

D38 Board (Cont. from p1)

team or club sports

- Require a class in personal financial literacy

Benton said that 25 credits would continue to be required and that technological capability and financial literacy could be embedded in the curriculum.

The next step will be to evaluate the cost of adding these requirements, staffing

requirements, and the logistics of the PE credit change. The concept of a differentiated diploma will also be discussed, as for those students who are concurrently registered in the district and a college or university at the same time.

Exceptional Student Services update

Director of Exceptional Student Services Mary Anne Fleury reported on develop-

ments in her department upon completion of the December count of those receiving services.

The December count revealed that 531 students are now receiving services. Resources are available in each building and the majority of students are receiving services for a specific learning disability. The number of staff in each building varies due to need.

Some services, such as audiology, are contracted out and there is a consultant for dual diagnosis and augmented communication.

The department was found to have met all state requirements.

Fleury briefly explained plans for professional development. She also outlined the activities of the Special Education Advisory Council.

As a result of Palmer Lake Elementary School receiving a Title I award, the growth gap between students with IEPs and mainstream students has shrunk considerably.

Technology update

Director of Instructional and Informational Technology Liz Walhof reported on activities in her department in devising three- and five-year plans to reduce reliance on state funding to achieve goals. There will be a new survey distributed in March in order to continue to enable data-driven decision-making.

Recent activities have included a Techpalooza training event for staff, Ed-Camps to address specific technology, and classified training in Google apps.

Walhof also mentioned progress on the new district website and teacher web-pages.

Director Sarah Sampayo said that parents have expressed concern about screen time among the students and questioned whether this would add to it. She was concerned that screen time has been shown to increase ADD and ADHD and adds to parental responsibility in having to monitor it. She asked whether there should be a distinction between educational and gaming screen time.

Walhof said that she was glad to hear of the parents' concern. She does not want students always to use technology as the lazy way to find information and says that she wants to tell parents that if they don't wish to have technology used in the home,

they do not have to have it.

Adjustments to 2015-16 district calendar

Director of Personnel and Student Services Bob Foster explained that, due to recent snows, the district will need to add one day each to the middle school and elementary schools' calendars for this year. The board approved the change.

Budget update

Assistant Superintendent Cheryl Wageman gave a brief history of state funding of education and the difficulties caused by the negative factor, resulting from the state's inability to keep up with constitutionally mandated funding for K-12 education. The negative factor is now 12.1 percent.

Wageman pointed out that, as the state's population ages, the portion of the state budget devoted to Medicaid will grow and education will continue to suffer.

Local property taxes have declined, resulting in the state paying a larger portion of education funding. Regardless of the rebound in property values since the recession, TABOR prevents funding from increasing quickly.

Consequently, the district is looking at new ways to provide services without relying entirely on the state.

In a brief review of the 2016-17 budget, Wageman said that she expects to see an increase in student count of 70 to 100 and that the district will be able to maintain certain class sizes by staffing accordingly.

The cost of PERA (Public Employee Retirement Association) is expected to be lower next year.

Wageman said there is expected to be an increase in revenues next year due to an increase in student count and inflation. Expenses are expected to include \$220,000 to cover additional teachers needed to serve the increased number of students.

Board President Mark Pfoff said that although cuts may not be necessary in 2016-17, they are expected to be necessary the following year. He suggested a board work session to discuss the issue.

Sampayo said that there would be increased costs in security due to recent legislation triggered by a school shooting in Littleton last year.

Wageman commented that there are a number of new building developments underway in the area. She said that her de-

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