

4/19/2013

TO: Parents and Guardians

The Board of Education held their last meeting on April 8, 2013. Here are the highlights:

Singing Hills Elementary School Showcase

SHE Principal Regina Montera shared the reward system in place to recognize Pawsitive Behavior.

P - Positive Attitude

A - Act Responsibly

W - Willing to Learn

S - Safe Choices.

Regarding **school safety** Ms. Montera explained that all staff members are trained in the Standard Response Protocol and emergency plans are in place and practiced regularly. SHE has a visitor check in and check out process and cameras are in place and monitored. SHE staff has a strong partnership with the Elbert County Sheriff Office and Elizabeth Fire Department.

Information related to **student achievement** was also presented. SHE students have taken the fall and winter MAP (Measures of Academic Progress). MAP testing includes the content areas of math, reading, language, science (concepts & process) and general science. Here are the percentage of students who have shown at least 5 points of growth from fall to winter:

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Reading	73%	80%	55%	58%	51%
Math	83%	83%	64%	63%	52%
Language	85%	62%	55%	56%	
Science	63%	55%	51%	45%	
General Science	67%	43%	55%	58%	

Technology Instructor Susan McMullen shared the **technology advancements** at the school. There are 24 Kindles and 50 Netbooks available for student use and 25 ipads available to teachers and students. Students participate in technology labs learning about mobile devices and safety, how to use email and email etiquette. Mrs. McMullen and several of her students shared the work they are doing with Google Applications such as electronic surveys and incorporating the results into spreadsheets. They also demonstrated how they are sharing google documents, utilizing instant messaging and developing power point presentations.

Ms. Montera complemented and thanked the PTCO (Parent Teacher Community Organization), SAC (School Accountability Committee), the parents, volunteers, community and entire staff for supporting the students and helping them to reach their highest potential.

Infrastructure Assessment Committee Final Report

Members of the Infrastructure Assessment Committee presented their final report to the

board. Key findings included:

- Infrastructure is generally adequate to meet current needs.
- Schools range in condition from very good to poor and the district should consider retirement and replacement of the two oldest school buildings.
- Information technology support for administration and education is relatively poor. -Shortfalls exist from the network architecture level to the adequacy of user workstations.
- Transportation operations are efficient and well managed. Several buses are near the end of their useful life and the district should plan for their replacement.

The executive summary and full IAC report is available on the [IAC webpage](#).

Human Resources Implements New Background Check

The HR Director Kin Shuman discussed process enhancements to better protect the students and the district. Our current criminal background check with Colorado and Federal Bureau of Investigation has a significant lag time for the district to obtain results. The district will be implementing for new hires an instant background check through the Colorado Bureau of Investigation. In addition we will be implementing the instant background check for volunteers.

Approval To Lift Salary Freeze

The Chief Financial Officer Ron Patera provided the following salary recommendations to the board that would take the district off the salary increase freeze.

- Certified employees receive a full step increase
- Classified employees receive a full step increase
- An eighteenth step is added to both the certified and classified salary schedules
- A 1.8% salary increase for administrators.

The board approved the salary increase recommendations.

The Superintendent provided several updates to the board.

Tech Fee. At the beginning of the school year the Elizabeth School District implemented a **\$25 district-wide technology fee** to help keep classroom technology up to date in all our schools. Although this is a new fee for our district, a technology fee has been a standard with many districts in the surrounding areas and throughout Colorado for a number of years. Recognizing the declining resources in state and district funding levels, while striving to meet the ever increasing demands for student achievement, the technology fee was part of the budget proposal for 2012-2013. This year various accomplishments at all school buildings have been made. These include purchases of student use devices, iPads, Kindles, computer labs, laptops, and upgrades to internal connections, document cameras, programs, server upgrades, and teacher laptops.

Strategic Plan. A district wide leadership team worked to develop a **long term strategic plan** that is currently in a draft stage. The success of the strategic plan will depend on strong leadership throughout the organization and an informed, engaged, and supportive community. Strategic focus areas include:

- Successful Students
- Quality Educators and Skilled Professionals
- 21st Century Technology
- Effective Communication
- Maximize Resources - Safety, Transportation, Infrastructure

The leadership team will be participating in open discussions with key stakeholders including staff, students, parents, and community members to engage in feedback on the draft and to work together in finalizing the strategic plan for the district.

Safety. The district leadership working closely with Elizabeth Fire Department and Elbert County Emergency Management have developed a **Joint Information System** for incident communication. Various communication vehicles include our emergency automated voice messaging system, website, social media, and email communication. More details outlining the communication plan will be forthcoming to parents. The **safety task force** has listed and prioritized action steps for safety improvements based on the safety survey. The list will be posted to the safety webpage in the next couple of weeks.

All-State Band. Congratulations were extended to three members of the Elizabeth High School Band; **Casey Gerczynski (saxophone), Myles McMahan (euphonium), and Andrew Chase (trombone)** for being selected to perform in the **Colorado All-State Band** at UNC Greeley. Almost 900 Colorado High School Students auditioned for a spot in the All-State Band. Of the 900 students approximately 185 students were selected to participate in two Colorado All-State Bands. Approximately 90 students in each band. These students are chosen as the absolute best high school musicians in the state of Colorado. Being selected as a participant in the ensemble is the top honor a high school band student can achieve.

Community Support. A special thank you was extended to the community for the support and participation for the FCCLA Dodgeball Tournament that raised close to \$1,000 which was donated to the No Kid Hungry Organization. The Frontier High School spaghetti dinner was a huge success in which the money raised was double over previous years. These funds help to support the FHS Experiential Education program. A special thank you to the American Legion Post 82 for their generous donation.

Geography Bee. Congratulations was also extended to **Nickolas Malwitz** an Elizabeth Middle School Student that qualified for the State Geography Bee. This is the 5th year in a row an EMS student has qualified. All the students who win a school bee are required to do a written test and only the top 100 from the entire state qualify for the state meet.

2013 STARS Banquet. Extraordinary students were recognized at the annual STARS banquet. These students were selected as STARS recipients because they demonstrate the following characteristics:

- Model responsible behavior
- Involvement in clubs, organizations, community, performing arts, and/or athletics
- Committed to learning and motivated to do well
- Demonstrates a high value of caring by helping others

-Makes good choices

Visit the [district website](#) for the list of the 2013 STARS.

Public Participation

Tom Peterson, parent and community member shared with the board his concern of the track conditions at Elizabeth High School. The track was installed in 2000 and as it continues to deteriorate the safety concern increases as does the potential for increased cost due to damage of the underlying pavement. He suggested that a review of the condition of the track be include in the IAC evaluation of the modular buildings.

Upcoming Meetings

The next BOE meeting will be on April 22nd, with a different start time of 7:30 pm. The next BOE Meet and Greet is scheduled for April 23rd at Grumpy's Coffee.

Kind Regards,

Michele McCarron

Executive Administrative Assistant/Communication Specialist