



MEMORANDUM

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD

Rely on us.

TO: Commissioners Helgeson, Brown, Mital, Simpson and Carlson
FROM: Frank Lawson, General Manager; Jeannine Parisi, Customer Relations Manager
DATE: November 1, 2017
SUBJECT: Community Education Grants
OBJECTIVE: Information only

Issue

EWEB is implementing a new strategic plan with a focus on affordability, including a review of how discretionary funds are allocated. The Board has directed Management to ensure that its community investment dollars are targeted towards programs and activities that are aligned with the utility's strategic priorities and provide benefit to the most number of customers. The Board has requested more information about how school grants are applied through this lens.

Background

The EWEB Education Grant Program, established in 1995, replaced long standing "contributions-in-lieu-of-tax" (CILT) payments to the four school districts in our service territory. A similar change was made in 1998 for Lane Community College. The Grant Program provides funding for water and energy education activities in four area school districts: Eugene (4J), Bethel, Springfield and McKenzie, and for Lane Community College (LCC).

Five-year Inter-Governmental Agreements (IGAs) are used to allocate the grant as follows: Eugene (4J)-\$247,000; Bethel-\$77,000; Springfield-\$47,000; McKenzie-\$21,000 and for LCC - \$70,000. Language in the IGAs provide EWEB with the ability to increase or decrease grant payments as part of the annual budget process. The EWEB Board last renewed the IGAs in December 2015, continuing funding for the following five years at the 2015 funding levels. This renewal carried forward a 50% reduction to LCC enacted during the economic recession.

Discussion

Support for K-12 education programs are fairly common among electric utilities, including classroom presentations and site tours provided by utility staff, and scaling up to direct funding for equipment, events and curriculum. EWEB's education grants are one of the more tangible benefits derived from the public ownership of the electric and water utility, with thousands of students as direct beneficiaries. EWEB funding fills a critical resource gap for science curriculum and hands-on learning at area schools, enabling field trips, equipment purchases, teacher training, and multi-district events like the solar car challenge. Refer to the attachment for a summary of the main grant funded activities in the Bethel and 4J School Districts during the 2016-17 school year. For a recent example of how EWEB grants support hands-on science learning, there is an article in the EWEB newsroom and a short video describing the Salmon Watch program. Links to the article and video are here:

<http://www.eweb.org/about-us/news/salmon-watch-visits-carmen-smith-spawning-channel>
<https://youtu.be/3zdg8MBf1XA>.

The LCC grant is a bit different in that the funds have largely been to support instruction and administration of its two-year energy management, building controls technician, and water conservation programs. Employment rates play a key factor in community college enrollment levels. Consequently, the current record low unemployment rate (4.5%) has led to under-enrollment in many technical programs, including energy management. Ideally, the building controls and energy management courses target twenty or so students per year, but participation has been much lower the past few years. Students that do graduate have high placement rates in the labor market in a variety of well-paid positions, like energy analysts, resource conservation managers, and building controls specialists.

LCC was successful in receiving a grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to move its commercial building energy management curriculum completely on-line and offer the curriculum to students throughout the Northwest. The Northwest Public Power Association (NWPPA) and Northwest Public Utilities are intimately involved in the deployment of the online program. With NSF and EWEB grant funds supporting the development of this new effort, LCC has the potential to greatly extend the program's reach while offering improved economies of scale to the college. This year was the first time the on-line curriculum was offered and the college hopes to improve marketing to increase participation despite current enrollment trends.

TBL Assessment

No formal TBL has been completed.

Recommendation

Management has met with LCC program directors to discuss future funding in light of the Board strategic direction and EWEB's affordability initiative. In comparison to the school district funding, the LCC grant has a more limited reach in terms of the number of EWEB customers impacted. However, there is specific benefit in terms of high workforce placement rates of LCC energy and water conservation program graduates, with graduates finding employment in both private businesses and public utilities throughout the region.

Requested Board Action

No action is requested at this time; the information in this backgrounder has been provided to assist the Board as they provide direction on the proposed budget which is scheduled to be approved in December.

EWEB Education Grants

4J School District | 2016-2017

We believe that **science education and hands-on learning** for area school children is an important investment in our future. The following is a summary of major EWEB grant-funded activities in the 4J School District during the 2016-2017 school year.

Investment

33 Schools

Elementary, middle and high

19 STEM Programs

Science, Technology, Engineering & Math

\$247K

Funds activities, curriculum, equipment & teacher training

Multi-District Solar Challenge

20th Annual Event

involving 3600 students

1000+ Race Day Participants

150 teams from 14 middle schools

4 competitions

Speed, art, science, & hills

STUDENT REACH

Salmon Rearing



1700

Field Trips/Labs



1800

KidWind Projects



500+

Science Kits



7000+

SUBJECTS

- Energy conservation
- Aerodynamics
- Electric generation/safety
- Water resources
- Sustainable energy
- Local watersheds
- Biology/Chemistry
- Math/Engineering
- Recycling

**Springfield and McKenzie School Districts are supported at levels roughly proportional to the amount of EWEB revenue generated in their districts (\$47k and \$21k) and use EWEB funding for similar science-based activities.*

EWEB Education Grants

Bethel School District | 2016 - 2017

We know that **education is a critical ingredient for a healthy, prosperous community.** The EWEB Education Grant Program provides funding for activities in four area school districts. Here is a summary of the main grant-funded activities in the Bethel School District during the 2016-17 school year.

INVESTMENT

11

Schools
Elementary, middle and high

13

STEM Programs
Science, Technology, Engineering & Math

\$77k

Grant funds
For activities, curriculum, and materials

CONGRATULATIONS!



Ten classes participated and one team from Willamette high school advanced to the National KidWind Challenge in Anaheim, Ca. Congrats to Team Hot Glue for placing 6th out of 24 teams and 3rd in energy production!

REACH



Field Trips

570

Kids



Watershed &
Fish Studies

1000

Kids



Science Kits
& Labs

2,000+

Kids



Wind Turbine
Projects

500

Kids



Electric & Solar
Car Projects

550

Kids

SUBJECTS

- Energy conservation
- Aerodynamics
- Watershed protection
- Water resources
- Sustainable energy
- Electric safety & generation
- Math/Engineering
- Biology/chemistry
- Recycling