

offer additional professional development for staff.

- Kilmer Elementary also views reading and math among students with disabilities and those needing to catch up as challenges. They plan to use the

Skills Navigator tool to improve monitoring of performance and to have their instructional coach aid staff in its use.

- Monument Academy reported stable trends in its data. They have changed the fourth-grade curriculum and have shifted from novel to narrative reading. Students are assessed three times a year.
- Lewis-Palmer Elementary reported that students on IEPs made more than a year's growth in a year's time but still are not reaching grade level. Professional development is planned.
- Lewis-Palmer Middle School reported that reading continues to be a challenge, especially in the area of growth gaps (students on free/reduced lunch, minorities, students with disabilities, English Language Learners). Staff is increasing the use of intervention with the Read Plus program, but many parents and students reject offers of intervention due to the stigma.
- Palmer Lake Elementary has the largest population of English Language Learners in the district. Reading comprehension and vocabulary are weaknesses. Staff analyzed the factors that are out of their control. A stress is on creating an engaging learning environment, considering the size and appearance of learning spaces—what is on the walls, is the area organized, etc.
- Palmer Ridge High School had stressed improvement in math for students with disabilities over the previous year, and reading scores slipped slightly. The staff is now using Reading Plus. Principal Gary Ga-

ble thanked the district for instituting late start days in the coming year to provide time for professional development.

- Director of Assessment and Gifted Education Lori Benton reported on the district's Unified Improvement Plan. She said that middle school reading was the biggest challenge, and the target for improvement was met. All students are now assessed twice a year in reading and math. High school freshmen were assessed for the first time last year. Reading in grades four through eight remains a weakness. There is a new tool called a skills navigator built into the assessment that points out weaknesses so they can be addressed. There is now a segment of the UIP that addresses exclusively gifted education.

Budget overview

Assistant Superintendent Cheryl Wangeman presented an overview of the district's 2016-17 budget. Wangeman explained that a function of DAAC is to review and comment on the budget before it is presented to the Board of Education.

State funding continues to be an issue. Although K-12 enrollment continues to rise, TABOR limits funding. It is projected that the schools will reach base funding by 2020, which would be a decrease of \$600 per pupil from current funding. While D-38 is among the lowest funded districts in the state, it can count on increased enrollment to help with the shortage.

It is estimated that the district enrollment will increase by 70 to 100 in the coming year based on meetings with local developers. There is also hope for an increase in income from specific ownership taxes on cars and boat sales.

Regarding expenditures, Wangeman will request the purchase of three new buses in the coming year. Due to lower fuel costs, now is also a good time to do asphalt work. The district also wants to replace many of the 8-year-old computers.

Also forecast are maintenance projects including removal of asbestos from Palmer Lake Elementary and repair of siding at Kilmer Elementary. The district will apply for grants to help fund these projects. Purchase of three tractors for schools

that have none would expedite reopening of schools after snow closures, Wangeman said.

Board of Education and legislative update

Board Liaison John Magerko reported that recent legislation proposing that ninth-graders take the civics portion of the federal government exam taken by immigrants to qualify for citizenship did not pass.

Magerko reported that negotiations began last October for a new five-year contract between District 38 and Monument Academy. A draft has been generated and attorneys for both parties continue to meet.

Regarding a memo from the Monument Academy board requesting part of the 1999 mill levy override (MLO) funds, Magerko said that the document is deceptive because it fails to mention that contracts were renewed in 2001, 2006, and 2011 without mention of the MLO funding.

The academy put its own MLOs on the ballot in 2004, 2006, and 2007, and all failed to pass. In 2013, the academy and the district combined forces to pass an MLO that failed.

Magerko concluded that the academy board has come to agreements on how the academy and the district would operate with each other. On each renewal of the contract, the academy based its decision on what the district and the state were offering in the form of waivers and funding such as the facility funding only available to charter schools.

Members of the district board in 1999 and members of a committee that developed the MLO understood that the proceeds of the ballot initiative would only benefit traditional schools. Magerko said that his preference would be for the district and the academy to jointly propose a new MLO from which both would benefit.

The Lewis-Palmer D-38 District Accountability Advisory Committee meets five times a year on the second Tuesday of the month. The April 12 meeting was the last of the 2015-16 school year.

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Monument Academy School Board, April 14

Board plans interim 3% teacher raise while hoping MLO money yields 25% increase

By Jackie Burhans

The Monument Academy (MA) school board met on April 14 to discuss its Uniform Improvement Plan (UIP), update progress on the board election, and approve an interim 2016-17 budget after a long discussion on potential salary increases.

School budget discussion on salary increases

The board engaged in a lengthy discussion on whether it would be possible to approve a small (1 to 3 percent) salary increase for teachers only now, while hoping to approve a larger 25 percent increase should the school be successful in its bid for money from the 1999 mill levy override (MLO). The discussion ranged from showing current commitment to teachers for retention purposes, to whether paraprofessionals and other staff should be included, to offering a bonus instead of a salary increase while waiting for a resolution on the MLO issue.

Executive Director Don Griffin noted that there was a deadline to submit an approved budget to the district. Principal Lis Richard noted that expectations were set with the teachers that a contract would be extended in May and a second contract would be forthcoming in June with a minimum raise of 3 percent based on an expected increase in per pupil revenue (PPR) from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). The raise could be higher depending on the outcome of the MLO decision. The board noted that if things fall through with respect to the MLO in the near term, there were other avenues to pursue but that those would take longer.

A motion was made to extend an offer now for a 3 percent raise to all teachers and commit to coming back and looking at including the rest of the school and increasing the raise after the MLO decision. No one seconded the motion and it was not voted upon. A new motion was made to pass the preliminary 2016-17 budget,



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