

PIEDMONT FOCUS

MONTHLY NEWS & UPDATES FROM PIEDMONT PUBLIC SCHOOLS





PIEDMONT

Public Schools

BOARD OF EDUCATION MARCH 9, 2023 MEETING UPDATES

ROLL CALL

All board members were present.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Jacci Cardwell & Janie McNabb addressed the board.

EXECUTIVE SESSION/BUSINESS ITEMS

Piedmont Public Schools Board of Education convened into executive session.

After returning from the executive session, the board unanimously approved the employment list in Attachment A of the agenda.

The board unanimously approved the purchase of 5 buses we are currently leasing.

The board unanimously approved the construction change order for the renovation of the middle school hallways and the replacement of classroom lighting.

The board discussed scheduling a special meeting, but no action was taken. The special meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2023, at 8 a.m.

The board discussed the possibility of a future bond issue, but no action was taken.

CONSENT AGENDA

All items on the consent agenda, except the district calendar, were unanimously approved. The 2023-2024 calendar was voted on separately. The 2023-2024 district calendar was approved 4-1, with Greg Duffy voting no.

DISTRICT UPDATES

SPECIAL SERVICES



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PPS Special Services team has held professional development for Paraprofessionals regarding different personalities at work and De-Escalation Strategies for the Crisis Cycle. De-Escalation Strategies were also covered in professional development for Piedmont Intermediate teachers on February 20th.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS UPCOMING EVENTS

Unified Bocce, March 23rd
Location: Weatherford HS
Sites participating:
PES, NW, PI, MSP, PHS

Athletics, April 8th
Location: Yukon HS
Sites participating:
PES, NW, PI, MSP, PHS



ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES

- PPS hosted the regional wrestling tournament for the first time in school history
- Wrestling had seven wrestlers qualify for State. Special recognition goes to Makaylee Cannon, the first female wrestler in school history to qualify for State:
 - Jackson Blackburn
 - Makaylee Cannon
 - Cash Donnell
 - Jayden Fuston
 - Brogan Hardy
 - Jesse Knapp
 - Kolton Luschen
- Lady Wildcats basketball won the Suburban Conference championship
- Lady Wildcats basketball hosted four teams for the regional tournament
- Men's basketball traveled to Southeast High School for regionals
- Baseball, soccer, tennis, golf, and track have all begun their seasons
- Piedmont swim competed at the state tournament
- E-Sports and Cheer STUNT have started their spring seasons
- Pride of Piedmont varsity guard takes first place at Choctaw in a WGPO event
- Men's and women's soccer held their annual soccer all-day preseason tournaments
- 8th-grade boys' basketball finished second at the Suburban Conference Tournament while the girls took third place

HUMAN RESOURCES & EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

As we begin to plan for the 2023-2024 school year, we are focused on staffing.

Our Recruitment and Retention Committee met on February 22nd to share ideas for next school year. This committee will attend a job fair for educators to gather ideas and will host our own PPS Job Fair! We are excited to work together to hire the best and brightest to join our school community.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PIEDMONT

- Concrete foundation is underway in areas 3 and 4
- Under slab electrical and plumbing rough-in added to areas 3 and 4
- CMU block walls are going up in areas 1, 3, and 4
- Fire suppression rough-in in the gym
- In-wall and above-ceiling electrical and plumbing rough-in added to the gym



MARCH 2023

DISTRICT UPDATES



ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

Elementary professional development day was highly productive as teachers worked together to identify essential math standards. These areas will receive extra focus moving forward, with the goal of all students reaching mastery. We appreciate the leadership and guidance of Brenda Davis, Brandi Skokowski, Jayme Knox, Laura Kishman, and Jennifer Luttmmer for this presentation.

Elementary specials teachers, including Music, PE, Spanish, and Library Media, met to work on current and future items related to their content areas. Spanish and Library Media took advantage of a great opportunity for vertical collaboration with their secondary colleagues.

SECONDARY CURRICULUM

Secondary building administrators are working to expand instructional delivery approaches to reach more students. Our site administrator team collaborated to develop innovative instructional strategies to pilot with a select group of teachers. The pilot group will implement these strategies upon return from Spring Break. The group will note successes and obstacles to evaluate if these instructional practices would be beneficial building-wide.

