

DAAC urged to inform public about previous budget cuts

By Harriet Halbig
Committee member Karen Shuman suggested at the March 14 meeting that the District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC) allow Building Accountability Committees (BACs) to be informed of all budget cuts

in the district over the past few years. DAAC Chair Steve Braun said that he would supply this information over the next few weeks.

Shuman commented that consistency in messaging is important. She attended some of the meetings about transportation fees and was surprised at how little people know about the extent of budget cuts over the last four years. Little information was provided during BAC meetings. She recommended that representatives from DAAC make use of Fusion sites and school websites to provide necessary information to parents.

Committee member Georgina Gittins, a member of the

transportation fee task force and parent from Bear Creek, suggested posting the information on bulletin boards in the schools.

Legislative update

Board liaison Gail Wilson said that a number of initiatives are under discussion in the state Legislature.

- House Bill 101 and Senate Bill 191 involve methods of evaluating teacher performance on the basis of student achievement.
- There is a discussion to modify the terms of the Public Employee Retirement Association retirement system structure, which costs more each year.
- There is concern that the se-

nior homestead tax exemption may be reinstated, costing the state much revenue. The board would encourage the Committee for Political Achievement to contact both local candidates for the state House regarding this subject.

- HB 1238 proposes that those students not reading at grade level by third grade shall be retained.

Wilson said that Gov. John Hickenlooper will hold a series of panels on legislative matters. Those in El Paso County will be held on April 10 and May 13, and all citizens are invited to apply to appear.

Lewis-Palmer Elementary School improvement plan

Lewis-Palmer Elementary School Principal Lois Skaggs reported on her school's improvement plan. The school's academic achievement exceeds requirements in all 20 targets for academic performance. Growth requirements in reading, math, and writing were met. The school's goal for math proficiency is 90 percent.

Writing proficiency for English Language Learners (ELL), students needing to catch up, and those on free/reduced-cost lunch, meet state requirements.

The challenge focus for the school is academic growth gaps in math for students with disabilities and those on free/reduced-cost lunch. The causes of this deficiency were identified as:

- Not enough repetition to achieve mastery
- Lack of early identification of students who struggle
- Lack of intervention

The school's action plan is to identify struggling students as early as first grade and use Mountain Math as a supplement. Parents will be provided with tools and games to use at home. Math nights will be held for students and parents.

Bear Creek Elementary School improvement plan

Bear Creek Elementary Principal Peggy Parsley presented her school's plan. The school's overall academic achievement rating shows it meets all targets in reading and math.

Bear Creek is a Title 1 targeted assistance school, allowing it to receive some assistance in reading intervention. Reading is a focus at the school because the population of English Language Learners is growing.

There is a growth gap in math due to lack of consistent language and too little time per day spent on the subject.

The action plan for the school consists of:

- Alternative curriculum in math
- Identify struggling students at an earlier age
- Identify students entering

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