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Children's Hospital Colorado

The MA School Board meets at 6 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. The next regular board meeting will be on Thursday, July 14, at 6 p.m. on the East Campus. See more information at https://bit.ly/ma-boe. Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

### **D38 BOE** (Cont. from 1)

board Secretary Tiffiney Upchurch summarized several important pieces of legislation from this year's session. Among these are:

- Bill 1295, which creates a state Department of Early Childhood Education that would involve the creation of Local Coordinating Organizations to administer tuition-free preschool 10 hours a week at schools, churches, community centers, and licensed home-based childcare centers.
- Bill 2023 will update the method of evaluating teacher performance. In the past few years, 50% of the scoring has been based on student performance on assessments. This will change to 30%, with the remainder to include evaluation of teacher quality of performance.
- HB 22-1220 creates a student stipend program that offers financial help to students seeking a degree in education. The stipend would be \$11,000 for participation in a 16-week internship and \$22,000 for a 32-week internship. Assistance also will be offered to pay fees for licensure exams.
- SB 22-127 provides funding for special education services and will increase from \$1,250 to \$1,750 per pupil. In District 38, state-provided funding represents a small percentage of the funding dedicated to this purpose.
- HB 22-1260 provides access to medically necessary services in the schools. In addition to providing access to medical professionals, such professionals may be allowed to observe their patients in a classroom setting to determine effectiveness of treatment.
- HB 22-1358, Clean Water in Schools, involves the requirement that all drinking water sources in schools be tested to determine lead content. Pre-K to grade 5 schools must test before May 2023, and higher-grade schools must test before November 2024. In later discussion, the board agreed to seek evidence of previous testing. It was agreed that this testing evaluates the pipes through which the water is delivered rather than the original source.
- HB 22-1390, the School Finance Act, will add to school funding, buying down the Budget Stabili-

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Above: At its June 20 regular board meeting, the Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education recognized Christy Milks for her service as co-chair. From left, board Treasurer Ron Schwarz, Christy Milks, board members Tiffiney Upchurch and Matt Clawson, and Assistant Superintendent Amber Whetstine. Photo by Jackie Burhans.

zation Factor to 40% of its original amount. While this will help a great deal, board Treasurer Ron Schwarz encouraged the public to support the district in lobbying for the release of the remaining funds. This will not improve the district's standing in compensation relative to neighboring districts because the present system will be applied in distributing the funds.

Another bill makes it possible for recipients of PERA (Public Education Retirement Association) pensions to work as substitute teachers in areas where there is a need. Recipients of PERA pensions may work full time in rural districts where there is a need without a reduction of their income.

Board Secretary Upchurch added a few items to this list:

- There is an \$8 million grant to support school secu-
- SB 22-171 offered protection of personal information for school employees.
- SB 22-238 lowers the assessment of non-residential property to 27.9% from 29% and the assessment of residential property to 6.75%

To see a detailed list of legislation, please refer to boarddocs on the district website. (go.boarddocs.com/co/ lewispalmer/Board.nsf.vpublic).

In a related subject, James Howald, in his public comment, called attention to initiative 63, a proposal which would add \$900 million annually to the state education budget. Howald stressed that this is a grassroots initiative which would require 125,000 signatures to appear on the ballot. He requested that the board pass a resolution in support of the initiative.

#### Superintendent's update

In his superintendent's update, Somers reported that the Schneider Electric energy conservation project should be complete by the end of summer. Work on the geothermal project at Palmer Ridge High School also continues. Summer school was a success, involving 175 students in elementary school and 61 at the middle school level. Preparations are being made for a Patriot Prep boot camp in August for sixth- and eighth-graders.

There were 94 students at the high school level attending the summer session online.

Special education services are offered throughout the summer to retain achievement levels.

The hiring campaign involved the use of print ads. Most of the teacher positions have been filled, but there remain openings in more specialized areas. A number



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