

Dear Parents and Guardians

WELCOME TO THE BOE RECAP

The Elizabeth School Board of Education normally meets twice month. After each meeting, I will be sending to Parents and Guardians the BOE Recap, which will provide you the highlights of the meeting. Because this is the first **BOE Recap** it does include information from the last two meetings.

October 8 meeting.

Budget Work Session

Director of Finance, Ron Patera lead a budget workshop. Ron explained specific requirements by the C.R.S. including budget submittals, notice of publication, and the use of accounting codes. Every school district has to use a system that follows financial policy and procedures, and that records financial transactions. The school principals and other department heads are in constant contact with Ron regarding the budget. The district has a tracking system and processes for ongoing checks and balances. As you know, the ongoing reduction of funds for our district is challenging. We have learned to stretch a dollar but the task is becoming more and more difficult. Everyone across the district is making conscientious decisions when it comes to spending.

Discipline Philosophy

Principals from the five district schools attended the BOE meeting and gave a brief overview of the discipline philosophy at each school. There were **four consistent themes** for every school:

- **Behavior expectations** are communicated to the students and positive behaviors are reinforced through acknowledgement,
- Each situation is treated as a **learning opportunity** for the student,
- Building **relationships** with students and establishing trust is always a priority,
- A coherent, yet **individual** approach is used, recognizing that students are unique and learn in different ways.

If you have questions on the behavior expectations or the discipline philosophy, we encourage you to have discussions with the particular school your child attends.

BOE Involvement

The members of the board are active in our schools and in the community. For example, Director Debbie Spenceley attended the band competition held at the middle and high school. Director Dee Lindsey assisted at EMS career day by demonstrating to students the equipment used by firemen and emergency medical technicians. Director Chip Swan recently attended the Cardinal Booster Club meeting where the High School Barn Dance and the Tailgate Party was discussed. **Cardinal Homecoming Week** is a long-standing tradition with events and

celebrations taking place for students in all grade levels. You can visit the [EHS website](#) for the listing of activities the student council has planned.

Board members and the superintendent attended the **Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB)** region meeting. They attended workshops on how to become active in state education policy and how to engage elected officials in discussions about the needs of Elizabeth public schools in Colorado. Director Cindy Miller will be representing Elizabeth Schools at the upcoming CASB Legislative and Delegate Assembly.

President Chuck Williams announced the Board of Education would have a booth at the upcoming community event - The Harvest Festival and Trick or Treat Street.

The **Infrastructure Assessment Committee** will have their launch meeting on October 15 to begin work on the project. The [IAC page](#) provides the list of committee members, meeting notices, and ongoing updates.

Superintendent Report

October 1 is when we officially count enrollment. The numbers are still preliminary but **enrollment is up by 52 students** over last year, with EHS showing the biggest increase. This count includes our preschoolers and Legacy Schools. This is very encouraging and reflects our continuous improvement in areas such as quality teachers, student learning, and providing environments where all learners are safe and respected.

Colorado Department of Education (CDE) **selected the Elizabeth School District** to be in a mini-study for the new teacher evaluation rubric. In addition, the district has a committee in place to support a pilot program for this school year, using the new rubric. The pilot provides the opportunity for our teachers and principals to learn about the new evaluation rubric and process prior to implementation next school year.

The **district calendar** committee is working on the calendar for the school year 2013-2014. All parents and guardians will receive a draft of the calendar and the opportunity to provide input to the committee. Having the calendar available far in advance of the next school year we hope will help with your family planning.

Kellie Lanphere, our Director of Human Resources resigned in late August to relocate in Breckenridge. The **Director of HR position** is open and will remain open until filled. We are looking for an individual who recognizes the value and the contribution HR can make in a high performing educational environment. We have received approximately 25 applications, and plan to start the interviewing process within the next couple of weeks.

The Grant Program is Back

Years ago the Elizabeth Education Foundation was gifted with money and were able to put money back into the schools through grants. With the monies so tight the foundation has been looking for something that will help bring the grant program back. Mary Smith announced that

EEF launched a fundraiser the “**Reloadable Safeway Gift Card**”. When people use their gift card, the EEF receives 3-5% of the purchases. This money will go back to the schools in the form of grants. You can learn more about the, EEF Safeway Card, how easy it is to use and how to get yours by visiting the [EEF website](#).

September 24 meeting.

EMS

Steve Thiessen, principal at the Elizabeth Middle School, announced a new program called Club 303. This is a once a month outing available to all EMS students, parents/guardians. The outing is an extended learning experience away from the campus on a Saturday. The first outing was September 22 at the high ropes course at Ponderosa Camp.

Partnership

The **Elbert County Early Childhood Council** is one of our partners that provide support to our district families. Cathryn Reiber, from Elbert County Early Childhood Council, explained their focus on providing information and connection to services to families with children birth to age eight. Some of the services mentioned are parenting classes, oral health services for early childhood, and professional development for adults who work with young children. Parents with young children, from birth to age eight, are encouraged to visit the [council's website](#).

Another one of our partners is **Connections for Families**. Heather Harcourt from the organization shared the Heads Up Colorado program that provides youth in the community with an adult mentor. The program has about 17 youth signed up, and some are still in need of a mentor. Those interested in the program can contact the program coordinator, Jasmine Rinehart at 303-284-2853, or [HeadsUpColorado](#)

Standards Based Grading

A new **Standards-Based Grading System** is now being implemented at the elementary schools. Director of Learning Services, Andrea Duran gave an overview of the new system in which students will be graded based on their knowledge of a standard. Once that mastery is demonstrated they will move on to the next learning target. With the new system teachers, parents and students are made aware of progress toward the standards and can work together to enhance student's achievement. The upcoming parent teacher conferences are a great opportunity for parents to learn more about the new system.

District Accountability Committee (DAC)

As you may know, DAC conducts a **parent survey** in the spring of every school year. This provides an opportunity for parents to share constructive feedback to the schools and to the district. DAC reviews the surveys and shares with the board their top recommendations for the schools and district. All principals have their school specific survey results and are actively

working on their action plans to address the feedback. The principals and superintendent will share the action plans at an upcoming board meeting. In addition, DAC has a process in place to communicate to parents on the actions taken by the schools and the district.

The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 22. The agenda will be posted on the website the Friday before the meeting.

I encourage your feedback not only on the BOE Recap but on the various communications from the District Office. We are always looking for ways to improve.

Kind Regards,
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