

the district's numbers including salaries, Mill Levy Override (MLO) statistics, and various comparisons with adjoining districts.

The base per pupil revenue for the 2021-22 school year is \$7,725.45. Add to this the mill levy override passed in 1999 and the total becomes \$8,501.45 per pupil.

Lewis-Palmer has a relatively low risk factor (due

to a low number of students qualifying for free/reduced lunches), which could have added to state-provided revenue, but has been unable to pass MLO or bond issues since 1999.

Explaining the budget in detail, Somers said that 78.48% of the general fund budget is devoted to salaries and benefits.

Somers said that many constituents have suggested that cuts be made in other parts of the budget to improve compensation rates. His response is that many other factors, such as food service and transportation, are necessary to the operation of the district.

He said that he hopes in the near future to offer an interactive program on the website which would enable members of the public to try to shift expenditures to add to compensation. Results of this input would be available to administrators.

Somers' main point was that, as the state is unable to provide additional funding, the district depends on the community to see how worthwhile it is to invest in the schools. Therefore, efforts are being made to reach out to the community with information on the district and to conduct a market analysis in the next few months.

When asked how the recent growth of Monument could help with funding, Somers said that the tax base is growing and property values rising, and additional students add to per pupil funding, but additional enrollment also requires hiring additional staff.

**Teacher evaluation update**

Assessment Coordinator Michael Brom and Assistant Superintendent Amber Whetstine reported on the state of teacher evaluations.

Whetstine introduced the subject by referring to Colorado SB 10-191, a law which created a complex method of evaluating teachers 50% on the basis of professional practices (through observation) and 50% based on measures of student learning, primarily state-approved assessments.

Due to the pandemic, there have not been assessments since 2019. As a result, it is impossible to measure growth based on test results in consecutive years. In addition, there have not been district or school performance frameworks created to measure goals and improvements since 2019.

In response to this problem, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) created a list of value statements which could be used to color how measures of student learning (MSLs) could be viewed without assessment data.

When considered by a survey of teachers, it was determined that the priorities should be that teachers should use MSLs to gain insight about their students and inform instruction, growth is more important than achievement, and MSLs should be easy to understand and communicate with teachers.

The proposal for this year is that, rather than giving professional practice and student growth equal weight, 30% will be based on school-wide goals, 20% will be based on student data, and 50% would continue to be based on professional practices.

**MA secondary school update**

Representative Cathy Edwards from Monument Academy reported on the evolution of the academy and its new secondary school.

Monument Academy (MA) was founded in 1986 with a total of 180 students. Today the enrollment has passed 900 with a target population for the secondary school of 400 to 500.

The vision for MA is to provide a character-based education involving classic core classes (otherwise known as common core) and a daily exposure to such classes as band, choir, and the arts. MA is the only district school to offer an orchestra.

At this time, grades 6 through 8 are at the east campus with hopes to add grades 9-12 in the next few years. Earlier grades are housed at the original campus.

A second phase of construction will break ground soon and will open in the fall of 2024. This building will include a competition-size gym and other amenities.

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The Lewis-Palmer D 38 District Accountability Advisory Committee meets five times a year at various locations. The next meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 8 at Prairie Winds Elementary School, 790 E. Kings Deer Point, Monument.

Harriet Halbig may be reached at [harriethalbig@ocn.me](mailto:harriethalbig@ocn.me).

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**June Steele-Meacham**

June 4, 1926-December 14, 2021

Mrs. June Frances Steele-Meacham (Felder), age 95, passed away in the loving company of her son and daughter, her Bridges Hospice Nurse and her caregivers on December 14, 2021. She was currently living in her independent home at Liberty Heights Senior Care Residence, where she had been residing since 2013. June and her husband, Nick, moved to Colorado Springs later in life, but built a vast and loving community of friends amid the retired Air Force community in the area.

June was born on June 4, 1926 to Mildred Frances Felder and George W. Felder Sr. at the Sibley Memorial Hospital in Washington DC. June was a good student and a lively, social young lady. As she was growing up, she loved ice skating, horseback riding, dance, and modeling.

Through friends June met William Nicholas (Nick) Steele, who was working at the Washington Navy Yard until he was old enough to join the Army Air Corps. June married Nick on August 12, 1944 in Baton Rouge where he was in pilot training, preparing for his World War II combat missions. Upon Nick's return, their son, William Nicholas Steele Jr. was born in Washington DC. Later, they welcomed their daughter, Amy Jo (Steele) O'Dair, in Bellevue, Nebraska. June heartily embraced the responsibilities of being a military spouse as the young family began the many moves of Nick's Air Force career, including assignments across the country as well as Morocco and Okinawa.

As June managed their dynamic life together, she also began her enjoyment of fashion and etiquette. Her modeling career blossomed as she helped manage a Professional Model Studio while they were stationed at Offutt AFB in Nebraska. She also furthered the capable golf swing which she had nurtured while they were stationed at Nousseur Air Force Base in Morocco. June's true love of the game made it into a joyful pastime with friends and family for years to come.

As June and Nick's lives brought them to Colorado Springs with Nick's military retirement and career change, they both energetically embraced their empty nest life. June started her own design and decorating



company, June Steele Interiors. At each tour of duty, she had devotedly made each house into a lovely family home, helping her husband and children feel comfortable and grounded in new environments. This wonderful attribute led her to a successful career. Her design skills continued to be in high demand until she retired in her 70's. June and Nick also welcomed many grandchildren during this time and became involved, attentive grandparents. They rarely missed the opportunity to join Amy's family in Colorado Springs for celebrations and for their grandchildren's many important milestones. "Nana June" and "Poppi" living close to Amy's family was a huge blessing and lots of fun for all! However, those involved grandparents also traveled around the country to visit with Nick Jr.'s family; even enjoying a marvelous vacation in Paris with them!

June was preceded in death by Nick Steele, her adoring husband of nearly sixty years, in 2003. She continued an active life with her two children, eight grandchildren, five great-grandchildren and many wonderful fur-children. June Steele married Gerard Meacham, a long-time Air Force friend, in 2005, thus becoming June Steele-Meacham. In 2011, Gerry also passed away.

June's ceremony of life will be held with family in Washington DC where she will be laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery with Nick Steele.