



To: Joel Boyd, Superintendent
From: Billie Jo Turner, Assistant Superintendent of Finance/CFO
RE: Delayed Bills Update (Batch 2)
Date: January 29, 2021

Per the motion made by Connie Martin on January 6th, we will now present delayed bills to the School Committee for approval prior to forwarding to City Council (per MGL 44 S64). On January 20th, the budget update included initial references about additional bills that were received after the first batch was submitted. Below you will find a summary of such bills that will include a description of what happened and what our recommendation is for each. Each bill has been certified by the vendors. Please note that we are not aware of any other bills but due to the unprecedented nature of last year (the pandemic), we cannot promise that more bills will not come in. To clarify, the School Committee does not require any additional appropriations from the City for any of the outstanding obligations listed below. Our circuit breaker revolving account that funds special education out of district costs has sufficient funds to cover these costs. If the School Committee approves the bills recommended below, we will forward to the City CFO to bring before the City Council for approval to pay under MGL 44 S64.

- Devereux Foundation \$6,162.86 – This bill was received in December 2020. Due to the pandemic, billing has been delayed. It was for services ended June 30. The billing date for such services were not until mid July. By the time the invoice would be received by the Business Office, it will always be past the City closing date. This may potentially be an ongoing problem.

Recommendation: Approval to forward to City Council for payment under MGL 44 S64 using funds from Lowell Public School's general fund or circuit breaker revolving account

- Wayside Youth & Family \$1,321.90 – This bill was received in December 2020. Due to the pandemic, billing has been delayed. It is for June services.

Recommendation: Approval to forward to City Council for payment under MGL 44 S64 using funds from Lowell Public School's general fund or circuit breaker revolving account

- Walker \$5,941.74, \$5,941.74 and \$2,970 – These bills are for three different students' June services. They were emailed to a retired staff member. In December, we received copies of the bills when the company was following up from non-payment.

Recommendation: Approval to forward to City Council for payment under MGL 44 S64 using funds from Lowell Public School's general fund or circuit breaker revolving account

- Valley Collaborative \$7,884, \$7,008, \$8,760 and \$7,884 – These bills were for services for one student for March, April, May and June. There was a dispute over the residency of the student and whether or not Lowell was responsible for payment. When there is a dispute, DESE evaluates and decides who is fiscally responsible. Based on the Assignment of School District Responsibility letter from DESE, we are indeed responsible and must now pay.

Recommendation: Approval to forward to City Council for payment under MGL 44 S64 using funds from Lowell Public School's general fund or circuit breaker revolving account

- The Guild for Human Services \$7,790.64 – This bill represents the unpaid portion of a bill for one child who stopped attending school in December 2019. The bill was for more days than the student attended. Lowell Public Schools disputed such charges stating that we should only get billed for days the student attended. The company countered that the contract demands a 14 day notice. Due to the pandemic, this conversation stopped. We received a follow up invoice in December 2020.

Recommendation: Approval to forward to City Council for payment under MGL 44 S64 using funds from Lowell Public School's general fund or circuit breaker revolving account

- Southshore Collaborative \$25,591.42 – Bill was for student that did not attend Lowell Public Schools. When bill was first received, we rejected the bill since the student was not in our database so we thought it was a mistake and disputed it. Months later, we learned from DESE that this was a DSS placed student's whose fiscal placement was Lowell due to parent's last known address.

Recommendation: Approval to forward to City Council for payment under MGL 44 S64 using funds from Lowell Public School's general fund or circuit breaker revolving account

- Bay State Interpreters \$38,087.55 - There was a significant increase to the usage of translations for both special education and districtwide. The bills were sent to the wrong contact in Lowell Public Schools until recently. Since the Business Office has no way of knowing how many translations have occurred, payments are only triggered from invoices. Since this realization, we have changed the contact.

Recommendation: Approval to forward to City Council for payment under MGL 44 S64 using funds from Lowell Public School's general fund

- Novak \$22,500 – When the grant that funded this cost was ending, Lowell Public Schools reached out to the company to ask if there were additional invoices that were outstanding. The email shows that the company confirmed that there weren't any additional invoices since COVID had interrupted the work. Several months later they have submitted bills for the work they said

had not been completed. We asked the company to show proof that they did conduct the work they are billing us for. We still have not received that.

Recommendation: Accept the report on Novak as a report on progress and not submit to City Council until the company provides proof of work. This will be brought back to the School Committee if we receive the necessary proof and documentation.

Recommended Motion: Approval to forward \$125,343.90 of unpaid obligations from FY19/20 with vendor certifications to City CFO for approval by City Council