

**2014-15 capital reserve budget**

Assistant Superintendent Cheryl Wangeman presented a proposal to devote \$2.1 million to capital needs of the district.

In the area of technology, she said that a list has been made of all existing resources. The district will try to have a single brand of equipment to allow for ease of repair. Quotes on wiring of buildings and staffing levels will be sought.

It was suggested that the district hire a technology director to oversee that aspect of district operations.

Additional proposed expenditures were the purchase of two buses, a backup generator for the district's computer server, purchase of 180 computers (including those needed for testing), and \$430,000 for grounds improvement including fencing, resurfacing and maintenance of AstroTurf areas near Palmer

Ridge High School.

Maintenance expenditures of \$607,000 would include roof repairs, air conditioning backup for Palmer Ridge, and window repairs.

Wangeman said that, to make these expenditures, the district will need to transfer about \$1 million from other funds. Further discussion will be held next month.

**Superintendent search**

Bob Cito of CASB reported

that 34 applications had been received for the position of superintendent. Applications were received from all over the country, although most were from Colorado. They included 10 sitting superintendents, nine assistant superintendents and two principals. All hold at least a master's degree.

Cito said that background checks are now being conducted and interviews will be held on March 8.

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The Board of Education of Lewis-Palmer School District 38 meets at 6 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month in the district's Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. The next meeting will be held on March 20.

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**District Accountability Advisory Committee, Feb. 11**

**Four more Unified Improvement Plans reviewed**

By Harriet Halbig

The School District 38 District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC) reviewed an additional four Unified Improvement Plans for schools at its Feb. 11 meeting.

**Lewis-Palmer Middle School**

Principal Seann O'Connor of Lewis-Palmer Middle School reported that he was pleased with the increased performance at his school. In the area of academic achievement, the school was rated as "exceeds" with a score of 87.5 percent, a considerable improvement from the 2012 rating of 75 percent. The school was rated as "meets" in academic growth and in academic growth gaps.

The score for academic growth gaps increased from 40 percent to the current 71.7 percent, largely due to diligent monitoring of progress, O'Connor said. Areas in which the school did not meet requirements were writing and math among students with disabilities and writing among English language learners (although they did meet state standards). Although goals were not reached, improvement was shown among these groups.

O'Connor said that his teachers have put emphasis on data collection and monitoring in order to identify students needing additional help and interventions to improve their performance. He said that these students are evaluated on a more frequent basis than the general student population to determine the effectiveness of interventions.

Staff has been trained in the multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) so that lessons can be tailored to the needs of the students and excessive out-of-classroom teaching can be avoided. Additional training in the area of differentiation is planned for later this year. It is also possible that classroom assessments may be developed to aid in progress monitoring.

O'Connor said that the school's Academic Excellence periods on Tuesday and Thursday were being used to offer additional help to students struggling with a subject. These periods, previously used as study halls, enable the school to offer additional help without interrupting the flow of the general

classroom. A math teacher in attendance said that the higher-achieving math students are tutoring those who need help, a system that seems to benefit both as the tutor reviews basic concepts while the underachiever improves his or her skills.

Teachers analyze student records before the beginning of the school year to identify those who will need monitoring and assistance.

**Bear Creek Elementary School**

Bear Creek Elementary School Principal Peggy Parsley reported that her school is rated at "meets" for academic achievement, academic growth, and for academic growth gaps.

Parsley said that Bear Creek is one of three Title I schools in the district due to the number of students on free or reduced-price lunch. She said that the focus in the school for the past few years has been on reading and that attention will now be turned toward math. They have found that the Every Day math program does not serve special needs students and does not align well with assessments. In response, they have tried using the Math Triumphs program.

Parsley said that her teachers are focusing on assessments in order to determine where their efforts should be concentrated. The population of special education students is rising within the school, and an effort is being made for general education teachers to work with special education teachers within the classroom. Resource teachers and others have received additional training in math and special education.

Parsley said that she believes the special education count is up because students are identified earlier than in previous years.

The school sponsors a math night in March of each year where parents and students attend and learn math games and other ways to improve performance. As an added advantage, parents learn what is being taught at each grade level. There is also online help available in the areas of math (Moby Math) and reading.

The school has received funding for an instructional coach in the areas of math and response to intervention. This individual will observe support

and instructional strategies used in math instruction.

**Lewis-Palmer Elementary School**

Special Education Parent Liaison Michelle Nay reported on Lewis-Palmer Elementary School's (LPES) plan.

LPES scores as "meets" in academic achievement and academic growth and "approaching" in academic growth gaps. The school's goal is to achieve a "meets" score in growth gaps within three years.

The school has many new teachers and a sizable special education population due in part to the presence of two center-based programs, one for students with significant emotional needs and one for preschoolers who are impacted by autism.

The growth rate for those with significant disabilities and English language learners has been slowing, causing the growth targets to increase. This is cause for concern, Nay said.

Students with disabilities are not making adequate growth in reading, math, and writing, she said. Students needing to catch up also are not making adequate growth in reading, math, and writing, and students on free/reduced-price lunch are not making adequate growth in math.

The MTSS team feels that the emphasis must be placed on students with disabilities and those needing to catch up in reading, writing, and math. Ad-

ditional assessments have been used to confirm this conclusion.

The improvement plan document states that teachers were trained in additional math intervention during the 2012-13 school year and training is needed for new teachers in reading instruction.

The plan also proposed providing teacher training in the analysis of assessment data.

**Monument Academy**

Monument Academy scores as "exceeds" in academic achievement, "meets" in academic growth and "meets" in academic growth gaps. Monument Academy is somewhat different in its reporting because it en-

compasses an elementary and a middle school.

The school's population has grown very quickly. The plan states that this factor plus an increase in the number of students entering the school at the mid-elementary and middle school level cause challenges due to their unfamiliarity with the district's curriculum.

A school parent presented the plan information, saying the primary challenge is with minority students in math. They are not meeting state expectations for growth in math and are struggling with the analysis aspect of math. Assessments will be given to ensure that students are placed



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