

However, a number of teachers are nearing retirement and it is essential that they pass on their practices to their replacements.

Kilmer received some Title I money this year due to an increased population on free/reduced-price lunch. The funds were used to fund interventions.

A number of families have come to Kilmer due to its services for students with significant support needs. Some of these new families have moved to Colorado because of its availability of medical marijuana to control seizure disorders.

Director of Assessment and Gifted Education Lori Benton reported on the Prairie Winds Elementary im-

provement plan. Prairie Winds exceeds requirements in academic achievement, meets requirements in growth and meets in growth gaps. Students needing to catch up in math progressed from "approaching" to "exceeds" in the past year. An emphasis on writing for students with disabilities is a focus for the coming year.

School board liaison John Magerko reported on the Palmer Lake Elementary School plan.

Palmer Lake Elementary improved its scores by 10 percent in all areas, with writing scores now rated as "exceeds."

Academic growth is challenging to track due to the small population of the school, with few groups numbering more than 20 individuals. Teachers track individual students to monitor their progress.


The Multi-Tiered Support System is in use to address behavior as well as test scores. An attempt is being made to alter general classroom teaching to benefit all students.

Interim Superintendent Ted Bauman said that newly selected Superintendent Karen Brofft will be present at the March Board of Education meeting to sign her contract. Her employment will begin on July 1, but Bauman said that he hoped that she could attend at least one DAAC meeting and some end-of-year ceremonies.

Bauman also said that the Palmer Ridge High School basketball team has the highest grade-point average in the state and that teacher Mark Ewig from Palmer Ridge has been selected as teacher of the year in economic education.

The District Accountability Advisory Committee meets at 7 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month. Locations vary. The next meeting will be on April 8 at the district's Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument.

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D-38 Special Education Advisory Committee, March 12 Calming test-taking anxiety

By Nancy Wilkins

While School District 38 students were taking the Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) tests in March, the D-38 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) heard about anxiety problems that students might experience during the testing process.

At SEAC's March 12 meeting, Michael Brom, eighth-grade math teacher at Lewis-Palmer

Middle School, said 40 to 50 percent of all students experience test anxiety at some time. But, he said, a little test anxiety can actually be good because it makes a student more alert and less apathetic. Brom, currently working on his dissertation on test anxiety, also explained how students may experience physiological changes due to test anxiety, and that as the level of anxiety increases, a student's cognitive function can actually decrease.

Brom advised parents to focus on effort rather than test scores. "Give your best effort," Brom advised parents to say. Negative feedback can make test anxiety worse, he said. Students who have high self-confidence in math attribute their success to effort, and students who know they are given enough time to finish a test experience less anxiety than in a timed test.

According to Brom, students also experience more test anxiety in a "high-stakes test" such as the TCAP tests than on classroom tests. "Test scores need to be speaking the truth to us, because we are assigning a label to that student and teacher," he said. When anxiety lowers test scores, then the test may not be an accurate measurement of the student's knowledge.

Brom suggested that teachers let the students know the type of test questions they will receive, such as essay, matching, and multiple choice, and what content will be on the test. If a student knows the test protocols, he or she is less likely to have test anxiety. Brom also said teachers could benefit from seeing the results from TCAP tests sooner, before students have graduated to the next grade.

Brom identifies special needs students as one subgroup likely to experience test anxiety, but says generally all students can experience some form of it. Colorado offers parents the opportunity to advocate for their children



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