

School and Lewis-Palmer Elementary School, and windows and doors at the middle school, Lewis-Palmer Elementary and Kilmer Elementary. The turf at the district stadium needs replacement, and maintenance of dampers, bathrooms, HVAC controls, roof maintenance, and buses is also needed. Door locks at several schools are not up to fire codes. The committee approved the budget for submission to the board.

The District Accountability Advisory Committee for Lewis-Palmer District 38 meets five times per year. Locations vary. This was the final meeting of the 2016-17 school year.

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Monument Academy School Board, April 13

Board hears improvement plan, approves budget

By Jackie Burhans
The Monument Academy (MA) School Board met on April 13 to hear about the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP), to get updated on the progress of bringing the new principal on board, and to vote on the budget. Board member Scott Saunders was absent and Julie Galusky was late due to traffic. Because the board did not have a quorum until Galusky arrived, members decided to cover other matters on the agenda and wait until she arrived to take any votes.

Unified Improvement Plan
According to outgoing Principal

Lis Richard, the UIP was presented to the District Accountability Committee and is available on the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) website at <http://bit.ly/ma-uip-1516>. The report online at CDE is based on the state PARCC test; only about 30 percent of MA students take the test. Richard noted that MA builds its own report based on NWEA testing, which has a higher participation rate. MA did get noted for “low participation” along with other D38 schools that did not have 95 percent of the students participating.

In the UIP, MA identified that its top performance challenge

is that the number of proficient and advanced students in reading in 2015 in all grades showed a drop in proficiency, with grade six being most significant. The root cause is that middle school students don’t meet local expectations for reading because there is not a continuum of reading curriculum that consistently focuses the students on reading comprehension to enable them to prepare for high school. MA’s improvement strategy includes getting a concentrated cross-curricular effort by teachers to focus on comprehension skills, providing training to teachers focusing on develop-

ing these skills in middle school students, and purchasing a reading curriculum for lower-performing readers to target the intervention for those who are struggling.

The next identified performance challenge showed a continued decrease in the percentage of fifth-grade students testing greater than the 50th percentile of the national average in math. In reviewing enrollment, MA noted a significant influx in fifth-graders over the past five years. New students come in at fifth grade, not knowing the curriculum of basic math. MA will implement a review program for new students coming

into the school to introduce them to the Saxon Math program, review basic math facts, and take a placement test.

New principal transition
Outgoing Principal Lis Richard reported that newly hired Principal Elizabeth Davis is spending time in the office, and that is going well. They are spending time doing a transfer of knowledge; Richard will start to phase away and let Davis take the reins, and Richard feels the school has made a good decision. Board member Dunston said he hoped that Davis will be able to see how Richard handles some of the special events. Davis comes to Monument Academy from a charter school in Castle Rock.


Budget passes
Once board member Galusky arrived, the MA board quickly approved the 2017-18 budget in time for the April 15 deadline to submit it to the district. Treasurer Patrick Hall reported that the budget shows a net income of \$80,286 and will be trued up on Oct. 1 when the per pupil revenue count is available. Revenue is based on a preliminary per pupil funding for 919 students. There were no questions or comments ahead of the unanimous vote to approve the budget.

Other highlights

- Grandparents’ day on April 28 drew over 400 grandparents from 19 states.
- There are two confirmed candidates for the school board election.
- The Highway 105 meeting included the county director of public works, the chief county engineer, and representatives from the next-door Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, along with MA Director Don Griffin. Griffin said he hopes officials will save the left-turn lane into the property from Highway 105, although the county plans to eliminate the left turn going east out of the property. They will also add a traffic circle by the bank on Knollwood where the parents come to help improve the flow. Work will start in 2018, hopefully in the summer.
- Since the cost of preschool substitutes exceeded the budgeted amount, the revised preschool appropriation was unanimously approved.


The next meeting will be on Thursday, May 18 at the Monument Academy library at 1150 Village Ridge Point. The Monument Academy usually meets at 6 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. Information on the MA School Board, including schedule, minutes, committee and finances can be found at <http://www.monumentacademy.net/school-board>. Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

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Our staff are highly qualified, loving, and held accountable. MA’s teachers are the very best there are.

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