



Above: The Lewis-Palmer School District D38 Board of Education recognized numerous students and partner organizations at its Oct. 18 meeting. Above are some of those recognized for their contributions and accomplishments. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

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Chief Financial Officer Kite Overton explained the process of determining school funding in the state. Complex formulas involving the number of at-risk individuals, income in the community, and other factors are examined. D38 is among the lowest funded in the state with regard to per pupil funding.

Somers said the district will offer more opportunity for community engagement to address the problem of noncompetitive compensation rates. We need to determine the community's willingness to invest in education, he said.

The additional revenue due to increased enrollment may offer the opportunity for a one-time compensation bonus.

Recognitions

The board recognized Laura Lambrech, a Palmer Ridge High School senior who won the Denver Young Artists Orchestra Wind Concerto competition. Lambrech is an oboist and clarinetist and thanked the district's music program for an inspiring education.

Pastor Brian Petak of Ascent Church was recognized for his sponsorship of the 5K Run for Hope to provide funding for teen suicide prevention. The event earned \$52,000 this year and applications are available to provide \$3,000 to each of 17 schools.

President Rich Hicks of the Monument Hill Kiwanis Club was recognized for that organization's support through such fundraisers as the Empty Bowls Dinner, the annual peach sale, and the North Pole craft fair. The goal of Kiwanis is to make a difference for youths by sponsoring clubs at various age levels to teach leadership in serving the community. Kiwanis raise about \$120,000 per year in support of their activities.

Executive Director Haley Chapin of Tri-Lakes Cares (TLC) was recognized for her organization's

support of the community. Chapin offered a presentation to outline the ways in which TLC offered housing assistance, snack packs for students, medical programs, and transportation support.

Chapin said that TLC focuses on those who make half the median income and are uninsured or underinsured for medical care.

The organization spent three times its average amount to support families during the pandemic.

When asked what they needed most, Chapin listed toothbrushes, toothpaste, paper products, feminine supplies, and canned protein such as chicken or tuna are needed.

ESSER III funding

Overton presented a preliminary budget for application of \$2.75 million (\$43,831 to Monument Academy) in funding from the Elementary and Secondary School Relief fund.

These funds must be applied to address the effects of the COVID pandemic, such as providing mental health services, upgrades in physical facilities, and technology to make possible virtual learning.

The budget includes funding for training in social-emotional learning, HVAC upgrades, chrome books, support for the visually impaired, a nurse/COVID coordinator, grant administration, and communication services for stakeholders.

The Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education meets at 6 p.m. on the third Monday of each month at the district's learning center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. The next meeting will be on Nov. 15. Meetings are also livestreamed on the district's YouTube channel.

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Lewis-Palmer D38 District Accountability Advisory Committee, Oct. 12

Discussion of Strategic Plan priority 1; review of bylaws

By Harriet Halbig

The D38 District Accountability Advisory Committee had its first meeting of the year on Oct. 12. The committee voted to approve its bylaws as written and received a report from Superintendent KC Somers regarding the strategic plan, which is the basis for decisions in many aspects of district administration. Superintendent update

Somers reported that the strategic plan was shared throughout the district in the opening weeks of the year. The priorities for this school year are listening to student voices, developing teacher leadership, and using the strategic plan to bring the districts goals to life.

The first priority involves the safety and security of students and provision of a welcoming environment. In addition to physical changes to security such as the addition of security vestibules, there will be an effort to support the whole student in their academics, mental wellness, and planning for the future.

Priority 2 involves delivering a world-class education to district students. This may be achieved through centralizing the preschool system, offering alternative secondary pathways toward career and college, and providing professional development so that staff can support one another to achieve these goals.

Priority 3 involves supporting the staff and committing to their growth through professional development, recognition, and appreciation.

Priority 4 involves effective asset management and efficient use of resources. This goal also involves leveraging available resources and seeking input from stakeholders.

Priority 5 addresses communications with the community by developing relationships with individuals, organizations, and individuals in support of the strategic plan.

Somers encouraged schools to base their individual decisions and actions on this plan, as well.

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