

upgrade costs with the servers, but the report still projected a solid budget for the year.

- The Colorado Department of Education corrected school performance status that was wrong due to clerical errors.

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- Assistant Superintendent Cheryl Wangeman invited the MA and the church next door to meet with County Commissioner Darryl Glenn to discuss a county engineering plan to modify both Highway 105 and Monument Hill Road near Palmer Ridge High School.
- MA board elections will take place May 18-19; if there are more than two candidates there will be a candidate forum on May 17.

\*\*\*\*\*

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, March 9 at the Monument Academy library at 1150 Village Ridge Point. The Monument Academy usually meets at 6 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. Information on the MA School Board, including schedule, minutes, committee and finances can be found at <http://www.monumentacademy.net/school-board>.

Jackie Burhans can be reached at [jackieburhans@ocn.me](mailto:jackieburhans@ocn.me).

### Lewis-Palmer School District Long Range Planning Open House, Feb. 13

## Demographer, architect discuss rising school growth

By Jennifer Kaylor

At the Feb. 13 Community Open House: Long Term Planning presentation conducted by the Lewis-Palmer School District (D-38) along with Western Demographics Inc. and RTA Architecture, community members learned about the growing number of D-38 students and possible solutions for accommodating them. The open house format allowed time for the public to hear initial findings and then provide feedback.

Karen Brofft, superintendent of schools for D-38, introduced the speakers.

### Schools' capacity challenged

Shannon Bingham, president of Western Demographics, said that within D-38's boundaries, 300 new homes are under construction. This winter building activity is surprising and suggests that local growth will only increase. Over the past six years, the district has grown an average

of 1.75 percent per year. In contrast, during 2016-17 the district has grown by 3.57 percent, or over 200 students. A standard measurement used for estimating the number of incoming students is 0.7 students per new home, thus the additional households will likely send at least 200 extra students to D-38 classrooms for the 2017-18 school year.

Estimating conservatively and considering the high quality of home development, as well as a statewide annual growth of 1.5 percent over the next 40 years, Western Demographics projected D-38 student population growth over the next eight years as:

- K-6—680 additional students
- 7-8—181 additional students
- 9-12—499 additional students

Student population forecasts include current student populations within current boundaries, plus estimates of choice-in students.

### Strategies to address growth

The D-38 Long Range Planning Committee, formed in January 2017, intends to explore new facilities, additions, grade redistributions, and boundary adjustments as potential solutions. Bingham commented that the least expensive school to build is an elementary school, which costs about \$17 million. He added that shifting sixth-graders to the middle school buys time for the elementary schools, but immediately overcrowds the middle school. Western Demographics and RTA Architecture will continue to gather data for the Long Range Planning Committee as it meets throughout the spring.

### Architectural assessments

Doug Abernathy, principal, RTA Architecture, reported that deferred maintenance, safety and security, and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) will be included in the growth strategies considerations. The age of some schools—Grace Best Elementary School, Kilmer Elementary School, Lewis-Palmer Elementary School, and Lewis-Palmer Middle School—presents varying challenges. Boilers, pumps, and mechanical systems have life cycles and their respective replacement costs and efficiency, or lack thereof, must be assessed and factored into the Long Range Planning Committee's decision making.

Abernathy cited a new state law that requires door hardware to be lockable from the inside of a classroom so that students and teachers aren't forced to step out of the room to lock the door. Schools may also need to upgrade to two-way addressable PA systems, which allow communication during emergencies to specify shooter situations, tornadoes, fire, etc. Abernathy explained that CPTED, which addresses vulnerability to crime accord-

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