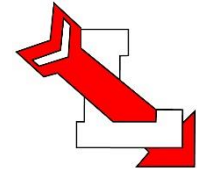


Board Briefs



Regular Meeting of October 14, 2024

Student Council Report

Conner Casarez stated that the student council did a great job with homecoming this year. The entire week was full of fun activities that included an assembly, parade and spirit days. The theme this year was disco. The Equestrian team won the Division A State Championship and girls golf won the conference championship with an undefeated season. He wished all the sports still competing good luck. In the River City Alliance, the Red Arrows have really shown that “we have the skills to pay the bills.”

Consent Items Approved

- Approval of Minutes
- Payment of bills

Report

Students presented the Board with a ticket to the upcoming High School Play “Game of Tiaras.”

Action Items

- Gift to the District
- Salt Truck

Human Resources Update

Dustin Cichocki stated the new professional staff met last week. Topics included early planning for retirement, curriculum and a “Learning by Doing” book study. The nurses are continuing to work on CPR training for professional staff.

Budget Update

Sonia Hodge stated that the final audit reports are delayed and should arrive later this week. The State passed a supplemental budget with changes to retirement. More information will be coming to the Board. The 3% that some employees contribute for their healthcare in retirement has been repealed and will not go into effect until October 1, 2025. The district will be receiving money to offset some or possibly all of what they contribute. We are communicating with staff to keep them updated. Two weeks to go and the new finance software will go live.

Curriculum Update

Dan VanderMeulen stated the Math Vertical Team will be working with KISD consultants on October 24. The district-wide Mental Health Team met with staff from Corewell Health to plan for a free suicide prevention training. Students completed a one question survey – “Do you feel like you belong in school (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)?” There was a 5% increase in students feeling like they belong in school (65% to 70%). On October 15, Mr. VanderMeulen will complete an English Language Learner program self-assessment to identify areas for improvement. He thanked Tom Kaywood and Jessica Curtis for participating in the Cherry Creek leadership team interviews.

Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent Fowler stated that Lowell received a 52.8% proficiency score on the SAT which is comparable to other districts. Seniors did a great job on the SAT! The district will continue to work to make sure we get as many students as possible to that proficiency score. College Board (administrators of the SAT and AP tests) named Lowell High School an Honor School:

- College Culture – Bronze Award (one point from the silver)
- College Credit – Gold Award
- College Optimization – Gold Award

Fowler stated that he was proud of our community for their support to redo Creekside Kingdom. Road projects near Central Office are making progress and should be finished up soon. The bus wash bay is currently receiving electrical and underground work. Fowler noted that several area schools have received threats. Lowell Area Schools is being proactive by building strong relationships with students and law enforcement and reminding everyone about the consequence associated with these threats. Fowler stated that the Board has tabled the Title IX policies until a later date. If the Board feels compelled to move forward, those policies, and future policies, will be publicly posted. October 2 was count day. It’s still too early to report where the district stands, however early indications show less of a drop in enrollment than predicted. In 2004, the student count was 3,917. There was a dip in enrollment after both the recession and pandemic, with no rebound. Last year the student enrollment was 3,449, which is a 10-12% drop. There are a lot of outside factors that account for enrollment that include birth rates, affordable housing, schools of choice, average age of community, etc. He congratulated the equestrian team for their State Championship win. He also noted that October is principal appreciation month. He thanked all the principals for the work they do every day and for advocating for students and staff success. They serve as role models for our community and students and handle a difficult and stressful job with integrity and grace.

Board Communications

- Tom Kaywood stated he had a riot with Jessica Curtis interviewing the Cherry Creek leadership team candidates.
- Jennifer Dougherty stated she was excited about the bus wash and doesn’t expect drivers to wash buses but rather drive.
- Brian Krajewski reminded everyone to vote on November 5.

Public Comments

Two audience members made public comments. No action taken.

Lowell Area Schools Board of Education

Brian Krajewski, President • Lauria Kuna, Vice President • Pat Nugent, Secretary • Tom Kaywood, Treasurer
Jennifer Dougherty, Trustee • Jared Blough, Trustee • Jessica Curtis, Trustee