

February 15, 2021

BEARCAT BOARD STORY

Educating for Excellence....the Bearcat Way!



IT'S ALWAYS EXCITING TO BE A BEARCAT!

The Gasconade County R-1 School Board met Thursday, February 11, 2021 for a regular meeting and an executive session. The meeting took place in the Middle School Library.

The meeting began with recognizing the Board of Education for all they do for the school district, including a gift certificate and thank you card from GTCA and a display from the Kindergarten class showing their gratitude for the recent playground updates.

Two of the students enrolled in the high school Flex Program shared their experiences with being part of the program which included the opportunity to work as well as take college classes. They both felt the program better prepared them for deciding what field they would like to enter upon graduation. In addition, the Department and Building Reports were submitted with limited questions from the Board.

The Board listened to MSBA's monthly video update where the Executive Director of the National School Board Association, Anna Marie Chavez, discussed how the pandemic has highlighted the important role the public schools play in our communities and the continued importance of federal funding for public schools. Additionally, Governor Parson announced the consolidation of state agency early childhood education programs into a new Office of Childhood that will be part of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and focus on streamlining programs strengthening the emphasis on early childhood education.

Dr. Smith and Board President Mark Brooks formally introduced the new Superintendent for Gasconade County R-1 Schools, Mr. Geoff Neill. Mr. Neill will join the District on July 1, 2021, when Dr. Smith will transition to the Superintendent of Jackson R-II School District. Mr. Brooks offered a warm Hermann welcome to Mr. Neill and his family on behalf of the Board of Education and the District.

Dr. Smith shared a financial update with the Board, noting that we are in good shape with our budget and our expenditures are tracking as projected. Additionally, the annual budget planning workshop with the Board was scheduled for March 31, 2021.

There was a discussion on current legislation impacting public education, most notably Senate Bill 55, which, if passed, will negatively impact the amount of funding for public education as well as change the current MSHSAA participation guidelines. The Board encouraged everyone to share their concerns about the passage of harmful bills with their Senators and Representatives.

Dr. Smith reminded the Board that we are accepting Bearcat Memorial Nominations until March 1, 2021; nomination forms are available on our website or by calling Karen Morton at the Central Office.

In new business, the Board approved several items:

- The first read of several policies: BBFA, DC, DFI, GBAD, GBCA, GBCBA, GCBA-R1, GCBA, GBEBB, and IC which focused on a variety of topics including staff disclosures, behaviors/expectations and compensation as well as tuition rates and the academic calendar.
- The exploration with the Messmer Eitmann Foundation of the possibility of a walking trail on the east end of our campus.
- The purchase of swings and rockers for the elementary playground.
- To move forward with an RFP for Auditing Services and Picture Company Services.
- The design and cost estimates associated with the middle school secure entrance.
- The 2021-2022 District Calendar.
- The High School Course Guide.

In the executive session, the Board approved the hiring of several coaching positions. These included Renee Heidger as Freshman Girls Basketball Coach, Jake Witthaus as Golf Coach, and Tony Terry, Jr. as Assistant Track Coach for the 2020-2021 season. We welcome them to our coaching team!

The next regularly scheduled Board Meeting is Thursday, March 11th at 6:00 p.m. in the Central Office.

Upcoming events:

- Basketball Season – check out the Athletics tab for details. Livestreaming is available
- School Board Appreciation Week is February 14 – 21st
- Bearcat Memorial Applications are due March 1st; see our website or call Karen Morton at 573-486-2116 ext. 1302 for information and forms
- Kindergarten and PreK 4 year-old program registration is in March; sign-ups required, more details on the front page of our website

