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Butler School District 53

Board Report

A news report of the March 12, 2018 Board of Education meeting

Strategic Plan approved

The Board approved a new Strategic Plan, developed after a series of focus groups, interviews and survey. The Board also approved detailed action plans for the first year. These focus on three areas: creating an instructional and curricular framework, promoting community engagement and creating value. Examples of some critical work in these areas are:

Curricular

Strengthen teaching and learning by identifying enhancements for the K-8 STEM curriculum; review process or content area revisions, review community data regarding expectations and readiness of a D53 graduate, conduct audit of extracurricular opportunities.

Community Engagement

Enhance engagement by developing a clear process for conflict resolution, develop a guide for accelerated placement and gifted and talented programs, develop a communications survey and develop a communications plan; create a community stakeholder group of non-parents, senior citizens and businesses.

Value

Create value and fiscally sound practices by completing analysis of comparable districts and researching a cost-savings consortia, among others.

Superintendent Dr. Heidi Wennstrom noted that the work was “an intensive systematic process of envisioning a desired future, and translating this vision into broadly defined goals and sequence of steps to achieve them.”

She said that at every stage of the planning, parent/community/student participants and the administrative team focused on building an understanding of “what must be done to build on a foundation of excellence in order to reach the next higher level.”

New fee structure for bus transportation

The Board approved for one year a new fee plan for bus transportation beginning in 2018-19. The fee will change to \$300 per family to ride a bus to Brook Forest and \$300 per family to ride a bus to Butler Junior High. This changes the fee structure from \$350 per family for bus transportation to both schools. The fee structure is a pilot and will be evaluated during the 2018-19 school year. Bus transportation costs have been steadily rising and fees only offset the cost to the District by 13 percent.

Preschool and before-and after-school care agreements okayed

The Board approved a renewal of the intergovernmental agreement with the Oak Brook Park District and the LaGrange Area Department of Special Education (LADSE) for a preschool program for District 53 and area students. The program is operated by all three entities and held at the park district’s Recreation Center. In a related move, the Board approved another intergovernmental agreement with the Oak Brook Park District to operate a before-and after-school program at Brook Forest. The program, which began two years ago, is funded through user fees.

Personnel and policy changes

In other news, the Board:

- Approved the hiring of Julie Moser as a long-term substitute, who replaced staff who had resigned.

- Approved a Reduction in Force (RIF) for one teacher due to enrollment changes. Staff could be rehired if there are enrollment increases necessitating additional staff prior to the start of school.

- Approved the resignation of several faculty members effective at the end of the school year: Samantha Barry, reading teacher and teacher's aide; Carrie Fitzgerald, early childhood teacher, Maxx Marano, teacher's aide; Catherine McGovern, permanent substitute; Alison Salerno, permanent substitute and Scott Thesen, Brook Forest library/media teacher.

- Approved eliminating four policies that are redundant with recent new policies approved in the last year. The Board also approved two new policies – one that requires the superintendent to establish an organizational chart and chain of command. Another policy established a succession plan in case an administrator is temporarily away.

Summer projects reviewed

The Board heard an update from the Buildings and Grounds Committee, which is reviewing plans on a number of upcoming projects: updating the Butler Junior High faculty lounge, installing new playgrounds at both schools, replacing the lift at Brook Forest and installing keyless entry doors at Brook Forest for improved security. The committee also reviewed summer preventative work to maintain the buildings.

School reports

In the superintendent and principals' reports:

- Brook Forest Principal Dr. Chad Prosen thanked teachers for opening up their classrooms to visitors who wanted to observe and talk to teachers about the school's instructional methodology of its Reader's and Writer's Workshop model. He also noted that PARCC state testing begins this week and thanked the Student Council for organizing a toothpaste drive to benefit a local homeless shelter.

- Butler Junior High Principal Amy Read reported on plans to administer PARCC testing in the beginning of April. She also said that teachers will participate in training for the new RULER program that will augment the school's social emotional program. She also noted that teachers are beginning to work with a math consultant, who will work with teachers to refine effective practices. The consultant was "incredibly complimentary" of the current instructional practices, she said.

Board Calendar

- April 3** District Leadership Team - 4:00 p.m.
- April 5** Buildings and Grounds Committee - 7 a.m.
- April 9** Policy Committee Meeting - 5 p.m.
- April 9** Board of Education Meeting - 6:30 p.m. Administrative Center
- April 24** Technology Committee Meeting - 7 a.m.
- April 26** Board of Education Committee of the Whole Meeting - 6:30 pm. Administrative Center

School Calendar

- March 23** BJH: End of third quarter
- March 26 - April 2** Spring Break; No school
- April 3** School resumes
- April 6** PTO Meeting



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