



BOARD BRIEFS

Authored by the Davis School District Community Relations Department

Policy proposal impacts ninth-grade extracurriculars

District considers changes to bring policy in alignment with UHSAA

The Board of Education of the Davis School District is considering changes to the ninth-grade extracurricular participation policy. The changes also impact the policy which governs boundary variances.

Superintendent Reid Newey said the changes came about after Board Member Brigit Gerrard requested a review of the policy.

“It does not stand alone in its impact,” Newey said. “It has a great impact on the variance process because of the possibility of the policy aligning further with the Utah High Schools Activities Association (UHSAA), which establishes point of residency in terms of student participation at point of entry in the ninth-grade year.”

District Secondary Director Ryck Astle told board members that the proposed policy changes have been reviewed by the Healthy Lifestyles department, which oversees athletics, the Student & Family Resources department, which processes boundary variances, and secondary principals. The current policy, he said, does not allow a student to

participate in athletics at a high school outside of the normal school tract without jeopardizing eligibility. Newey said Davis School District is the only district in the state that does not follow the UHSAA’s first entry establishes athletic participation rule.

“One request we made is that they start with: ‘What is everyone else’s policy in terms of, particularly those that we compete against and are competing with?’”

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— Superintendent Reid Newey

Newey said. “When we can and when others have the kind of choice that our students and families would like, I believe it probably serves us to examine that with a close eye.”

District Healthy Lifestyles Director Dr. Tim Best said he often works with parents who question why the Davis School District has a different policy for ninth-grade participation than other districts.

“They feel like they are not being able to even have a chance to go where they wind up going, irregardless, in their 10th-grade year,” Best said.

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Risk factors indicate Davis County among healthiest in state

District Healthy Lifestyles Director Tim Best says community health indicators show Davis County is the fourth healthiest county in Utah and the healthiest among counties with larger populations.

Community health indicators include teen pregnancy, child sexual abuse, sexually transmitted disease diagnoses, sexting, pornography complaints, etc.

Best told the Board of Education the state requires a review with

the board every two years. Compared to two years ago, all indicators have dropped except lewd behavior. Many factors could contribute to the decreases in schools, including health curriculum and local case management meetings which work with schools and students to get the assistance needed.

One thing worth noting from the SHARP survey data was that 14 percent of students — sixth, eighth, 10th and 12th — surveyed said they had tried vaping. He said the district will increase its focus on risk prevention in making students more aware of

the dangers of those chemicals.

“I think some kids aren’t aware of the chemicals that are in there,” Best said. “They think they are harmless. Kids think it’s just a flavor. That’s not always the case. We’ll work closely with student services as well. We don’t want that number to increase. We want it to decrease.”

Best said an opt in, eight lesson risk prevention presentation has been added to the fourth-grade health curriculum. In it, students learn about avoiding risky behaviors, including vaping and smoking.

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Board Member Cheryl Phipps questioned whether the changes would create pipelines where students choose a specific junior high so they can be part of an elite high school team.

Board President John Robison emphasized that it does not change where the student attends junior high, but may allow them to participate in an extracurricular activity at the high school they receive a permit to attend.

Best said the attempt is to streamline the process. Boundary permit changes are for all students. Athletes do not receive extra consideration.

The proposed policy revisions emphasize that coaches and advisors cannot recruit students who are not enrolled in the school. However, it does allow students who are in junior high to try out for a UHSAA-sponsored group. The student may apply to try out at the high school which they would normally attend or at another high school if they have an open enrollment permit. The student applies for an open-enrollment permit during eighth-grade.

Additionally, the proposed changes outline the parent's responsibility for transportation and expectation that the student completes the school day at the junior high even if there is a practice.

If the board votes to approve the changes to the policy, it would go into effect for the 2022-23 school year. The decision needs to be made soon Newey said, because registration will begin in January and students need to be aware of their options.

Student & Family Resources Director Brad Christensen said changes to the policy regarding open enrollment also brings the district more in alignment with the rest of the state. The deadlines do not change. The district will continue to hear appeals and work with those.

He said the change will also help with waiting lists and allow schools and department personnel to refocus time spent addressing matters.

Board of Education members continued the discussion on the proposed policy changes during a later study session. A final adoption is scheduled for a vote during the meeting on October 5. The board will also consider public input received prior to the next vote. The policy proposals can be reviewed on the policy manual website, [which is accessible here](#).

Board honors



The Board of Education of the Davis School District honors faculty members from Sunburst Elementary for being among the first schools in the district to achieve the recognition as an Apple Distinguished School.



Staff members of Snow Horse Elementary receive recognition for being an Apple Distinguished School — one of two in the district.



The Board honors Gwen Wilson, Central Davis Junior High. She was a first-place winner in Business Etiquette in the FBLA Nationals Awards of Excellence.



The Board recognizes the Farmington High Dance Group following a student performance at the beginning of the meeting.