

Charlevoix-Emmet Intermediate School District Business Services

History:

In 1998 a local district came to us after posting its position and getting no qualified applicants looking for help. We offered to help “short-term” and the reposting failed as well. We signed a “contract” to provide business services to the district with Char-Em ISD employees. The following schools approached us, as they had needs as well:

- 1998 Pellston Public Schools – Business Manager Retires
- 1999 Ellsworth Community Schools- Business Manager Retires
- 2000 Cheboygan Otsego Presque Isle ESD- Business Manager Retires
- 2001 Boyne Falls Public Schools- Business Manager Retires
- 2002 Boyne City Public Schools- Business Manager Leaves
- 2003 Central Lake Public Schools- Central Office Assistant Leaves
- 2004 East Jordan Public Schools- Business Manager Retires
- 2005 Beaver Island Community Schools- Business Manager Retiring

Office Procedures

In addition to have a set of system processes for the accounting system, we have been able to standardize attendance, conferences/professional development, employee benefits, substitute tracking, REP reporting, purchase order process, banking, auditing, and other services. Several of these have certainly saved district resources.

Benefits

Not all of the benefits of our Business Service Agreements are measured by financial savings and our districts realize this and appreciate this fact.

- “Instant” access to 14 finance office individuals with varying expertise and specialties.
- Every function has a trained back-up person for emergencies or even vacations. Also provides a natural replacement training system.

- Mix of part-time and full-time employees offers “extra” capacity during busy times of the year, and limits “idle” time during the rare slow times.
- Accountants can see opportunity for advancement from within the operation.
- Professional development and other benefit opportunities are available through the ISD.
- Smaller “D” size schools have access to multiple MBA/CFO/CPAs that they couldn’t normally “afford” to hire.
- Benefit coordinator with a “personally assigned” representative at MESSA to handle our needs.
- Bidding process for school supplies, audit services, custodial services, energy procurement, and other areas.
- Access to human resource services such as employee discipline or retirement counseling.
- In the Char-Em ISD formula, our districts have also realized a direct financial savings on the cost of the service versus employing their own staff.
- Vendors have one stop shopping, so they aren’t interrupting us 9 separate times. They have one point of contact for all 9 districts

The Future:

We are implementing purchase cards, continuing to turn AP to electronic payments, streamlining attendance tracking, improve our purchase order system/process, use of lock boxes, and investigating positive pay along with other banking products for efficiency.