



Administrative Council Agenda Packet

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY
LIBRARY SYSTEM
2420 Mariposa Street
Fresno, CA 93721
559-600-6256

August 20, 2024

Online via Microsoft Teams

11:30 a.m.

Enclosed are the agenda and prepared attachments for this meeting.

Copies of these materials may be made at the public's expense.

The public may participate by using the following URL:

<https://go.sjvls.org/admin240820>

To participate in the meeting by telephone, call:

(559) 785-0133

Enter Phone Conference ID: 805 541 735#

The public may also participate at any of these teleconference locations:

Fresno County Public Library: 2420 MARIPOSA ST, FRESNO CA 93721

Kern County Library: 701 TRUXTUN AVE, BAKERSFIELD CA 93301

Kings County Library: 401 NORTH DOUTY, HANFORD CA 93230

Madera County Library: 121 NORTH G ST, MADERA CA 93637

Mariposa County Library: 4978 10TH ST, MARIPOSA CA 95338

Merced County Library: 2100 O ST, MERCED CA 95340

Porterville City Library: 15 E. THURMAN AVE. SUITE A, PORTERVILLE, CA 93257

Tulare County Library: 200 WEST OAK AVE, VISALIA CA 93291

Tulare Public Library: 475 NORTH M ST, TULARE CA 93274

Accessibility and Accommodations: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the San Joaquin Valley Library System at (559) 600-6256 no later than 10:00 a.m. on Monday, August 19, 2024.

Public records: Disclosable public records related to this agenda are available for public review at the Fresno County Public Library, Business Office, located at 2420 Mariposa Street, Fresno, CA 93721, during regular business hours, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

AGENDA

A. COUNCIL OPENING

1. Call to Order
2. Introductions
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Public Comment – The Public may comment on any items relative to SJVLS and not on the agenda.

B. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION

1. ACTION: SJVLS Subscription to Brainfuse Products – Wymer (Attachment 1)

C. CALENDAR ITEMS

1. Set the date and agenda building for the next meeting, tentatively Friday, October 4, 2024, at the Madera Main Library.

D. ADJOURNMENT

DATE: August 20, 2024

TO: SJVLS Administrative Council

SUBMITTED BY: Chris Wymer – Administrative Librarian

SUBJECT: SJVLS Subscription to Brainfuse Products

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. Approve a systemwide 1-year subscription to Brainfuse’s HelpNow and VetNow products for all members at a cost of \$231,700.
2. Approve an exception to SJVLS’s purchasing rules that require soliciting sealed bids for subscriptions exceeding \$75,000.

Approval of the recommended action will authorize the Administrative Librarian to initiate a 1-year subscription to HelpNow and VetNow for all members with expenditures coming from SJVLS’s fund balance. Members that previously paid for their own subscriptions can decide whether they want to request a refund, or a credit that can be used on other Brainfuse products.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Alternatively, Administrative Council could elect to proceed with one of the alternative actions listed below.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION 1:

1. Approve a systemwide 1-year subscription to Brainfuse’s HelpNow, VetNow, and College Now products for all members at a cost of \$245,000.
2. Approve an exception to SJVLS’s purchasing rules that require soliciting sealed bids for subscriptions exceeding \$75,000.

Approval of the recommended action will authorize the Administrative Librarian to initiate a 1-year subscription to HelpNow, VetNow, and College Now for all members with expenditures coming from SJVLS’s fund balance. Members that previously paid for their own subscriptions can decide whether they want to request a refund, or a credit that can be used on other Brainfuse products.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION 2:

1. Approve a 1-year subscription to Brainfuse’s HelpNow and VetNow only for the members that haven’t started their own subscriptions at a cost of \$150,450.
2. Approve an exception to SJVLS’s purchasing rules that require soliciting sealed bids for subscriptions exceeding \$75,000.

Approval of the recommended action will authorize the Administrative Librarian to initiate a 1-year subscription to HelpNow and VetNow for the members that didn’t start their own subscription, with expenditures coming from SJVLS’s fund balance. This means Fresno County and Tulare County patrons will not have access to VetNow. Porterville patrons will have access, but through their subscription, not SJVLS’s subscription.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION 3:

1. Approve a 1-year subscription to Brainfuse's HelpNow, VetNow, and CollegeNow only for the members that haven't paid their own subscriptions at a cost of \$159,450.
2. Approve an exception to SJVLS's purchasing rules that require soliciting sealed bids for subscriptions exceeding \$75,000.

