thin in our budget. I think this is one thing that can be cut very early.

I don't support the hiring of another administrator (K-5 curriculum director), especially to a position that might be ongoing after the grant money has expired.

I am in full support of district mental health counselors. It might be good to have 6.0 (one in each building). I know there is a need for more guidance counselors as well, especially at BHS. I would fully support this funding to go to those needs.

I don't really know exactly what "District Success Coordinators" means; the description is fairly vague. I understand it would be 8.0 licensed teachers intended to help support students. I might be on board with this if I knew more about the details of how those positions will support student learning. One MAJOR concern I have though is that it is almost August and we are expecting to hire 8 licensed teachers this late in the game. I am worried about the quality and number of applicants we will get at this point in time, especially knowing that these positions are potentially only 3-year positions.

I'm not exactly sure why we are looking at a communications / public relations position, or what their exact role would look like. And again, I am concerned about the quality of applicants this late in the summer.

These last two paragraphs cause me great concern. I think there should be a lot more detail provided to staff and the school board about the nature of these potential positions.

* I agree we need more mental health help but the number proposed seems excessive.

* Why do we need 8 district success coordinators??

* I also think that every school should have a FULL TIME NURSE. You should also have the nurses take mental health classes as a lot of what they see is in the mental health field.

We will always have issues and controversies in education. If we don't, we may not be doing our job. One additional teacher who has contact with students is much more important than hiring a Public Relations person to tell the community we are doing a good job. Realize we have been cutting money and programs!

We need more teachers to make smaller class sizes. Bring back high school cuts.

Not replacing the four positions at BHS seems very shortsighted; students need to connect with teachers...having four less staff (5....with the loss of the TA position who taught seven periods of study strategies) seems counterintuitive to wanting to provide support to students. Anyone in favor of having 30+ students in high school classes probably has never productively taught high school classes....especially with the current social/political climate in which we live.

As a classroom teacher, I need support staff for students that are needing assistance with make-up work completion. I worked with students during lunch, recess and after school in order to try to get them caught up. Camelot needs an after school tutoring program, ideally a paid classroom teacher, to work with

students that are behind academically. Many of the students I had last year needed one-on-one assistance in order to grasp concepts. The above position would be great additions, but we need more "after hours" support by classroom teachers, to really help students improve confidence levels and academic skills. An after hours bussing option would also help working parents, as most cannot take off work to transport their child.

It would be nice if they would pay for an overage for science credit recovery for students that have fallen behind in credits in science.

Was BEA consulted on the ESSER III funds?

I believe that every school should have a full time nurse on staff. While accidents/emergencies don't happen often, when they do, help is needed immediately. There isn't time to wait for a nurse to go to and from building to building. And while each building's secretary is amazing, most are not trained to assist students with medical questions, injuries, etc.

We need more teachers, and smaller class sizes. If we want the greatest impact on students, we need to put the money in the classroom. Our teachers need less people telling them what needs to happen, and more "hands on deck" to make an impact on student improvement.

BEA was not consulted in creating the list of items to fund. We don't need more people in the admin office-the current curriculum director needs to focus on BSD instead of working for multiple colleges as an adjunct professor and then we wouldn't need a k-5 curriculum director. Public relations and communications person? I think that can be handled by one of the admin secretaries. We need one if not 2 more social workers since Dana is swamped. We also need to hire more teachers to keep class sizes manageable. None of this will help with learning loss more than smaller class sizes. Bring back the positions you cut and advertise them as three year positions. Funding for PowerUp is always in the budget, along with Studer Group. Why use this money for that? Create before/after school tutoring programs to be done by certified teachers.

Each school needs to have a full time nurse. We are still in a pandemic and they are the ones needed to give them care and access if they should be at school. They are spending tons of time dealing with parents and also contact tracing.

I think that for the students yo have an education that is full and achievable, the staff need to be a high priority. We need to have something set up as a way to keep the amazing ESP staff we have such as Bt, Ta, and custodial. These focus put a lot of time, heart and sometimes own money into help learners succeed. There needs to be more funding for the behavior program that is already in place so students and assistance staff do not have to use their own money for there to be success.

I'm not sure I can support any of these positions because there is not enough information to explain what each role is and how you will sustain these positions after the ESSR funding runs out. Wouldn't it be better to pursue an opt-out to make the funding more permanent? I am also concerned that we need more teachers at the high school, and that is not addressed in this plan. Also not addressed is a pay increase for TAs and BTs, whom we seem to be losing at an alarming rate. And why do we need a Public Relations person? How about a full-time Human Resources director? And I don't know what a "Student Success Coordinator" is and how we would find 8 of them this close to the start of the school year. My understanding is that ESSR funds are supposed to be distributed based on stakeholder input, and to my

knowledge, no classroom teachers were involved in this discussion. What if we had started having these conversations in the spring?

I don't support wasting monies on Public Relations. Why not just pay educators to provide these extra services? Seems like we should have offered educational support to our students during this pas summer? Maybe some sort of summer school enrichment would help our students catch up? Instead it looks like our admin wants to add more administrative positions.

We do NOT need an MCL coordinator. What are district success coordinators? Why 8? Could this money be given to staff similar to last year? Also, I'm concerned that we're going into this when a covid surge among the unvaccinated is rising. That's our children! Why are we not doing more to look out for them? Thanks for all you do for BEA, our students and staff.

ESSER: we knew of these funds in the spring, why is the District lead first looking at these implementations. How is that the district lead thinks they can fill these positions a few weeks before school starts. What an enormous burden on Building Admin! And what about the trickle down if we hire internally? I would think some will be excluded from these positions if they already teach in a high needs or hard to fill position (teachers wanting to apply but know that their positions will not be able to be filled this late before school starts).

What about all of the safety concerns brought forth at the high school from students being out and about with no supervision? I don't really seeing this being addressed. BHS really need additional supervision (or does this fall into PBIS or District Success Coordinators?). It's difficult to know what the role of some of the positions is without further descriptions and/or discussion.

I really wonder how much input stakeholders had in this??? According to the grant money, they need to be involved. Sending out a survey as an afterthought with only a few days to review is unacceptable. There is no time to ask questions or really raise concerns.

The district seems to be about quick fixes without teacher consensus and at the expense of teacher cuts(not replacing retired teachers)

Staff are still underpaid, even with the new pay scale. Staff are still overworked. We still need smaller class sizes and more staff to work with increasing behavior issues, educational and mental health challenges. If we claim to be the best district in South Dakota, we should try to make the changes that will actually make that happen.

I support all of the above positions but I feel like the district needs to hire some teachers for the high school before we hire administrators or support staff. I am unsure what 8 full time District Success Coordinators are or what they will do? I fear that we are going to hire a bunch of positions and not give them any real direction or parameters for doing their job. We have incredible Behavior Intervention Resources at MMS and they were not wisely used during SY 2020-2021 so to put more money into that program seems to be sort of a waste. I fear 8 "Success Coordinators" would be equally wasted. I think the money would be better spent hiring teachers and mental health counselors.