

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Butler School District 53

Board Report

A news report of the Sept. 11, 2017 Board of Education meeting

Welcome to new staff

The Board was introduced to new staff and faculty for the 2017-18 school year and earlier had held a small welcome reception prior to the business meeting. Superintendent Dr. Heidi Wennstrom noted that the news staff “come to us bringing wonderful gifts and talent and they are fully committed to our students’ success.”

Board adopts budget

The Board held a public hearing on the 2017-18 budget and subsequently adopted the budget. Business Manager Dr. Sandra Martin shared a summary and highlights of the budget. She said it reflects the Board and District’s goals to try to match revenues and expenditures and at the same time provide support for instruction, professional development and technology and resources for capital improvements while maintaining its AAA bond rating.

The following expenditures were highlighted:

- \$158,632 increase in contractual faculty salaries
- \$120,000 in substitute budget
- \$600,000 in technology such as interactive flat screens, band/music equipment, Macbook Pros for STEM students
- 16 percent increase in special education
- 8.6 percent increase in student transportation costs

The budget plan shows \$14.938 million in expenditures and \$13.318 in revenues. The budget reflects planned reductions in fund balances in order to conduct repairs to the facilities. In next year’s budget, the Board will consider whether to reduce or delay additional capital improvements in order to align expenditures and revenues.

Revenue growth slowed considerably in the last decade due to a historically low Consumer Price Average (CPI). Under the tax cap laws, the CPI largely determines the increase in property tax revenue from one year to the next. The CPI has averaged 1.4 percent in the last five years and 1.8 percent in the last 10 years. Property taxes make up 88 percent of the revenues. Nine percent is from other local revenue, including student registration fees and full-day kindergarten.

Board President encourages presence in District 86 boundary discussions

The Board discussed its role in Hinsdale High School District 86’s forums on potential attendance boundary shifts between its two high schools. Board President Dr. Elizabeth Chun noted that the District 53 Board has no legal standing or jurisdiction on the issue but encouraged parents to attend the listening sessions and have their voices heard. She said that District 53 notified parents of the meeting via the digital backpack and texts and invited Hinsdale District 86 Superintendent Dr. Bruce Law to attend a PTO meeting.

Strategic plan review

The Board heard an update on progress for the Strategic Plan and reviewed a presentation called "Building a Foundation for Excellence." Superintendent Dr. Heidi Wennstrom outlined a framework for the three focus areas suggested by the Board: Academics, Facilities, and Community. The draft presentation included metrics for measuring results and a timeline to build an understanding of our current accomplishments. The Board approved the strategic plan framework with authorization for the administrators to begin development of a comprehensive strategic plan and action plans that will lead Butler 53 into the next era. The Board gave its approval to continue to build out the details of the framework and to work with teachers, parents and the community for meaningful input into the strategic plan. The next step is for teacher teams to develop action plans to bring back to the Board of Education later this fall.

Facilities update

- In other news, the Board:
- Heard a brief report on the District Leadership Team, which is a group of teachers, administrators, parents and Board members who meet monthly to discuss issues related to school improvement. They reviewed accomplishments of the Building Leadership Teams (BLT) from both schools. The BLT teams meet monthly for focused work on school operations, curriculum and instruction,
 - Heard a report on the Buildings and Ground Committee meeting. That meeting included a recap of the summer work and a review of the Master Facility Plan,
 - Approved on first reading, 10 revised policies that were recommended by IASB and discussed by the Board Policy Committee and reviewed by administration,
 - Approved designated hazardous bus routes, which are less than 1.5 miles from the school. The designation is determined in order to apply for transportation reimbursement.
 - Approved compensation for Superintendent Dr. Heidi Wennstrom for unused vacation days from 2016-17,
 - Accepted resignation of Elizabeth Horky as a permanent substitute.

Board Calendar

- Oct.16** Board of Education Meeting - 6:30 p.m.
Administrative Center
- Nov. 13** Board of Education Meeting - 6:30 p.m.
Administrative Center

School Calendar

- Oct. 2** 8th grade Iron Oaks trip
- Oct. 5** PTO meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- Oct. 6** BF Parent Visitation Day, 8:35 -11:50 a.m.
- Oct. 6** School Improvement Day
(BF students dismissed at 11:40 a.m.; BJH dismissed at 11:50 a.m.)
- Oct. 9** Columbus Day: No School
- Oct. 12-14** 7th grade Philadelphia trip



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