At Piedmont Intermediate, teachers and students will focus on cross-curricular projects through Social Studies, ELA, and Career Exploration classes. Students will utilize the research from their career class, guest speaker from social studies class, and skills obtained in ELA class to create a final presentation about their "dream job."

Middle School of Piedmont will introduce entrance tickets, a system to check what students know or may need additional time to understand, and literature circles for all curriculum areas.

Piedmont High School will implement a model called content creators. This model allows students to be active participants in the learning process. Students will create projects that illustrate their understanding of the standards and skills taught in the classroom. These projects could include student-created video lessons, Sage and Scribe illustrations, or many other student choices.

STUDENT & STAFF HEALTH & SAFETY

SUICIDE AWARENESS SPEAKER SHARES WITH PHS, MS STUDENTS

The topics of teen suicide and self-harm are among the most difficult for parents to discuss with their children. Speaker Jeff Yalden shared his life experiences with our middle school and high school students on February 23rd. He spoke of his need to ask for help throughout his life, the loss of a friend to a "forever decision," the need to find healthy ways of expressing big feelings, and self-care. Before the presentation, Mr. Yalden met with our secondary counseling team to get an understanding of our students and the struggles they are facing. Counselors were also available during and after the presentation for students.



SAFETY & WELLNESS COMMITTEE MEETING

Our Safety & Wellness Committee, comprised of staff, administrators, parents, and students, met on Tuesday, February 21st, to discuss opportunities for improvement, suggestions, and ideas.

We were happy to have student input in the discussion, as they are the eyes and ears of our schools. We value the time our committee members dedicated to our meeting for the safety and well-being of our students and staff.

DISTRICT UPDATES

ENROLLMENT CENTER		2-6-2023	2-27-2023
	PIEDMONT ECC	601	600
	NORTHWOOD ELEM.	473	475
	PIEDMONT ELEM.	459	459
	STONE RIDGE ELEM.	592	593
	PIEDMONT INTERMEDIATE	759	757
	MIDDLE SCHOOL	767	766
	HIGH SCHOOL	1415	1418
	TOTAL	5076	5068

PRE-KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENT

Pre-kindergarten enrollment for the 2023-2024 school year opened Wednesday, March 1. We are proud of the efforts of our Enrollment Specialists as they collaborated with our Communications Coordinator to get messaging out regarding enrollment, including a step-by-step video of the enrollment process. They worked with families to answer questions and provide guidance to welcome our newest Wildcats to Piedmont Early Childhood Center.

PRINCIPAL REPORTS

Secondary

FOCUS: FEBRUARY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

PIEDMONT INTERMEDIATE

Piedmont Intermediate designed our Professional Development day to reflect our annual goals of protecting instructional time and implementing best academic practices.

In the morning, we emphasized best academic practices. We concentrated on how we, as teachers, can model the practices we want students to learn. We then had experienced staff instruct their colleagues using personal experiences from the classroom. Small group collaboration allowed staff to dive into their successful classroom techniques, tips, and tricks. Our teachers presented in rotations over topics requested throughout the year, such as research tools, non-traditional presentations, classroom organization, and student mental health.

In the afternoon, we concentrated on protecting instructional time by collaborating in small focus groups regarding several springtime events and activities, including DUCK Week, enrollment, 4th-

grade transition activities, and testing. We will use focus group feedback to guide us as we incorporate these special events into our calendar. Teachers also heard from Mrs. Kaitlyn Smith to learn de-escalation techniques for student disruptions and from Mrs. Lauren Charney on how to be a more mindful teacher throughout the day. Both sessions were very beneficial in helping us all to reflect on how we preserve our classroom time for all students and maintain our enthusiasm.



MARCH 2023

PRINCIPAL REPORTS

Secondary

FOCUS: FEBRUARY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PIEDMONT



The staff at Piedmont Middle School spent the day learning from each other and growing stronger as a team. One of our focus goals this year has been to introduce and implement new instructional strategies with our staff. We started our morning with an instructional tour led by teacher leaders in our building to showcase instructional strategies that have been effective in their classrooms. We traveled the building to three instructional tour stops to provide teachers with a glimpse into classrooms and instructional layouts of their colleagues.

Our staff showcased the following instructional strategies during our tour:

- Entrance tickets
- Document cameras for guided notes and instruction
- Literature circles for all curriculum areas
- Guided instruction

We challenged our staff to find a way to incorporate one of the strategies into their classroom in the coming weeks.

