

Lewis-Palmer School District 38 Board of Education, Nov. 15

## Board signs agreement with Kiwanis; changes high school social studies curriculum

By Harriet Halbig

At the Nov. 15 District 38 Board of Education meeting, Monument Hill Kiwanis Club President Russ Broshous, Kiwanis Service Leadership Program Director Max Williams, and Al Brown, K-Kids Club advisor at Palmer Lake Elementary School, presented a partnership in service agreement between the district and the club.

Broshous said that the board and officers of the Kiwanis Club change annually and there was a concern that the relationship between the two entities could vary as a result. By signing this agreement, the two parties confirm that they will cooperate in bettering the community and serving its youths.

Some of the provisions of the agreement are that Kiwanis will continue to offer its K-Kids and Key Club activities in the schools and the school district will make available its facilities for such events as the Empty Bowl Dinner and the North Pole Craft Fair.

Board President Jeff Ferguson thanked the club for its support of the schools.

### Changes in high school social studies curriculum

Director of Assessment, Gifted Education and Technology Lori Benton reported to the board on changes in the high school social studies curriculum. She said that new academic standards beginning in the 2013-14 school year will add assessment of social studies to its testing.

High school students will be required to study civics, economics, history, and geography. Benton recommended that the present civics, world history, and honors world history classes be archived. In their place will be civics and economics 1 and 2, honors civics and economics, world history, world geography, and advanced geography.

In place of electives, sophomores will be required to take world history and world geography.

Benton said that she has been discussing these changes with teachers since last year.

Due to the expense of geography textbooks and the frequency of changes in the field, the district is exploring online resources for this subject, she said.

### Refinancing of general obligation bonds

Assistant Superintendent Cheryl Wangeman and financial consultant David Bell explained the potential refinancing of some of the remaining 2006 general obligation bonds that were used to purchase land and build Palmer Ridge High School.

Due to new lower interest rates, refunding and refinancing these bonds could save taxpayers about \$900,000, they said. This action would not affect the amount of funds in the general fund but would lower mill levies.

The board voted to have Wangeman and Bell proceed with the refinance.

Wangeman informed the board about a proposed assisted living facility to be located directly east of Grace Best. The building would include 16 units for double occupancy and cover 3.7 acres.

If built, the facility would be required to widen some streets and make improvements to drainage across a corner of district property.

Wangeman said that most residents of the facility would probably not own cars and that such a facility would be a good neighbor to the district.

Superintendent John Borman reported on the Oct. 1 student count. Although it is not yet finalized, it appears that the district has met its budgeted goal and will most likely attain an additional 10 full-time equivalent students due to the larger than expected enrollment in the Home School Academy.

### Mill levy override plan

Community Relations Manager Robin Adair reported on progress in the Mill Levy Override Communications plan. Meetings with school and community groups have been held and training of internal staff has begun so that the district's message will be consistent.

Adair stressed the importance of board member attendance at district athletic and other events. Ferguson requested that she inform the board of any help she may need.

Adair said that materials for distribution will be developed beginning in January. The board will receive training on the use of the materials and will be provided with a supply of brochures to distribute as appropriate.

Also in January, she will begin to monitor the choice enrollment process.

Wangeman reported on the district's Dashboard budget monitor, saying that 449 students are now on free or reduced-price lunches, partially due to the new transportation fees. She said that spending on utilities remains within budget, due to the mild weather, but water spending is over budget.

### Superintendent's update

Borman reported on a number of Veterans Day activities in his update. Among these is the continued Veteran's



Above (L to R): Monument Hill Kiwanis President Russ Broshous and board President Jeff Ferguson shake hands after signing a partnership in service agreement. Photo by Harriet Halbig.

History Project at Lewis-Palmer Middle School, where students are paired with veterans whom they interview. The students produce videos of the interviews, which are sent to the Library of Congress.

He congratulated the Palmer Ridge boys' soccer team and the Lewis-Palmer girls' volleyball team for reaching the state finals and commented on the high quality of the high school musicals offered in November.

Borman reported that the district has been placed on the Advanced Placement Honor Roll for the third year in a row. This honor is awarded to districts with college-level Advanced Placement programs that simultaneously expand class offerings while maintaining high achievement levels. In 2012, 74 percent of those taking the exams scored high enough to earn college credit.

This award placed Lewis-Palmer School district in the top 3 percent of school districts nationwide. It is the only Colorado school district to earn the distinction three years in a row and the only district in El Paso County on the list.

The award is administered by the College Board.

Borman also reported that David Neumann, CEO of Neumann Systems Group, has donated a set of iPads to the second-grade class at Bear Creek Elementary.

Palmer Lake Elementary School Principal Julie Jadowski introduced sixth-grade teacher Jennifer Coopman and several of her students who are involved with green architecture and energy and environment studies. They demonstrated architectural drafting projects involving building houses from shipping containers.

This course is part of the Gateway to Technology Program. This is the first year in which sixth-graders have been offered a class in engineering. The course materials were funded by the school's PTO and a grant from the Tri-Lakes Women's Club.

The board approved a list of routine items such as minutes of previous meetings, personnel matters, and finance and operations matters.

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The Board of Education of the Lewis-Palmer School District meets at 6 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at the district's Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. The next meeting will be held on Dec. 20.

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

District Accountability Advisory Committee, Nov. 13

## Palmer Ridge High School overview

By Harriet Halbig

At the Nov. 13 meeting of the School District 38 District Accountability Advisory Committee, Palmer Ridge High School Principal Gary Gabel guided a tour of his school before presenting information about the school's School Improvement Plan.

Gabel was selected as principal in 2007, before the school had been completed. He was instrumental in its

planning and design and the hiring of its staff.

Due to a failed mill levy override, Gabel said, the school was quite austere at the time of opening. Many parents and other volunteers participated in making the school a more welcoming place by painting murals and installing display cases to show the students' achievements.

One unusual feature of the high school is the neigh-



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