



Above: At its March 17 board meeting, the D38 board honored Laurie Caves of CarePortal for her extensive service to the Tri-Lakes and Lewis-Palmer communities, including her past role as D38 Colorado Preschool Program coordinator and her current contributions through CarePortal. Director of Communications Amy Matisek highlighted CarePortal's role in fostering shared responsibility for supporting those in need, allowing community members to respond to posted needs. Executive Director of Student Services Rick Frampton praised the compassion of those he works with, recalling his collaboration with Caves on the preschool project. He shared that he had signed up on CarePortal to explore ways he could volunteer and urged others to join at www.careportal.org. From left in front are board member Dr. Patti Shank, board President Tiffney Upchurch, Caves, and Interim Superintendent Amber Whetstine. From left in the back are board members Todd Brown, Ron Schwarz, Kris Norris, and Frampton. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

have not been altered in many years and requested that these be approved as part of the board's consent agenda. In the case of significant alteration, he suggested that more than two readings may be required.

Whetstine commented that the current process for consideration is a policy in itself which would need to be changed.

Financial planning and analysis
Ridgway and Andrews returned to the discussion of capital improvement recommendations, displaying the list of 40 projects completed in the current year. If a project did not use the allotted budget, the leftover amount would be applied to the next project on the list.

Capital is defined as any acquisition of land, improvements, construction of structures or additions to existing structures. Acquisition of school vehicles and lease agreements are included, and a project must have a total cost of at least \$5,000.

Ridgway explained the various funds which are the source of capital investment and explained the two committees involved in deciding which projects to fund. These are the Capital Site Audit Team, which includes individuals from each facility, and the Capital Prioritization Committee, which includes individuals from the administration.

To view this update in detail, please see boarddocs under the

Board of Education tab on the district website, lewispalmer.org. The list of funded projects is included in this PowerPoint.

Ridgway also spoke of district enrollment trends and the proposed change in state rules involving the averaging of student counts. Currently the district can average the student count over the past five years. This may change to four or even three in the near future. D38 is seeing a slight decline in enrollment from year to year, but each individual full-time student equals over \$7,000 in revenue for the district. He said that some districts are suffering a much faster decline.

When asked about funding special education, Ridgway said that the district receives \$2.3 million for this purpose and invests an additional \$6.3 million.

Estimated per pupil funding for the 2025-26 schoolyear is \$7,628 per pupil.

The Lewis-Palmer D 38 Board of Education usually meets at 6 p.m. on the third Monday of the month in its learning center, 146 Jefferson St. in Monument. Due to a change of date approved last November, the April meeting will be on Tuesday, April 22. For information, please contact vwood@lewispalmer.org.

Harriet Halbig may be reached at harriethalbig@ocn.me.

Monument Academy School Board, Feb. 26 and March 13 Board returns focus to gender ideology, hears concerns about discipline enforcement

By Jackie Burhans

The Monument Academy (MA) School Board held a special meeting on Feb. 26 to make another resolution on gender and hear from its consultant on its educational program. At its regular meeting on March 15, the board heard a parent's concern about discipline and approved updated policies.

Board directs review to ferret out gender ideology

Board President Ryan Graham moved to adopt a resolution recognizing only two sexes and rejecting gender ideology. The resolution reiterates that the board supports natural law, moral truth, and protecting the innocence and safety of every

student at MA. It also believes that there is a clear distinction between "sex" and "gender expression" or "gender identity."

The resolution notes that the president of the United States, on Jan. 20, signed an executive order "defending women from gender ideology extremism and restoring biological truth to the federal government" and "Federal funds shall not be used to promote gender ideology" which puts at risk federal funding to this school should policy or practice fail to recognize and honor biological sex. Another executive

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