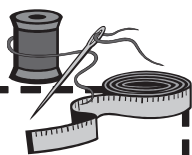


status of the school and the funding of the new secondary school. He referred to the annual audit and said that the secondary school will be included in next year's budget.

Financial Advisor Matt O'Hara explained the debt

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structure for the new building, saying that the original 2019 bond has a 5.5% interest rate, and they are monitoring interest rates for an opportunity to refinance.

Marketing specialists are focusing on recruiting students from Districts 20 and 49, where charter schools stop at grade 8.

To view the detailed report, see boarddocs (Board of Education, meetings, boarddocs on the website).

Safety, security and mental health report
Chief of Security Dennis Coates and Director of Student Services Krystal Rasmussen reported on safety, security and mental health services in the district.

Coates reported that there have been successes in building improvements such as 3M film on windows near entrances (the film prevents breakage of glass), a new security vestibule at Palmer Lake Elementary School, increased trainings and drills, and adding alarms to entrances at the high schools, limiting entrance and exits to two locations at each building. Although the doors are alarmed, they are not locked.

Challenges include the need for additional vestibules at Prairie Winds and Bear Creek Elementary Schools, improved communication to prevent blackouts, community growth near schools, and traffic.

In addressing the mental health aspect of safety and security, Coates said the district is partnering with the Sheriff's Office and other local, state, and federal agencies. The new police chief in Monument is school-oriented. The district is also applying for grants, such as a Safer Schools Grant to support im-

proved communications.

Coates also said that Safe2Tell, an anonymous reporting program, received 300 calls last year with self-harm the primary subject of the calls. These calls are answered immediately and referred to the Sheriff's Office when necessary.

Schwarz asked what Coates would do first given unlimited funding. Coates responded that he would address mental health and then the additional vestibules.

Rasmussen reported that the district is addressing mental health through counselors, assistant principals, parent and student input, and systemic practices.

She defined mental health as emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Good mental health enables an individual to handle stress and develop good relationships with others.

The district promotes social-emotional learning to promote self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, self-management, and good decision-making.

She stressed that all students, regardless of age, benefit from this approach. Demonstrating care and concern for all students and supporting the whole child are important factors in promoting mental health and the district partners with many area agencies such as the El Paso County Health Department, Youth Suicide Prevention, Tri-Lakes Cares, the Tri-Lakes Women's Club, and Monument Hill Kiwanis.

The primary challenge in improving mental health is the lack of staffing available. Mental health professionals are difficult to find.

The Student Services Department has sponsored parent nights to view films on "Screenagers" (addressing social media and excessive screen time among students), vaping, and a second Screenagers program planned for March.

Staff will be trained in youth mental health first aid and suicidology.

The workload of counselors will be re-evaluated to avoid overload, and grants will be sought to support the district's efforts.

Asked how the district is coping with insufficient staffing in the mental health field, Coates replied that

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