To: Dr. Mike Riggle
Board of Education

From: Dr. R.J. Gravel
Mrs. Hillarie Siena

Date: Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Re: PowerSchool Fee Plugin

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Education approve the purchase of Marcia Brenner Associates, LLC's PowerSchool fee plugin in the amount of $5,544 for the first year, and $1,150 for subsequent years (based on student enrollment).

Background

At the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year, it was identified that our existing bookstore point of sale software and system (CAM) was in need of upgrade or replacement. The CAM solution is used to perform bursar functions including:

- Management of individual student financial accounts
  - Assessment of general school fees, course fees, and obligations (library fines, outstanding charges)
  - Assessment of optional fees (activity pass, field trip, school directory, yearbook)
- Processing of payments
  - Cash, check, and credit card tenders (Visa and MasterCard)
  - Credit card transactions utilize a third-party payment processor owned by CAM Commerce Solutions (developers of the CAM system) called XCharge

Prior to reviewing options for a new system, the business and technology teams identified a list of desired features to meet the district's current and future needs. These features included:

- The ability to integrate with our student information system (PowerSchool) for assigning and maintaining course fees based on student schedules
- The ability to mass-assign general school fees based on defined variables (student status, school enrolled, grade levels)
- The ability to assign fees based on a student's financial qualification status (free and reduced eligibility)
- A student financial account tool that provides detailed current and historical financial reports for individual students, with the ability to carry-over outstanding fees (obligations) from year-to-year
- A web portal that enables parents to review their student's financial account,
- The ability to integrate with our financial management system (Skyward) for reviewing and reconciling bursar transactions

Using the list of desired features, our teams evaluated several systems including: CAM's RetailSTAR system, PowerSchool's integrated fee component, Skyward's student fee management module, and Marcia Brenner Associates' fee plugin. After a thorough review of these systems, one solution stood out from the rest. The recognized solution and vendor that provided all of the district's desired features was Marcia Brenner Associates' fee plugin.

Marcia Brenner Associates (MBA) is a recognized partner of PowerSchool, and provides a number of software plugins that enhance the functionality of PowerSchool. MBA's fee plugin software installs within our existing database, and enables our district to manage individual student accounts in the bookstore, while simultaneously providing parents access to review student accounts online.

The fee plugin's reporting features provide comprehensive detail and summary reports for all transactions, and will enable our business office to efficiently update our general ledger with transaction data, and decrease the possibility of human error. From a school perspective, the fee plugin will substantially decrease the amount of bookkeeping activities and related paperwork to track outstanding financial obligations, and the management of optional charges such as parking and yearbook fees. Additionally, by providing parents the ability to access their student financial accounts, and make electronic payments, we will be able to significantly decrease the amount of time spent in lines during the annual booksale event.

Acquisition of the fee plugin will enable the district to eliminate the use of the CAM system, and its ongoing software maintenance costs. During the 2015-2016 school year the district paid $4,957 in annual support agreement costs.