



BOARD BRIEFS

Authored by the Davis School District Community Relations Department

Board reviews final 2020-21 budget in workshop Funding includes teacher salary increase and pandemic coverage

The Board of Education of the Davis School District reviewed the final legal budget for the 2020-21, which includes an increase in teacher salaries, help with pandemic-related costs and replenishing its economic stabilization fund.

Davis School District Finance Administrator Tim Leffel said beginning teacher salaries increased by approximately \$1,000 last year. The district also received 22 COVID grants from the county, state and local cities.

The budget reflects the district's focus on funding student education.

"Almost 88% of every dollar the district receives in the general fund is focused on individuals who interact with students every day," Leffel said, which includes teachers, counselors, custodians and principals.

As the school year winds down, it is anticipated the budget will have a surplus of \$7.5 million in the general fund. Leffel said the plan for the surplus will be to reimburse the economic stabilization fund and add to the unassigned fund balance.

"One of our board goals has been to fully fund the economic stabilization account," said Leffel. "Our numbers

are a little lower than in the past, but we made that decision as a board and as a school district that we didn't want to focus as much on fund balance, but we still want to add to it and be responsible with how we are spending our funds."

The district's capital funds, made up of local property taxes, state equalization funds and bond dollars, are

currently going towards three large projects. The Catalyst Center in Kaysville and a remodel of building F2 in the Freeport Center uses capital funds. The completion of the

South Clearfield Elementary rebuild is the final project from the voter-approved 2015 bond.

Other smaller capital projects include the ongoing needs of building roofs and boilers, computer updates, buses and vehicles, school furniture, small maintenance projects and accommodations for students with disabilities.

The board will consider giving final approval to the 2020-21 legal budget during its next regular meeting on June 2, along with a review of the tentative budget for the upcoming 2021-22 school year.

Business Administrator Craig Carter said the new budget may see an increase in the certified tax rate, as part of the legislature requirement to raise the voting leeway up to \$1,600 every five years.

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— Finance Administrator Tim Leffel

Special Education updates policy identifying student eligibility

The process for defining student eligibility for special education in Davis School District is moving from an equation-based model to a focus on academic performance.

"The new method identifies within a child's intellectual IQ, their strengths and weaknesses. It then goes and looks at their academic performance and identifies strengths and weaknesses in their academic achievement," Special Education Director Julie Larsen told Davis School District

Board of Education members.

"Sometimes what happened with the discrepancy model, we had children who, because they had a low IQ, would not necessarily qualify for special education. This new model — patterns of strengths and weaknesses — allows us to really look at each individual child and ... be able to identify their needs along the lines of a disability," she said.

Board Member Gordon Eckersley asked how students get the help, who generally do well in school, but struggle in math or reading. Larsen

said the new eligibility model will help identify those students.

"With the patterns of strengths and weaknesses, there needs to be a correlation between a deficit in the IQ and a deficit in the academics," Larsen said.

"So, if we see a deficit in working memory, then we can correlate that to being able to work in mathematics and solving problems, so we would be able to identify that child as having a disability and they would qualify for services," she explained.