



# BOARD BRIEFS

Authored by the Davis School District Community Relations Department

## Board approves stipend for all district employees

Teachers to receive an additional \$600 for work on remote learning

In recognition of extra efforts being made during the pandemic, the Board of Education of the Davis School District unanimously approved a 1 percent stipend for all employees.

Additionally, the board approved a \$600 stipend to teachers for ongoing work in digital and remote learning. This one-time payout is in addition to the 2 percent stipend, which was announced during negotiations in the spring. Both stipends will be distributed in the Nov. 30 paycheck.

Board Vice President Liz Mumford said: “As a member of the board who has children, I have really firsthand seen the commitment our teachers have to students and what has happened with our building administrators to start this school year. It’s really phenomenal, and I don’t think we can quantify that.

“... There was no question that we wanted to appreciate every employee for the work that they did and it’s that whole team working together — creating safe places and creating learning opportunities — that makes it possible for kids to learn this year,” she said. “And we’re all

committed to that. So thank you to all of our employees for everything you have done.”

Each board member thanked staff for their efforts working on the frontlines. Many recognized the hours and hours of extra time teachers have donated to provide a quality education for students.

Superintendent Reid Newey joined in expressing appreciation for all that employees have done during the pandemic. Additionally, he thanked the board for approv-

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— Board Vice President Liz Mumford

ing the stipend.

“I personally thank the board for its efforts to recognize employees,” he said. “We realize managing finance, and in particular, allocating additional compensation, is the prerogative of the board. So we thank the board for having the courage to do that.”

In other business, the Board approved Bailey Construction for the building of the district’s first teen center at Clearfield High School. Business Administrator Craig Carter said the center will be established through the Davis Education Foundation. It will provide a space where underprivileged students shower, do laundry or even do homework. The center will cost about \$208,000 to build and is being funded in part by Clearfield City.

## Protocols established for quarantining schools, classrooms

Board members gave final approval to the protocols for classroom and school closures in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak.

Additionally, Board President John Robison reaffirmed the plan — based on the board’s earlier Sept. 23 decision — to move secondary schools to four days of in-person learning beginning Nov. 2.

The protocols adopted during the meeting Tuesday mirror guidelines established by the Utah State Board of Education (USBE). An outbreak is de-

finied as three or more positive COVID-19 cases connected by the same setting exposure within a 14-day period. A school outbreak would be 15 or more positive COVID-19 cases, across multiple settings in a school (more than one classroom) within a 14-day period. Board Member Julie Tanner emphasized the importance of staying close to the language adopted by the USBE.

The decision for a closure would be made by the superintendent in consultation with the Davis County Health Department. The classroom or

school would then enter a 14-day quarantine with students moving to remote learning. The 14-day quarantine is calendar days, not school days.

Assistant Superintendent John Zurbuchen indicated that the day prior to the quarantine, parents and guardians would be notified via email. The first day of the quarantine will be utilized as a prep day for teachers and staff.

Parents and guardians will also receive communication a few days before the return date reminding

**See PROTOCOLS, Pg. 2**

## PROTOCOLS, From Pg. 1

them of the timeline.

Board member Cheryl Phipps questioned the continuation of school sports or activities such as theater, choir or band, in the event of a school quarantine. Superintendent Reid Newey explained that the Utah High School Activities Association (UHSAA), which sanctions those activities, is an entity separate from public education. The UHSAA has established guidelines for participants in those activities. That includes, he said, quarantining a team if three or more members test positive for COVID-19.

The board could choose to prohibit the district from participating in those activities.

During the board meeting, Robison added, "As one of my fellow board members said at a previous board meeting, you don't run for a position as a board member so that you can deal with a pandemic. The same is true for all of you.

"You don't become a parent to deal with a pandemic, you don't become a student in school so you can be a part of a pandemic; and you don't go into the teaching profession with an expectation of teaching during a pandemic. But the stark reality is that we are all in this together.

"Our responsibility as a Board of Education is to help facilitate the education of each student. That involves educating the whole child — his or her academic, physical, social and emotional education. Based on that responsibility and based on all of the factors and data that we have looked at in our district and other districts, we feel that proceeding with the phased return is the right decision at this time."

## District gives snapshot of academic trends

Preliminary data shows that student learning is following similar trends across the state, Superintendent Reid Newey told the Davis School District Board of Education Tuesday.

While looking at initial assessments early in the school year is not typical, the district hopes educators can get a sense of where students are at academically amidst changes to in-person and remote learning.

"We are committed to continue to quickly accumulate data sources because the learning issues are significant that you can see early on — both in our data and what we are seeing statewide," said Newey. "It almost follows every district in the challenges that COVID has brought to learning, attendance and so forth."

The district looked at several indicators — student engagement, AP test data, graduation rate, Acadience (formerly DIBLES) testing scores and mid-term GPAs.

Assistant Superintendent Logan Toone said early benchmark checks show student engagement increased during remote learning last spring, with nearly 90 percent of students engaged by the end of the last school year. He also said Advanced Placement test reports show the district's pass rate of 73 percent remained the same as last year.

The state Board of Education has not released graduation data yet, though based on student population, Toone said Davis School District is anticipating a 94 percent graduation rate, which is 2 percent lower than last year. Official graduation numbers will be released by the state in January.

"Our efforts to reach out to students at risk for non-graduation is something we have consistently been proud of and are working on," Toone

said. "We believe that this (lower percent) is largely a result of our in-person, direct-contact with those at-risk students being significantly compromised because of the pandemic, but we will continue to watch that."

Initial reports from Acadience testing indicate a learning gap in younger-grade students, but the gap decreases in older-grade students.

Toone reported that the district's incoming first-graders, who were affected by the pandemic at the tail end of kindergarten, showed a 44 percent benchmark status, a significantly lower rate compared to their 63 percent benchmark status the prior year. However, the number mirrors initial data from the state board of education, he said.

"Davis School District is not unique in this, with the youngest students most significantly impacted," said Toone. "This puts significant pressure on our educational system, but our standards are not changed. This is a priority as we look at what needs to be done to address learning with students."

When looking at midterm GPA data, Toone said the data is traditionally used as a communication tool for parents and students to gauge learning, rather than a districtwide academic indicator.

"If we did calculate grade point average using traditional methods, our grade point average for first midterm this year is significantly lower than it was last year, which at its heart, means that the grades our students had at midterm this year are lower than grades they had the prior year," said Toone.