



BOARD BRIEFS

Authored by the Davis School District Community Relations Department

District celebrates second-highest grad rate in state

Individualized student support attributed to increasing graduation rates

Davis School District touts the second-highest graduation rate in the state of Utah, with a ranking of 96 percent for 2019, up from 95 percent in 2018.

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Logan Toone shared the 2018-19 school year graduation numbers with the Board of Education during a recent workshop.

The district also leads the state in graduation rates for student subgroups compared to other large districts, ranking

first in overall graduation rates for students who are economically disadvantaged, English language learners, African American/Black, Asian, Latino and multiple-race subgroups.

Additionally, the district saw a 100 percent graduation rate for Asian students — the first time the district has experienced a perfect graduation rate with a student subgroup.

“We are at the top of the pack in almost every measure,” said Toone. “We still have a gap of about four percent, but it is significantly better than the 14 percent it was at eight years ago.”

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— Assistant Superintendent Dr. Logan Toone

Toone also pointed out that if district efforts toward graduation had not changed in the past 10 years, the number of students that wouldn’t have graduated would be equivalent to 4,300 students.

“If you think about those 4,300 people who have the opportunity now for post-secondary training, those 4,300 people who now have a future, that is a number we are proud of. We thank those who started this and for allowing us to keep this moving forward,” said Toone.

“We need to keep the pedal on the floor to continue the support for individual students. You may think it’s just one kid, but over time, it makes a huge difference,” he said.

Since 2012, district administrators have been meeting weekly with all 17 junior highs and 10 high schools in the district. “We meet with every secondary school and go over every single kid who is not on pace to graduate,” said Assistant Superintendent John Zurbuchen.

“This has been game changing. When it first started, it was an imposition for schools, but now it is part of the culture,” he said.

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Board opts to keep South Clearfield Elementary school name

South Clearfield Elementary will keep its name despite a request made by Clearfield City.

A majority of board members were reluctant to consider changing the school’s name, pointing out that other schools in the district have experienced changing geographic areas while keeping school names intact, such as North Layton and South Davis Junior high schools.

Board Vice President Liz Mumford said the only situations she

could see where districts across the state chose to change the name of a school were due to a change in facility use or restarting after a school failure.

“There is a lot of historical sense of place around a school’s name, including databases for assessment and all kinds of other purposes. I’m hesitant that we set a precedence and make a statement about the past performance of the school,” said Mumford.

“A label on schools isn’t indicative of who attends a school, so I

would shy away from a name change.”

Board Member Marie Stevenson pointed out that many of her constituents, including teachers and school alumni, have expressed a desire to keep the name of the school the same.

“I can see the reasoning for a request, but I don’t think as a district we just up and change names of schools,” said Stevenson.

Board Member Cheryl Phipps supported a name change, saying that

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GRADUATION, from Pg. 1

According to Superintendent Reid Newey, the meaning behind the number is about the help each student received along the way.

“Those numbers don’t come without significant effort and support. We are grateful for the great people who make this happen every day — from district staff to our teachers — and the lives they affect,” Newey said.

High School Director Dr. Dan Linford spoke during the workshop about the impact of individualized efforts in the graduation process.

“When these were first rolled out when I was an assistant principal, it felt like an imposition, but we didn’t know these kids’ story and eventually we knew every kid’s story,” said Linford.

“Those names and faces come forward because of counselors and others, who brought them to our attention so we could work together as a case management group with parent input,” he said.

In other workshop business:

- The board reviewed the recommended names for Elementary No. 63 in order of popularity — Harmony, West Layton and Sunburst Elementary. The Board plans to review and approve the final name recommendation at the board’s next meeting.

- The Board of Education heard a report on district plans to hire an additional 10 elementary coun-

selors and additional nurses from HB 373 and Title IV funds.

- The Board heard a report about security cameras on school buses. The district currently has 160 security cameras on 40 buses, with plans to increase the coverage to 80 buses during the next school year.

- The district will begin a pilot program at Bountiful High school incorporating new security system cameras that track heat signatures.

Assistant Superintendent John Zurbuchen explained to the Board of Education that if there were a school safety event, the cameras could locate everyone inside of the school and recognize an aggressive move that could be reported to administration.

While it is a great idea, the system is expensive, Zurbuchen said. The district plans to only use the system during the free one-year trial period to see if there are benefits to enhancing the District’s current camera system.

“This is an opportunity for us to have a competitive component to what we are doing to see if there is anything we are missing, where we want to expand our current use and see how useful that is,” said Superintendent Reid Newey. “We feel very secure with where we are at with our security cameras, in terms of what we are pulling from them.”

NAME, from Pg. 1

since the time the school was built, the city has grown further south, so the school’s name is not indicative of the school’s location.

“It causes confusion as if everything south of the school is not a part of Clearfield,” said Phipps.

Superintendent Reid Newey pointed out that the district puts a lot of effort and time into the naming of schools.

“We have great cooperation from our cities and continue to foster that, but consider it our obligation to lead out on the board’s policy to finalize the name of a school,” said Newey.

“We feel strongly that there is an identity that we try to foster within our district, which is to continue with South Clearfield Elementary as it is,” he said.

Board reviews changes to school fee schedule

The Davis School District’s fee schedule is in the process of getting substantial changes in structure to align with new state rules implemented in the last legislative session.

High School Director Dr. Dan Linford presented the proposed 2020-21 school fee schedule to the Board of Education.

The updated schedule was developed with recommendations and input from district and school administrators and the District’s School Fees Committee, which includes parents, students, educators and administrators.

The changes include a spend plan that lists the anticipated types of expenditures for each fee the district charges, a maximum fee amount for co-curricular and extracurricular activities and a total aggregate fee amount for students involved in multiple activities or programs.

“We are committed to being as transparent as possible and help key the general public into where the increases are happening,” said Linford.

“We saw gaps and felt that more transparency was important, so work was started a couple of years ago when we created maximum fees within some areas and we mimicked what we had done with athletics for the arts,” he said.

The district also plans to provide activity and class disclosures as soon as possible to outline costs, according to Linford.