Approval of the recommended action will authorize the Administrative Librarian to initiate a 1-year subscription to Brainfuse's HelpNow, VetNow, and CollegeNow for members that didn't start their own subscription, with expenditures coming from SJVLS's fund balance. This means Fresno and Tulare County patrons will not have access to VetNow or CollegeNow. Porterville patrons will have access, but through their subscription, not SJVLS's subscription.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION 4:

1. Approve a 1-year subscription to Brainfuse's HelpNow and VetNow for all members except Fresno County at a cost of \$153,700.
2. Approve an exception to SJVLS's purchasing rules that require soliciting sealed bids for subscriptions exceeding \$75,000.

Approval of the recommended action will authorize the Administrative Librarian to initiate a 1-year subscription to Brainfuse's HelpNow and VetNow for all members except Fresno County, with expenditures coming from SJVLS's fund balance. This means Fresno County patrons will not have access to VetNow. Tulare County and Porterville can decide whether they want to request a refund, or a credit that can be used on other Brainfuse products.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION 5:

1. Forgo a systemwide subscription. Members that already subscribed see no changes. Members that did not start their own subscriptions would be able to decide on their own how they want to proceed.

Approval of alternative action 5 would forgo an SJVLS subscription. There would be no costs to SJVLS, and members would be able to decide to start subscriptions on their own.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Approval of the recommended action or alternative actions 1-4 will not increase membership dues in the current fiscal year. Subscription costs will be paid for from fund balance in an amount dependent on the action selected. Funding sources for future years costs will be determined by Administrative Council as a part of the budget discussions for fiscal year 2025-26.

DISCUSSION:

During the previous Administrative Council meeting, Council discussed continuing to offer e-resources that were previously offered through subscriptions managed by the State Library but had funding cut for the current fiscal year. After discussion, Administrative Council voted to move forward with a systemwide subscription to Brainfuse's HelpNow and VetNow products, and to have Wegener and Cervantes meet with Brainfuse to discuss pricing for the systemwide subscription.

After meeting with Brainfuse staff, two complications arose. The first complication was how to resolve subscriptions that some SJVLS members already paid for on their own. Fresno County,

Tulare County, and Porterville City all subscribed to Brainfuse products outside of SJVLS. Fresno County committed to two years of HelpNow, Porterville City subscribed to the full Brainfuse package that includes HelpNow, VetNow, JobNow, and CollegeNow. Tulare County subscribed to HelpNow. In order to start an SJVLS subscription, Brainfuse needs to know how to resolve the existing subscriptions. SJVLS was not in a position to make a decision on behalf of our members.

The second complication is the price quote presented to Administrative Council was inaccurate and did not include Fresno County, since they already initiated their own separate subscription. Adding Fresno into the SJVLS subscription increased the yearly price from \$153,700 per year to \$231,700 per year. The increase was substantial enough that Wymer felt it was necessary to bring the subscription back for another approval.

During discussion, Brainfuse demonstrated that the pricing quoted to SJVLS included a substantial discount from their standard pricing. SJVLS’s cost for a systemwide subscription to HelpNow and VetNow using Brainfuse’s standard pricing model would be: \$303,750.

During the meeting Wegener inquired about potentially adding CollegeNow to SJVLS’s subscription. CollegeNow is a live tutor service aimed at helping students navigate the college application process. Services include assistance with drafting application essays and preparing for interviews, if they’re a part of the application process. The option to add in CollegeNow is included in alternative actions 1 and 3 on this agenda item.

SJVLS’s recommended action is to initiate a subscription for all members to the resources previously selected by Administrative Council. This ensures SJVLS utilizes system reserve funds in a manner that benefits all members. It also ensures all members will offer at a minimum, Help Now and Vet Now to their patrons. Whereas, if Administrative Council elects to start a subscription only for the members that did not pay separately, then Fresno and Tulare Counties would not be able to offer their patrons access to Vet Now. If Administrative Council decides to move forward with the recommended action, the members that already paid for separate subscriptions will be able to decide if they want to receive a refund or a credit that can be used on other Brainfuse products.

PRIOR AGENDA REFERENCE:

Administrative Council Meeting – May 24, 2024. Item 6.
 Administrative Council Meeting – August 9, 2024. Item 1.

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On File – Quote for Brainfuse Online Tutoring

Motion:

Second:

_____ PASSED

_____ REJECTED