We also had a “tech check” with our Technology Integration Coach, Mrs. Lizzie Charon. Lizzie provided a Schoology update and tips to help organize their information within the program. She also provided updates on exporting grades.

Our afternoon was spent with a guest speaker from Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Nate Gomez. Mr. Gomez led our staff through a variety of leadership activities to challenge our listening and focus skills. He also gave us opportunities to connect and grow closer as a team. He helped us to celebrate success from our year and to share struggles with our team, as well. Reconnecting as a team was refreshing! It gave us a newfound energy that will allow us to work together and finish our school year strong.

PIEDMONT HIGH SCHOOL

Piedmont High School spent the day learning and growing our craft as educators. We discussed our three focus points for the year:

1. Questioning
2. Application
3. Closure

We had administrator and teacher-led sessions throughout the morning, where teachers collaborated with colleagues, expanded their knowledge, and challenged each other to become better educators.

Mr. Jon Bakewell led our staff in a whole group activity to reconnect as a team. The intention was to establish relationships by working together.

Mrs. Charon, Technology Integration Coach, stopped by with Schoology updates and worked with teachers on questions regarding transferring data to PowerSchool from Schoology.

Mr. Tommy Buckner met with staff to explain how artificial intelligence is being utilized by PHS students. He emphasized how teachers can embrace this tool, and also addressed challenges in making sure students use their own voice and words on assignments.

Mr. Jewell had an application lesson in which teachers looked at the Bill of Rights and how it affects the local, state, and federal levels of government. He went on to talk about how teachers can utilize lessons to apply them to students’ everyday lives.

Finally, staff listened to Jessica Brown, Mr. Selph, and Dr. Cook explain how quality questioning can be utilized inside the classroom with supporting examples.

PRINCIPAL REPORTS

Elementary FOCUS: FEBRUARY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

In addition to district-provided professional development where teachers worked together to identify essential math standards, our elementary school sites provided the following opportunities for teachers.

STONE RIDGE ELEMENTARY

Stone Ridge Elementary focused on small group interventions and curriculum development for Science and Social Studies in each grade level. The 1st-grade team worked with the reading interventionist and reading specialist to identify areas in reading instruction that could be optimized in a small-group instructional setting.

In the afternoon, our 2nd-4th grade teachers worked in 30-minute increments to increase their understanding of small group instructional strategies for reading interventions with the reading interventionist and reading specialist.

The day concluded with a technology focus to maximize the utility of the interactive smart boards in classrooms. The district Instructional Technology Coach, Mrs. Lizzie Charon, presented a digital tool, Lumio, to our teachers. She demonstrated a sample lesson and activity with the tool, then walked the teachers through features that can make a difference in their instruction.

PIEDMONT ELEMENTARY

Piedmont Elementary second, third, and fourth-grade teams met during professional development to discuss curriculum and standards for the remainder of the school year for their specific grade level.

Teams discussed specific standards they should focus on during the last quarter of the school year. They also identified standards students have not mastered that should be revisited to ensure all students have grasped the material.

Teachers used iStation, Reflex Math, Mastery Connect, and HMH data to determine student progress, then changed their flex groups depending on those results.

First-grade teachers discussed and learned more about "Heart Words" and strategies for implementing those in the classroom. The discussion was led by first-grade teachers who have recently been or are currently being trained in Lexia LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling). Teachers then discussed the standards, what topics need to be revisited, and what standards are critical to our last quarter of the school year.



NORTHWOOD ELEMENTARY

Northwood first-grade teachers met with our Reading Specialist, Amy Bixler. Amy modeled a lesson on how to teach rhyming and phonological awareness through various multi-sensory activities. They also worked on creating materials to implement "Heart Words" techniques into their instruction on high-frequency words.

Second, third, and fourth-grade teachers collaborated among their teams. Using data from their math and reading common assessments, iStation, and Reflex Math, they identified standards their students have and have not mastered. They worked together to determine how to share students across grade levels to provide interventions.

PIEDMONT ECC

Piedmont Early Childhood Center had an exciting professional development day hosting Cushing educators and administrators. Their team toured our beautiful school, then met with classroom teachers for grade-level discussions.

Our staff enjoyed an engaging team collaboration activity and worked to establish common assessments on fourth-quarter standards for our students.