

September 15, 2020

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, September 10, 2020 for a regular meeting and an executive session. The meeting took place in the Central Office.

The meeting started with sharing creative ways teachers and students were educating to ensure we keep safety in the forefront. We saw teachers connecting via Google Classroom, students learning outside and in open hallways, and teaching our elementary kids about how to keep socially distant from their neighbor when lining up. Our teachers and staff have worked hard to instill the safety protocols into our environment and we thank everyone for doing their part to keep us all safe! We also received a thank you from a local business and a staff member acknowledging all the district and board of education's efforts through this difficult time.

The Department and Building Reports were reviewed with highlights on the successful open houses at each building this year and how MSHSAA continues to work on suggesting ways we can offer athletics to our students and still maintain safety during the COVID challenges. Things will continue to be evaluated on a case by case basis as it relates to the safety of sports and hosting events. The Board was updated about a grant through Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services which allows all students to receive a free breakfast and lunch. This program runs from September 1st through December 22nd.

The FY20 budget update was shared, noting that the reserve, due to the spring closure, ended in excess of the original budget. This reserve will positively contribute to future projects.

The Board approved the policy update ACA which reflects changes to the definition of and process for allegations of sexual harassment as it relates to Title IX. More information about Title IX can be found under the quick links on our website.

Dr. Smith shared with the Board that we strive to keep our students in session but given recent quarantines, he wanted to proactively discuss the Board's recommendations on how to handle extra and co-curricular activities if, in the future, we have to shift to distance learning for a period of time. The Board voted to allow extra and co-curricular activities on a case-by-case basis, with appropriate safety protocols, should we shift to a distance learning model.

The district is actively recruiting substitute teachers and attracting talent continues to be very competitive. To attract strong candidates, an increase for substitute pay was recommended and passed by the Board. New daily rates are \$95 for 60 hours or less, \$110 for a college degree and \$120 for a teaching certification; long term rates range from \$105 to \$130. The pay increase is retroactive, starting August 24, 2020.

The Board reviewed the bus routes, noting that one additional route was added to help reduce the number of students on the busses. The Board approved the bus routes for 2020-2021 and agreed to recruit for a full-time bus driver to fill the new bus route.

The Athletic Director shared recommendations for updates to the Gym as well as the football field. It is being recommended that the current turf be replaced after this season.

Given the recent quarantines within our student population, Dr. Smith opened the discussion to answer any questions regarding the protocols around that process. The Health Department was in attendance and shared information on how quarantines are identified and the CDC guidelines they are required to follow when notified of a COVID exposure. The Health Department clarified that they are the only legal authority that can quarantine a student.

In executive session, the Board accepted the resignation of Haley Cochran, Paraprofessional; we thank Haley for her service to the district. In addition, the Board approved the hire of several full time positions: Brian Azevedo, IT Assistant Director; Carol Kuhn, Building Office Aide – Elementary; Erin Winkelmann, Paraprofessional. The Board also approved the hire of three substitutes, one of which will serve as a substitute nurse as needed. We welcome all our new hires to the district!

The Board also approved Dawn Grosse to oversee a newly created after school Tutoring & Enrichment Program which will begin on September 15th and serve a variety of students.

The next regularly scheduled Board Meeting is Thursday, October 8, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the Central Office.

Upcoming events:

- Check all our fall sporting events under Upcoming Events on our website
- Bearcat Fridays are every Friday - Please wear BLUE!
- No school, Professional Development Day – October 12th

