

# BOARD BRIEFS

October 11, 2021

## Statements from the Audience

\*\*Jesse Tanksley, parent of four students in the Buhler district, addressed the board concerning the current mask policy at Prairie Hills Middle School. He is asking the board to change the covid policies that we are currently using since these policies are based solely on recommendations from the CDC, KDHE and Reno County Health Department and not mandates. He indicates that statistics show that covid is not dangerous to school age children. He would like the board to consider the fact that all adults and most children at PHMS have the choice to get the vaccine and/or wear their own masks to protect themselves.

\*\*Daniel Friessen, Reno County Commissioner and parent of Buhler students, addressed the board regarding Covid policies. He said that the county is in full support of the district and the decisions that the board makes in regards to Covid. As a parent, he agrees that the risk to school age children is not high and he does not support the use of masks. He encouraged the board to look at the data and statistics for themselves. He acknowledged that the board is in a tough position and he appreciates the work that they are doing.

## Approval of Minutes

As recommended the board approved the minutes of the regular meeting on September 13, 2021.

## Approval of Building Financials

As recommended the board approved the financial reports from each building.

## Resignation of Classified Staff

As recommended the board accepted the resignation of the following classified staff:

- i) Micah Alvarez, Cares Club aid at PCE
- ii) Steven Holmes, custodian at BHS

## Employment of Classified Staff

As recommended the board approved the employment of the following classified staff:

- i) Corion Johnson, District Health aide
- ii) Anna Harper, ala carte food service at BHS
- iii) Coby Wiehl, custodial aide at BHS

### Employment of Supplemental Staff

As recommended the board approved the employment of Katy Spencer, assistant track and field coach at PHMS.

### Out of State Travel

As recommended the Board approved the following out of state travel requests:

- i) Buhler High School FFA to the 2021 National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, IN October 26-30, 2021.
- ii) Buhler High School baseball coaches to the American Baseball Coaches Association National Convention in Chicago, IL January 6-9, 2022.

### Gifts and Grants

As recommended the board accepted the following gifts:

- i) \$432 to BGS from Commerce Bank to pay for t-shirts for the preschool class.
- ii) \$500 to BGS from Pastors in Partnership to pay for water bottles for each student.
- iii) \$577.24 to BGS from Buhler Kiwanis to be used for books and STEAM supplies.

### Handbook Updates

As recommended the board approved the updates to the following handbooks:

- i) Licensed Staff Handbook
- ii) Classified Staff Handbook
- iii) Administrative Staff Handbook

### Executive Session - Personnel

The board met in executive session for two separate personnel issues.

### Fair Market Lease Purchase

As recommended the Board approved the fair market lease purchase of a Buick Envision. This will be funded for three years from the KDHE grant and will be used to transport covid tests to Wichita and intradistrict tests as needed.

### Landscaping at Crusader Stadium

Mr. Hecox shared some ideas on landscaping at the north end of Crusader Stadium. The City has asked the district to address the corrosion of the soil into the street. Mr. Hecox has received suggestions from vendors but the board is not ready to make a decision yet.

### HVAC Updates

Three units at Union Valley are being replaced this week. The district has seen a \$36000 increase in maintenance contracted services when compared to this time last year. This is due in large part to the ongoing HVAC issues across the district. The DCS

capital expenditure plan will give us a better understanding of which units need to be replaced versus continuing to repair.

### Technology Proposal - Cloud Services

Laura Reed, Director of Technology shared the proposal to move some of our current servers to a virtual cloud server. As recommended the board approved the proposal to use Peak UpTime to manage these servers on their Cloud services.

### Solar Panel Update

Board President, Laura Meyer Dick, shared the feasibility study results from King Solar. PHMS appears to be the most advantageous for a solar system. The Board will continue to research the pros and cons of moving forward with this project.

### Executive Session - Real Estate

The board met in executive session to discuss real estate.

