

D-38 District Accountability Advisory Committee, April 10

# Committee reviews unified improvement plans

By Harriet Halbig

The Lewis-Palmer D-38 District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC) reviewed the unified improvement plans (UIPs) for each school and the district at its April 10 meeting. The meeting had been postponed due to a snow day on April 4.

### Unified improvement plans

Part of the charge of the DAAC is to review the UIPs of the individual schools and the district before they are submitted to the Colorado Department of Education in mid-April.

At this meeting, membership of the committee divided into groups to hear detailed information from each school regarding its strengths, weaknesses, and plans to meet goals. The groups then reconvened to hear a brief summary of each UIP.

To view detailed information, please go to <http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview/performance>. Select the district (they are listed alphabetically) and then the school.

Common trends were that students with disabilities were underperforming in language arts and math. Some proposed actions included offering additional professional development for teachers to allow them to differentiate instruction in the classroom so that students are not pulled out for individual help. Teachers were also to share best practices and improve communication between special education and general education teachers. A third solution was to use instructional coaches.

At Lewis-Palmer High School, customized study halls are used to offer additional instruction in reading and math, and some math courses are divided into shorter periods daily. After-school tutoring sessions are also offered.

A common thread between the schools is a relative lack of participation in standardized testing. Although the district's accreditation does not suffer from this, it makes it more difficult for administrators and teachers to compare year-to-year progress when a small percentage of students participate. The tests themselves have changed over the past few years, making comparison difficult.

The district UIP referred to the fact that students with disabilities are not growing fast enough to close the achievement gap in language arts, math, and reading. Increased professional development and use of intervention and progress monitoring were listed as solutions. Teachers will receive training in the use of Skills Navigator and data interpretation. Skills Navigator helps teachers interpret the use of Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) tests. During this time when state tests have varied from one year to the next, NWEA has offered consistent data.

Teachers will also receive additional training during the Summer Learning Academy and delayed start meetings.

This year for the first time, there was an addendum to the UIP that evaluates the Gifted Education Program in the district. It was stated that gifted students meet or exceed state requirements and that gifted students perform well above their non-identified peers.

### Legislative update

Board liaison John Magerko showed a video describing the impact of the Gallagher Amendment (which controls the assessment rate for taxation of business versus residential property) and TABOR (the Taxpayers Bill of Rights) on school funding.

Because the Gallagher Amendment requires that 55 percent of tax revenues come from commercial property and 45 percent from residential, the state is not benefiting from the upsurge in real estate activity. Instead, the assessed rate on homes must be decreased.

Magerko also commented on the series of long-range planning meetings held in the district and encouraged members to attend these to learn of trends in development and the state of facilities.

### 2017-18 budget approved

DAAC is required to review budget proposals before their presentation to the Board of Education. Assistant Superintendent Cheryl Wangeman offered a presentation on the history and status of school funding in the state.

Wangeman said that projections estimate the increase in revenues due to inflation at about \$190 per student, offset by a reduction in property taxes. The district is fortunate in that it anticipates an increase in enrollment of about 190 students. Current per-pupil revenue is about \$7,051, and that is expected to remain the same for next year. The increased enrollment will increase revenues by about \$1.34 million.

Increased expenditures will arise from higher payments for PERA, insurance, and new teachers to serve the increased number of students.

Wangeman added that the district also will need new bus routes to serve the new students, and continued updating in technology.

Capital needs include flooring at Lewis-Palmer Middle


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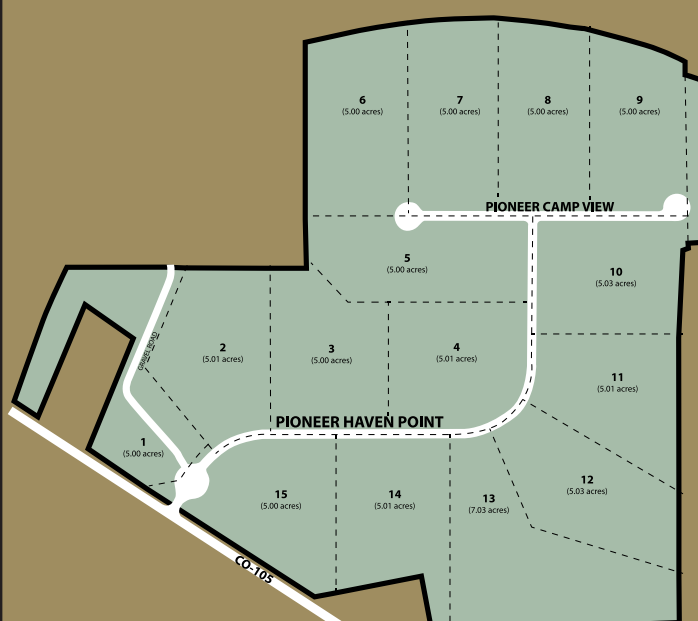
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