

**D38 BOE (Cont. from 1)**

the virus, since it is known that individuals may have it but be asymptomatic. Somers responded that there are no plans for testing in the schools but that

the number of testing sites is increasing.

**Communications update**

In keeping with goal 5 of the district's Strategic Plan, to forge community relationships and foster effective commu-

nications with all stakeholders, board Secretary Tiffiney Upchurch and board Vice President Theresa Phillips offered a presentation. Upchurch said the goal is to distribute information, promote feedback from the community, and elicit suggestions from all stakeholders.

Phillips said she and Upchurch had many meetings with Information Officer Julie Stephen and Somers about current efforts to keep the community informed. A decision must be made about how to determine the effectiveness of programs. One suggestion was to create a printed document mailed to all stakeholders describing district activities and goals.

Taylor commented that he wished that some of the communications would be forward looking rather than historic in character, describing whether the district is on track to achieve specific goals.

Phillips said that this is a good time to work on the communications policy, because there is not a ballot issue at stake.

Board Treasurer Ron Schwarz said he wanted Upchurch and Phillips to assign each board member a task and give deadlines.

**Budget update**

Chief Financial Officer Shanna Seelye presented the board with an updated budget for the year, reporting that preliminary enrollment numbers indicate 6,487 students. The original budget was based on a count of 6,481. The per pupil revenues for this year are \$7,762.

One major change is the expenditure of an additional \$66,000 for unemployment claims in the pandemic. The Transportation Department stands to lose revenue from ridership fees.

Seelye also said the board had requested the possibility of giving staff a one-time lump sum in November to partially offset the freeze on salaries. The board approved the budget.

**Refinancing bonds**

Schwarz reported that the district could refinance bonds from 2012 and see a

savings of \$1.7 million in interest as the current bonds are at 3.5% and the current interest rate is 1.5%.

Taxpayers would see a reduction in their property taxes in the spring were the refinancing to be approved.

After discussion, the board agreed that refinancing is a prudent action.

**Grace Best future**

Somers briefly reported on recommendations for the Grace Best property on Jefferson Street.

Some parts of the building are 60 years old and a large portable on the lot has outlived its usefulness, with no heating or plumbing and cracks in the ceiling and floors.

He listed the current uses of the building itself, including the Home-school Enrichment Academy, storage for science kits, Bearbotics (robotic program from Palmer Ridge), and parts of the Transitions program. Some parts, such as the gymnasium, are also rented for community use.

Somers recommended that a request for proposals (RFP) be issued for an owner's representative to explore the sale of the portable and potential actions on the main building.

Executive Director of Personnel and Operations Bob Foster, who would oversee the RFP, said the portable would probably be sold for private use.

Taylor also requested an update on the status of other portable classrooms in the district, many of which were leased in 2018. He requested a report at the December board meeting.

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The Lewis-Palmer District 38 Board of Education usually meets on the third Monday of each month at 6 p.m. Due to the pandemic, seating is extremely limited, but meetings may be viewed on the district's Facebook page. Go to lewispal.er.org, board of education, meeting livestreams in the left-hand column. The next meeting will be on Nov. 16.

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