



Above: Superintendent Karen Brofft, left, congratulates Palmer Lake Elementary Principal Peggy Griebenow for receiving a National Title I Distinguished School for 2015. *Photo by Harriet Halbig.*

Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA). The district must now list this as a liability.

Pfaff commented that the district has no choice but to contribute to PERA. State statutes require that all districts contribute and the amount can change at any time.

The second point Sonnkalb mentioned was that expenses must be reported when work is done, not when it is billed. This is especially true when work is done at the end of the fiscal year.

Sonnkalb confirmed that the district has a balanced budget and all exceptions simply involved reporting. The bond rating should not be affected.

The board voted to approve the audit and instructed Wangeman to forward it to the Colorado Department of Education (CDE).

Technology update

Director of Technology Liz Walhof reported on new uses of technology in the arts, including the use of touch screens in kindergarten and the introduction of digital portfolios in the middle school so students can share their work and determine with whom it is shared. At the high school level, students can blog privately about art and the blog can be seen only within the classroom.

Regarding data privacy, Walhof reiterated that Wangeman had attended CDE sessions on the subject and found that the district is the only one in the state that vets apps before use.

She also said that there appears not to be concern about student privacy using Google products. There are ways to share information between devices or to opt out of that possibility. Work is being done to omit ads from the screen.

Walhof also said that the recently received library grant is being used to subscribe to Britannica Online.

Assessment update

Director of Assessment and Gifted Education Lori Benton provided results for district Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments. She said that the statute requires standards-based education and now uses the five ratings for performance. Of these, "met" or "exceeds" are most desirable.

She said that students rated "approaching meets" can be moved into the higher category through individual help.

Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, Dec. 1

Board approves 2016 budget

By Jennifer Green-Lanchoney

The 2016 budget and 2016 appropriation were unanimously approved at the Dec. 1 Donald Wescott Fire Protection District Board of Directors meeting. The budget shows a \$200,000 increase for 2016. The district will also be rolling about \$140,000 into the reserve funds from 2014 and 2015. The 2016 budget includes an increase in the training budget and a \$79,000 salary increase.

Wescott salaries will be increased by 7 percent for entry-level firefighters and EMTs. The entry-level salary will increase from \$35,400 to \$37,878. Some positions, like paramedic, will be increased at a higher rate to keep competitive with other organizations. Wescott paramedics are contracted with the station to be put through school and



Above: Members of the full-day and half-day kindergarten classes at Lewis-Palmer Elementary School performed "You're a Grand Old Flag" and led the board in the Pledge of Allegiance. *Photo by Harriet Halbig.*

Students take grade level tests although many are taking more advanced classes, especially those in math.

Scores are compared with those of other districts, including more than 100 students per grade level. Because PARCC involved several states, results are comparable to nationwide assessments. District 38 did well, but participation rates make it hard to determine where it rates.

Benton said that in this district, assessment is not a way to view the end of a process, but a way to check progress.

Curriculum update

Director of Curriculum and Professional Development Sheila Beving reported on the process of selecting new curriculum offerings and that materials must be approved by parents, Building Accountability Advisory Committees and District Accountability Advisory Committee.

She said that her department is now studying the areas of math and social studies particularly. Vertical alignment of math is being conducted at the middle and high school levels.

The current civics test is 10 years old and is being evaluated.

She outlined plans for reviews in the coming year, among them the development of a material adoption process, including how often materials are reviewed, anticipated to be every three to five years.

Magerko requested information on contracts for materials.

Director of Student Services and Personnel Bob Foster presented a first reading of several board policies. Suggestions were made and no action was taken.

Sampayo inquired whether emails between board members were confidential and whether board members must notify the superintendent of plans to visit schools.

The board determined their responsibilities regarding representation on committees and other responsibilities.

Recognitions

Brofft recognized Palmer Lake Elementary School Principal Peggy Griebenow for having her school honored as a National Title I Distinguished School for closing achievement gaps. Only 100 schools nationwide receive this honor.

During board comments, Clawson announced that Paul Lewis of Palmer Ridge was the Gazette's top hockey coach and that the Palmer Ridge cheer squad won the 4A championship.

Citizens' comments

Michael O'Hare, Amy McKenzie, Ivan Anthony, Cheryl

Darnell, and Tammy John shared concerns about Common Core and data privacy. O'Hare also said that the Monument Academy wishes the board to support the construction of a new playing field.

The cost of the field would be about \$100,000.

Tom Chapman praised the D-38 grounds, maintenance, and custodial staffs for their hard work during weather emergencies.

Tony McKenzie addressed the board regarding substitution for P.E. credits. He requested that the topic be on the next meeting agenda. He reminded the board that CDE does not mandate P.E.

The Board of Education of Lewis-Palmer D-38 meets at 6 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month at the district's Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. The next meeting will be on Jan. 21.

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

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