

Monument Academy School Board, Nov. 9

Board hears first read of gender transition policy, plans to address East Campus budget issues

By Jackie Burhans
The Monument Academy (MA) School Board met on Nov. 9 to hear a first reading of a new gender transition policy, to discuss how to address East Campus budget issues, and to hear committee reports.

Gender transition policies

The MA board heard a first read from the governance committee on a JRT Gender Transition and Parental Rights Policy to codify its June 27 resolution on gender issues and student protection. See www.ocn.me/v23n8.htm/ma0627. The resolution:

- Declared that anti-discrimination state laws SB08-200 and HB21-1108 exposed students to gender dysphoria.
- Encouraged students to set boundaries and report boundary violations to staff.
- Said MA would violate state and federal anti-discrimination laws.
- Mandated that minor students who wish to express a different gender be affirmed by their parents or guardians, update all related school records, and follow their expressed gender dress code.
- Directed administration to notify the community that a student whose expressed gender differed from their biological gender might be in bathrooms or locker rooms.
- Advised parents to consult with their attorney about bringing legal action against the parents of children they felt violated their child's Fourth Amendment right to privacy.

- Affirmed that political leaders have a moral obligation to challenge laws.
- Appealed to the MA community to contact their representatives.

The policy, developed by board Treasurer Joe Buczkowski and board Director Karen Hoida and approved by legal counsel, is called JRT Gender Transition and Parental Rights Policy. Its purpose is to provide a procedure by which a student can transition to a different gender with respect to school records, policies, and facilities. The draft states that MA supports the rights of students to transition and the rights of parents to oversee the care, custody, and control of their minor children. The policy defines various terms and provides a background focusing on the fourth and fifth bullet points above.

The procedures include the staff's initial contact with a student who wishes to transition, referral and follow-up by the school principal with the students and their parents, required record changes, and community notification.

Buczkowski said that the committee received input from the administration and the principals and wanted to address the concerns of all involved, so it took a few months to develop. Board President Ryan Graham asked for advice on soliciting community input. MA's lawyer, Brad Miller, advised that there is an exception to the Open Records Act that would let them keep this as a private draft. Hoida noted that it was public now since they read it aloud and asked about the process



Above: At Monument Academy's Nov. 9 board meeting, board Vice President Lindsay Clinton, right, spotlighted arts teacher Deborah Hulting for her warmth and patience with artists of all ages. Photo by Natalie Barszcz. Caption by Jackie Burhans.



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