



**Above:** At the June 8 meeting, board President Ryan Graham reported that construction was underway at the Monument Academy (MA) West Campus on the new recirculation road that goes around the school building to divert traffic from Highway 105. Recent rains have slowed the work due to oversaturated soil. Graham asked that MA parents use caution when driving around the school due to the construction traffic. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

values, she said. The board unanimously approved her appointment.

Hoida was sworn in and took her seat alongside other board members. All current board members, along with newly elected board member Matt Ross, will take their oaths of office in July. The board voted for its officers, retaining Graham as board president, Lindsay Clinton as vice president, Emily Belisle as secretary, and Joe Buczkowski as treasurer. Board committee assignments will be decided in July.

**Legislative updates**

Rep. Don Wilson HD-20, the former mayor of Monument, briefed the board on relevant bills from the 2023 legislative session. Wilson serves on the Education Committee in the state Legislature.

The bills he thought would be of interest to the MA board included:

- HB-1009 Secondary School Student Substance Use. This puts the Colorado Depart-

ment of Education (CDE) in charge of how drug use is handled in districts and schools. This bill has been signed into law.

- HB-1291 Procedures for Expulsion Hearing Officers. The state feels there should be uniform guidelines and a set way of handling expulsions. This bill has been signed into law.
- HB-1003 School Mental Health Assessment. This lets the CDE conduct mental health assessments on students in sixth through 12th grade and provide mental health advice. The bill, which exempts home school enrichment students or those who only participate in extracurricular activities, has been signed into law.
- HB-1176 PERA Defined Contribution Plan School Personnel. Wilson was a sponsor of this failed bill which would have allowed

teachers to choose a 401K style defined contribution plan in lieu of the standard defined benefit plan.

- HB-1025 Charter School Application Timelines. Although this doesn't impact MA, it gives new charter schools more time to complete applications. It has been signed into law.
- SB-087 Teacher degree apprenticeship program. Wilson was a sponsor on this bill, which was signed into law, that allows an alternative route to teacher licensure.
- SB-065 Career Development Success Program. This bill, sponsored by Wilson and state Sen. Paul Lundeen SD-9 and signed into law, expands and continues access to trade schools by increasing funding. The bill removes the requirement for the successful completion of apprenticeships and adds the board of cooperative educational services (BOCES) to the program.
- SB-205 Universal High School Scholarship Program. Wilson and Lundeen were sponsors for this bill, which was signed into law, that makes scholar-



**Above and right:** On June 8, the Monument Academy (MA) school board unanimously appointed Karen Hoida to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Danny O'Brien. Hoida, who is a lawyer, will serve the remainder of his term. *Photos by Jackie Burhans.*



ships available to high school students who go into trades rather than a traditional four-year college.

Wilson said he looked forward to the next legislative session, where he would be watchful for bills impacting charter schools, including waivers for requirements for highly qualified teachers.

**Highlights**

Board meeting highlights include:

- Clinton reminded the attendees of the upcoming June 27 meeting on Navigating Gender Issues. It will be held at 6 p.m. on the East Campus and will include board members as well as MA's lawyer Brad Miller. Topics will include Colorado state

laws and the board's proclamation against discrimination protection for LGBTQ students. There will be a question-and-answer session.

- Graham reported that construction is underway on the recirculation road at MA's West Campus that was required due to the Highway 105 widening. Overly saturated soil due to recent rains has slowed the project somewhat. He encouraged parents to be careful due to construction traffic.
- Graham reported that modular construction on the East Campus would be completed in July before the school session begins in August.

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The MA School Board meets at 6 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. The next regular board meeting will be on Thursday, July 13, at 6 p.m. at the East Campus. See more information at see <https://bit.ly/ma-boe>.

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