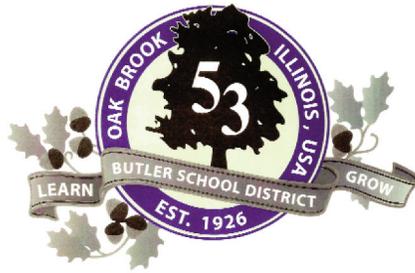


BOARD OF EDUCATION

Alan Hanzlik, President
Dr. Hitesh Patel, Vice-President
Dr. Alan Kumar, Secretary
Rajiv Advani
Elizabeth Chun
Lou Paskalides
Todd Rusteberg
Dr. Heidi Wennstrom, Superintendent

2801 York Rd., Oak Brook
District Office: 630-573-2887
Fax: 630-573-5374
www.Butler53.com



Butler School District 53

Board Report

A news report of the Aug. 8, 2016 Board of Education meeting

Board begins principal search

The Board accepted the resignation of Brook Forest Principal Kelly Voliva and said it was making immediate plans to identify a new principal. “While I recognize that the timing is difficult, I am confident that our excellent faculty and staff will work together to ensure that we continue to provide our students with the rich and fulfilling learning experience they have come to expect,” said Superintendent Dr. Heidi Wennstrom. She also said she is working closely with Assistant Principal Lisa Owen to ensure that teachers have the support they need to prepare for the new school year. Wennstrom said they are working with a search firm and that the position has been posted on the District web site and professional job sites. She also praised Owen for her organization and leadership during this time, telling the Board, “We will do whatever it takes to make sure there is a smooth start to the school year.”

Students comment on academic contests

The Board heard from a number of Brook Forest and Butler Junior High students who urged board members to continue to offer outside academic contests, like the National Geography Bee and Spelling Bee to students. Students said that the action of a few should not deter the Board from allowing contests for the rest of the student body. “The contests have been crucial to my educational development,” said one student.” Another student said it helps students work in teams and collaborate. “Competitions are really fun and help me represent my school.” Another said they hope to win contests so as to restore Butler District 53’s honorable reputation.

Superintendent Dr. Heidi Wennstrom said the administration needs to gather more research about contest safeguards and other information before it presents a recommendation to the board. She also praised the students for their civic-minded presentations and said the board and administration take the district’s reputation “very seriously.” She also told the students that “No one wants to limit your educational experience. They want to extend and enrich your educational experience.”

Facility updates

The Board heard an update on summer construction projects. One such project involved new cabinetry, shelves, desks and furniture which were recently installed in the Brook Forest classrooms. Business Manager Dr. Sandra Martin presented photos of the installation and of teachers filling their cabinets with teaching materials. She said that the teachers are all very grateful for a place to store supplies and make their classrooms more useable with more flexible areas. Another project is the security vestibule addition onto the gym at Butler Junior High. Dr. Martin said it is well underway with the structural roof installed and part of the driveway built. The project is slightly ahead of schedule and is expected to be completed in late October or beginning of November.

Substitutes, transportation, special ed and enrollment

In other business the Board:

- Heard that nearby Elementary School District 102 has given its one-year notice to withdraw from the special educational cooperative LADSE. Their withdrawal affects other districts, especially small ones like Butler District 53 that has to rely on a cooperative in order to offer a full complement of special education programs. Dr. Sandra Martin said that the District will monitor the potential withdrawal and its ensuing effects.

- Heard a report on hiring another permanent substitute in addition to the one already employed. This addition would alleviate gaps in covering teaching duties due to illness or longer term, family and medical leave. Currently, five teachers have requested family/medical leave. The proposed salary is \$25,000 and includes the same benefits and sick days as teacher assistants. Administrators said that it is difficult to find quality teacher substitutes, a problem many school districts are experiencing.

- Gave the go-ahead to spend up to \$81,600, if needed, to add two additional bus routes in order to cut down the time a student is on the bus. Board members said they were concerned about the cost, which averages \$2,700 per student, and favored a more cost effective option. Butler Junior High Assistant Principal Maribeth Mariner outlined two other options that would bump up start times, but wanted more time to work with the bus company to develop other suitable options. The Board said they would provide the flexibility for the administration to conduct research and develop an optimal plan for transportation.

- Heard an update on enrollment numbers for the coming year. While there is a smaller population at Brook Forest, including only two kindergarten sections, there is a jump in the number of students at Butler Junior High. In total, there are 533 students together at both schools, which is nearly 100 more students than three years ago. Still, new families are continuing to register in the schools.

- Heard about changes in the Chromebook policy, including requiring students to use the District's issued cases, which are more durable. Another change is that the Chromebooks turned in by 8th graders each year will be recycled for younger grades. There will be no buy-out plan offered on the student devices as of now.

- Approved an amended Board of Education meeting schedule. The calendar is on the District's website www.butler53.com

Personnel report

In action related to personnel, the Board:

- Approved the appointment of Plarnet Luarasi as custodian at Brook Forest
- Approved the appointment of Anne Soto as a part-time special education teacher
- Accepted the resignation of technology specialist Sami Mohammad
- Accepted the resignation of teacher Jennifer Traub
- Accepted the resignation of teacher Christa Halstead

Board Calendar

- Sept. 6** District Leadership Team - 4:00 p.m.
- Sept. 12** Board of Education Meeting - 6:30 p.m.
Administrative Center

School Calendar

- Aug. 31** BF Curriculum Night
- Sept. 2** PTO Meeting
- Sept. 5** Labor Day: No School
- Sept. 6** BF Picture Day
- Sept. 8** BJH Curriculum Night



Want to learn more? Listen to the Board Meeting audio at www.butler53.com Click on the tab "Board of Education"