



BOARD BRIEFS

Authored by the Davis School District Community Relations Department

District makes great strides with safety procedures Plans focus on broadening new safety systems

Safety is a moving target for the district, with continually changing communities and schools. Davis School District is hypervigilant about staying on top of student safety, according to Assistant Superintendent John Zurbuchen.

During a recent Board of Education workshop, Zurbuchen outlined the great strides the district has made since the creation of the safety committee two years ago.

The district has seen the most change with new responsive services processes by addressing issues before they happen. The district now has a multi-tiered support system (MTSS) with the ability to go out to schools and provide hands-on directives for school case-management teams.

“Where is the best place to deal with student problems? In the classroom,” said Zurbuchen. “Every time you step away, you lose a little bit of impact and support. MTSS is giving us the opportunity to do that.”

The new social and emotional learning focus within the district has the potential to be a difference-maker in terms of school safety, he added.

“Because of the direction provided by the board two years ago, now we have a system to be able to continue broadening our safety. We could have spent money on a lot of things, but it wouldn’t have made us any safer. Our

MTSS and SEL programs are game changers for the school district.”

Zurbuchen also gave an update on the technology aspect of safety measures. Currently, 80 percent of schools either have or are in the process of getting security cameras and a video management system installed, which allows for live monitoring as needed.

The district is continuing work on the installation of secure entry points for all schools. There are 19 elementary schools that need secure vestibules installed.

This fall, the district is also rolling out a new campaign in partnership with Inter-mountain Health Care.

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— Assistant Superintendent John Zurbuchen

The campaign will teach staff how to use a tourniquet and give each classroom a kit with gloves, gauze and tourniquet.

Another initiative planned is the district assuming responsibility of the student reunification process after on-site evacuations. By doing so, school staff will be free to take care of students.

Zurbuchen also updated the board on the district’s efforts to collaborate with law enforcement. During the last school year, the district received over 2,000 tips, almost double from the previous year. The district follows up on all tips received from the SafeUT app.

“That speaks to the implementation levels at the schools,” said Superintendent Reid Newey. “The minute we stop worrying about safety is when we have a problem.”

Board discusses final closure plans for Washington Elementary

While the school year may have permanently ended for Washington Elementary, the building is still hosting summer lunch and summer school. When the programs end in August, doors will officially be closed at Washington Elementary.

Elementary School Director Dr. Helene Van Natter updated the Davis School District Board of Education during a workshop presentation

on the final details for the school.

“All of the certified and full-time classified staff were placed by the first part of March. The part-time staff that we didn’t really have a lot of control over have all now taken jobs, except for two, who have been offered jobs.”

Superintendent Reid Newey said the anticipated plans for demolition of Washington Elementary will occur in early November, after the

building is prepared properly. The district does not intend to sell the property.

“We plan to plant sod or seed, whichever is best, and the city has the first right of refusal of the property,” said Newey. “(Bountiful) Mayor Lewis is well aware of our intent at this point.”

Business Administrator Craig Carter said the city plans to use the field areas for recreational purposes.

District partners with Apple

Apple is now providing training for teachers at a few select elementary schools. The training will help teachers use the full potential of technology in their classroom.

“We can put devices in the classrooms, but we don’t want a teacher to show up in the fall and not know what to do,” Assistant Superintendent John Zurbuchen said at a recent Board of Education workshop.

Teachers from nine elementary schools — Adams, Boulton, Burton, Layton, Mountain View, Parkside, Snow Horse, Valley View and Woods Cross Elementaries — will be given several half-day training sessions. Teachers will be trained on iPad software such as Augmented Reality, see how Apple Classroom works, become more familiar with Garage Band and see what Clips looks like.

Most of the 25,000 iPads currently owned by the district are used by students.

“We view technology as an accelerator of learning and knowledge and this gives teachers another tool to bring to students,” said Superintendent Reid Newey. “We don’t want to just buy machines and let teachers figure it out. They have enough to figure out.”

The district also wants to help students see that there is more to an iPad than typing.

“We can provide student content that is exposing them to the world beyond the classroom, including field trips where they can be there without leaving the classroom,” said Zurbuchen.

In other workshop business:

- The board discussed plans to contract out any auditing needs this year on a trial basis.

Board Vice President Liz Mumford said, “We have a fiduciary responsibility to protect that budget and have the option to use it for internal auditors or contract out for audits.

“For the time being, I feel like we aren’t trapped in a specific scenario because the board owns the audit program, so a year from now if we want to look back and adjust it, that is certainly our prerogative.”

- The board looked at combining the two public comment periods currently in place — a general comment period and a comment period specific to agenda items. Board members debated adjusting the time frame allotment and sent their suggestions back to the policy review committee to be discussed at a future meeting.

- The board discussed opposing the creation of an ad-hoc committee to study the district travel policy. Board President John Robison said an ad-hoc committee would duplicate the direction the district is already taking.

- It was announced that Davis School District was the first and is currently the only school district that is systems accredited in the state of Utah. Accreditation involves a review process from people outside the district to determine whether education programs are meeting defined criteria.

“I’ve had a number of meetings and phone calls with some of our neighboring school districts who want to pick my brain about how we do this, what happens, and what that looks like,” said Employee Evaluator Suzanne Cottrell in her report to the Board of Education at a recent workshop meeting. “The most important thing...is that we are all about learning — not just learning for kids, its learning for everybody.

FHS Activity Bus Spurs Discussion

The Farmington High activity bus trial year has concluded, so the Davis School District Board of Education discussed whether the bus should continue in the upcoming school year.

According to Business Administrator Craig Carter, the activity bus driver reported a general ridership of five to eight riders, while some days had no riders.

The bus was approved by the Board of Education to accommodate students who were required to travel a longer distance to Farmington High comparative to their previous boundary school.

“For those that used it, the bus was beneficial,” said Business Administrator Craig Carter. “To put it in perspective, state rule indicates you have to have 10 riders to fund a route, so this one probably wouldn’t meet that standard.”

Board Member Julie Tanner said one of her constituents appreciated the bus since Farmington High is a longer driving distance from their previous high school.

“I advocate for having it for at least a second year to see if the program increases,” said Tanner.

The cost for the bus last year was \$7,959, which included salary, retirement and fuel. The cost will go up 8 percent next year if the board decides to continue the activity bus.

Board Member Cheryl Phipps asked why there weren’t activity buses available to all secondary schools in the district.

Superintendent Reid Newey said, “We haven’t assumed that cost because it is an added hardship in terms of budget and driver availability. We have a very difficult time staffing for activities we have currently.”

Further discussion of the activity bus will occur at a future board meeting.