

return on Jan. 4 and the students on Jan. 11.

He said there have been many isolations and quarantines among the secondary schools, and this necessitates training teachers to more effectively educate online. In the second semester, synchronous learning will be required. Students must log in with the class and teachers must have a way to monitor participation.

Chief Academic Officer Lori Benton said that teachers will soon begin discussing grading. Some classes such as physical education and languages pose a problem online.

When urged to reopen sooner in person full time for secondary students, Somers said that we still cannot have more than 15 students at a time in a classroom. Until the virus risk level is reduced from red to orange, no changes can be made. Monument Academy's secondary school cannot be viewed as an example because it is a large building with relatively few students.

The board agreed to seek information from other districts on how they handle the issue.

The board voted to approve its annual financial report. For details on the report, see <https://www.ocn.me/v20n12.htm#d38boe>.

Board Treasurer Ron Schwarz announced that the district's bonds had been refinanced, resulting in a \$1.9 million savings for taxpayers. For details on the bonds, please see <https://www.ocn.me/v20n11.htm#d38>.

Chief Financial Officer Shanna Seelye reported that the student count had grown by 18 between the October count and December. The board had budgeted accurately for this year.

Seelye explained the mill levy proposal for 2021. The board approved a levy of 41 mills. This is a decrease from the previous year due to the increase in value of property in the district.

Strategic plan

Clawson, Benton, and Schwarz reported on efforts to implement Goal 3 of the district strategic plan. This goal involves professional development. It was proposed that this be applied in a variety of ways:

- Develop a culture committed to common core values.
- Require a high level of performance among staff.
- Provide the staff with opportunities for training and sharing of best practices.
- Provide a competitive rate of compensation.

Clawson reminded the board

that the district is one of the highest performing and yet the lowest funded in the state.

Somers commented that it would take several months to develop and implement this plan. Benton said that since 2018, the district has included staff development time in the calendar.

Energy audit

The board approved a contract with Schneider Electric to conduct an investment-grade audit of the district's energy use. Schneider's assignment is to determine savings, cost, scope of work, and funding methods for projects. A timeline will also be developed.

Some proposed proj-

ects include mechanical upgrades, security vestibules, LED lighting, and a standardization of automation between all campuses. To view the contract, please see boarddocs on the district website, lewispalmer.org.

The Lewis-Palmer District 38 Board of Education usually meets at 6 p.m. on the third Monday of the month at its

learning center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Due to COVID restrictions, seating is very limited, but all meetings are live-streamed. The next meeting will be on Jan. 25 due to school closure for Martin Luther King Jr. Day on Jan. 18.

Harriet Halbig can be contacted at harriethalbig@ocn.me.

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