



# RIDGEWAY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

35564 County Road 12 • Houston, MN 55943 • 507-454-9566

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RE: SF2255

April 1, 2025

Senator Kunesch, Chair  
Senate Education Finance Committee Members  
75 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Blvd  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Kunesch and Members:

My name is Jodi Dansingburg, and I am a director of Ridgeway Community School (C.S.D. #4083), a public charter elementary school located in rural Winona County, Minnesota. We have been serving students, their families, and our community since September 2001.

**As you consider SF2255, the Governor's proposed budget, I want to call your attention to the proposed deeply problematic cuts to chartered public school students. These cuts include reductions to special education funding.**

Ridgeway Community School serves 100 kindergartens through 5<sup>th</sup>-grade students. We have one full-time special education teacher and one full-time ADSIS reading and math intervention teacher. We also utilize the AMPAC Reading Corps program as an additional intervention service. We are not eligible for Title 1 funds as our school is too small and less than 30% of our student body qualifies for educational benefits (Free and Reduced-priced meals). Our educators work diligently to implement research-based interventions to prevent our students from needing referrals for evaluations for special education services. However, when students do need to be evaluated and are eligible for services, we work hard to meet their educational and social-emotional needs so that they can achieve their IEP goals. We are finding that the need for SPED behavioral services is growing among our youngest students, which may be a latent result of their early development during the COVID pandemic or may be an unfortunate social trend. Helping young children with social regulation issues is critical to help them achieve their full potential during their K-12 education and to become productive members of society.

Because of the hard work of our classroom teachers, special education and intervention teachers, and paraprofessionals (we have three paras who spend some of their school day working with SPED students), almost all of our students, including our SPED students, do very well in the middle school settings they move onto at our resident district (Winona) and other neighboring public-school districts.

Reductions in special education funding and operating revenue for our students would mean cuts to programming that serves our special education programs as well as cuts to programming, such as counseling services, music, and visual arts, which serve all of our students. As you can see from our attached wage rate, we are already underpaying our educators and staff, so if we have to cut staffing, we would be asking already underpaid staff to do more with even less. This would, unfortunately, impact on the FREE educational and services we can provide our students, families, and community.

**As you put forth your Education Finance Omnibus bill, we respectfully urge you to protect this critical state funding for charter school students during this challenging time. Our students need your support now more than ever.**

Sincerely,

*Jodi Dansingburg*

School Coordinator

Ridgeway Community School

507-454-9566

[jdansingburg@ridgewayschool.org](mailto:jdansingburg@ridgewayschool.org)

**STARTING SALARIES FOR POSITIONS**Teachers Includes: Kindergarten, Elementary, and Special Ed

An additional Teaching Team (ELT) stipend is offered based on roles and responsibilities determined annually

	BA	MA
\$	31,742.00	\$ 33,242.00

All Substitute Teachers	\$	23.00	per hour	cap	\$	115.00	per day	\$	125.00	long term on 11th day
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**HOURLY POSITIONS**

Based on time sheets turned in each pay period. 20 hours or more per week will receive holiday and personal pay.

Summer School Teacher	\$	30.00	per hour	Substitute will be paid \$30.00
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Nurse	\$	22.97	per hour	No substitute is stated for this position
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School Counselor	\$	22.97	per hour	No substitute is stated for this position
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Part-time Teacher working under 11 hours	\$	21.10	per hour	MA \$22.11	Substitute will be paid \$23.00	based on FTE of teacher salary
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Part-time Teacher working over 11 hours	\$	21.10	per hour	MA \$22.11	Substitute will be paid \$23.00	based on FTE of teacher salary
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Preschool Teacher licensed	\$	21.10	per hour	Substitute will be paid \$23.00	based on FTE of teacher salary
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Business Assistant	\$	20.97	per hour	No substitute is stated for this position
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Preschool Teacher non-lic	\$	16.75	per hour	Substitute non-licensed will be paid \$15.00
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Food Service Director	\$	18.00	per hour	Substitute will be paid \$14.00
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Bus Licensure required	\$	15.92	per hour	Substitute will be paid \$13.00
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**Paraprofessionals/Aids HQ**

current teaching lic 15+ yrs exp	\$	15.92	per hour	Substitute will be paid \$11.13
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Child Care Coordinator	\$	15.25	per hour	No substitute is stated for this position
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Administrative Assistant	\$	14.75	per hour	Substitute will be paid \$11.13
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Food Service Coordinator	\$	14.00	per hour	Substitute will be paid \$14.00
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Summer School Paraprofessional	\$	14.00	per hour	Substitute will be paid \$14.00
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Maintenance	\$	13.67	per hour	No substitute is stated for this position
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Library Media Aid	\$	13.67	per hour	Substitute will be paid \$11.13
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Van Drivers - only	\$	13.37	per hour	Substitute will be paid \$11.13
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Preschool Assistant Teacher	\$	13.30	per hour	Substitute will be non-licensed sub paid \$11.13
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Administrative Office Assistant	\$	13.30	per hour	Substitute will be paid \$11.13
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Van Drivers working other positions	\$	12.92	per hour	Substitute will be paid \$11.13
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Custodians	\$	12.92	per hour	No substitute is stated for this position
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**Paraprofessionals/Aids**

highly qualified required	\$	12.92	per hour	Substitute will be paid \$11.13
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Paraprofessionals/Aids not highly qualified required	\$	12.30	per hour	Long term on 11th day \$1.00 more to non-licensed positions Substitute will be paid \$11.13
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Preschool Paraprofessional	\$	11.90	per hour	Substitute will be paid \$11.13
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Office Assistant	\$	11.90	per hour	No substitute is stated for this position
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Club Facilitators	N/A	Decided on per session or per hour based on the person running the club		
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Employee under 18	\$	9.08	per hour - MN min wage as January 2025
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Employees substituting for non-teaching positions will receive regular rate of pay for that position.

Employees substituting for teaching positions will receive the substitute teacher or their teacher rate of pay, whichever is higher.

Employees starting at a new position to their existing positions will start at the base wage rate for that new position