### Facility Assessment Update

Mrs. Couchman shared the preliminary report from the DCS facility assessment. She received the report today and will be meeting with building administrators, Mr. Hecox and Steve Armbrust to make a priority list for each building. This initial report does not include any of the athletic facilities. The next few board meetings will be held at different schools so that the Board can tour those buildings and see the needs.

### Professional Development Council Report

As recommended the board approved PD points for Kayla Engel, Adam Whitney, Shannon Vieyra, Jennifer Keller, Brett Smith, Jason Kohls, and Dawn Willcox, as well as points for those who reflected on the professional development days at the beginning of the school year.

### eSports Proposal

As recommended the board approved the proposal to add eSports as an extracurricular activity at BHS.

### FastBridge Data

Kyle McClure shared reports from the first round of FastBridge testing. The FastBridge test is the new reading, math and social and emotional learning screener. Using this data, counselors and teachers will begin to do small group work to triage some of the areas that our students are struggling.

### Comments

- Mr. Hecox thanked the City of Hutchinson for their teamwork in moving forward with the overflow parking at Plum Creek Elementary. They are continuing to work together on the request for a crosswalk light as well.

- The fiscal audit for the previous year will begin on November 2. Representatives from Busby, Ford and Reimer, LLC will be here to begin that work.
- A district car was stolen from the Union Valley parking lot last month. The car was located in good condition in Concordia, Kansas. The keys were the only thing missing. It has now been returned.
- Mr. Hecox and Donna Kleinschmidt attended the SOAR job fair at the Hutch Mall last week.
- PCE is down to just one custodian. We are trying to think outside the box to fill in the gaps.
- Mrs. Couchman has been in communication with the County about the intersection at 43rd Street bridge and Old K-61 Highway. There is a blind spot when traveling from the north and turning onto 43rd Street which raises safety concerns. The City of Hutch has moved the stop bar forward to improve visibility and will continue to monitor the intersection.
- Buhler High School Marching Band has been doing well in their first two competitions. They were first place in Emporia and third place in Olathe. Their performances at the football games have been incredible!
- The SO-66 report has been filed. This report determines our state and federal funding. Our in-person enrollment looks to be down about 6 students but this does not include our virtual enrollment numbers. We are servicing more students this year than last.
- Mrs. Couchman was chosen to participate in BOLD through KASB. This is a Business Operations Leadership Development group.
- Mrs. Couchman gave an update on Covid in the district. We have received our PCR testing machines which will reduce the amount of trips taken to Wichita to deliver tests. We are up to 23 active positive cases at Prairie Hills. We administered 487 rapid tests last week in the district, with only three positives coming from the 86 close contacts in the Stay to Learn program. The masks are helping to keep the number of close contacts down since we can use a three foot radius instead of six if all parties are masked.
- Board member Tim Lackey asked if the district could change our close contact tracing to three foot instead of six foot even without masks. This would have to be approved by the Reno County Health Department in order to remain compliant with our KDHE grant.
- Laura Meyer Dick is stepping down as the President of the Buhler Education Foundation. Lacey Mills is taking that position and will do a great job. Many thanks to Laura for her years of dedication and her contributions to the Foundation. There are many new members and the Foundation is in good hands.

### NARCAN Policy

As recommended the board approved the NARCAN policy. This will allow those trained to administer Narcan to those who are experiencing a possible drug overdose.

### Proposed Student Handbook Amendment

As recommended the board approved the amendment to all student handbooks to support the health and safety of students and staff. This policy gives options to students who do not comply with any mask mandate that is imposed by district administration and the Board of Education for a specific building or the district at-large.

### Executive Session - Personnel

The board met in executive session to discuss two personnel issues.

### Action from Executive Session - Personnel

As recommended the board approved a \$3000 stipend to Steve Armbrust for driving a bus which is outside of his normal duties assigned.

The next regular board meeting will be Monday, November 8, 2021.