



West Plains School District Board Update

November 17, 2020

Academic Spotlight –

Each month the board of education has an opportunity to hear academic spotlights on programs or classrooms around the district. This month, Jim Laughary and Becky Wernsing updated the board on the South Central Career Central Practical nursing program. Mrs. Wernsing spoke about the new Holographic patient simulation equipment from MedCognition. The simulation helps students experience realistic medical simulation in the classroom and the clinical workspace.

Academic Update –

Greg Carter and Tiffany Young gave an update to the board on teaching and learning at the elementary and secondary levels. Dr. Carter spoke about RPDC essential standard training, a new 4th grade reading improvement plan and an elementary virtual handbook. Mrs. Young talked about a virtual learning guide, 2nd semester online enrollment dates, and placement testing for incoming 9th grade students.

Capital Improvements Update -

Dr. Davis gave an update on current fall projects, including the South Fork cafeteria and hallway, Zizzer Stadium elevator, bottle filling stations around the district, ZPA flag pole, and the SCCC culinary arts classroom.

Substitute Pay and Substitute Nurse Pay – Approval

Last month, Dr. Davis presented to the board a chart on substitute pay rates. The district is currently the lowest in the area, and it has become an issue when attracting subs, especially during COVID-19. Dr. Davis recommended to the board to increase the rates. Regular substitute full day will increase to \$100 per day, long term full day to \$125 per day (10+ consecutive days), district retired certified teachers to \$125 per day, and nurse pay to \$125 per day. The board approved the substitute pay increases beginning January 4, 2021.

MSBA Policies – 2nd Read

Each year, the school board reviews policy recommendations and adjusts as needed. Board members were given the annual MSBA Board policy update to review. These policies are scheduled to be approved at the December board meeting.

Approval of the 2019-2020 Audit

Nick Schultz from Shultz, Wood, & Rapp presented the findings of the annual district audit to the School Board. Mr. Shultz reported that the district remains in compliance with the state budgeting and finance requirements. All Missouri school districts are required to have an independent audit conducted each year. The board unanimously approved the report from Shultz, Wood, & Rapp.

Update on Return to Learn Plan

Dr. Wilson recommended to modify the current Return to Learn plan based on new quarantine guidance. Last week Governor Mike Parson, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) announced the state made a change to the quarantine guidelines for schools. The full press release can be read [HERE](#), but in essence, those who are properly wearing a mask during their exposure to a person who has tested positive to COVID19 may be exempt from quarantine. The district is still working through the guidelines, but the following update is available:

1. District procedures will remain the same through the end of this semester, with 7-12 grades remaining hybrid.
2. Masking rules will not change at this time. More information on the masking rules can be found at www.zizzers.org/returntolearn.

Spring Semester Return to Learn Update

Currently, the **district plans for all grades to return to school in regular seated classes on January 4, 2020.** (**pending** additional guidance, COVID cases in the area, etc.) Virtual/online enrollment is still an option. Enrollment dates will be released after Thanksgiving break.

- a. Grades 5-12 will remain masked, and the current opt-out mask clause will change. Only students with a medical excuse or those with disabilities can opt-out of wearing a mask.
- b. To comply with the quarantine guidance, specific information regarding masks has been provided **here**.
- c. No changes are being made for grades PreK-4 at this time. PreK-4 students are not required to mask, will continue to attend school as normal, and social distance as much as possible.

Faculty & Staff Quarantine Assurances

With the support of the Howell County Health Department, the board approved changes to the current faculty return to work procedures and will be made effective immediately. If a district employee has been in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 or the 48 hours prior to symptoms and has been quarantined by the Howell County Health Department:

- District employees must stay home for five days (120 hours) and then must receive a negative test to return to work. If the employee provides documentation of a negative test, they may return to work but must wear a mask for the 14 days after exposure. **The procedure does not change for faculty and staff who test positive for COVID-19 or are presumed positive.**
- Return to Work Expectations 14 days after exposure.
 - Remain masked at all times, no exceptions
 - Will eat/drink in isolation (non-group or co-worker settings)
 - Come to work and leave work at prescribed times.
 - Perform daily personal home wellness checks
 - Perform two (2) temperature checks with the building nurse
 - Will isolate immediately if demonstrate any COVID-19 related symptoms.
 - If symptoms appear, the employee must remain at home.

File for Board Candidate – December 15, 2020 – January 19, 2021

Board candidate election filing opens 8:00 a.m. on December 15 and runs through 5:00 p.m. January 19, 2020. Jim Thompson and Brian Mitchell are in their final year of a three-year term. All seats will be up for election in April.

GOCSD - #BeAMOTeacher

Director of Communications Lana Snodgras spoke about a partnership with GOSCD to begin a teacher recruitment marketing campaign in Southern Missouri. The West Plains School District, Branson School District, Republic School District, and Springfield Public Schools are leading the campaign. The communications professionals at each district and GOSCD are working together to create marketing templates to share with other school districts in southern Missouri. The campaign will focus on the students, current teachers, and retired teacher testimonials. The campaign will be featured on KY3 starting in January. A special highlight of the campaign is the opportunity for the West Plains School District to highlight our own students and teachers. More info to come.

COVID Antigen Testing

Dr. Wilson recommended the district have the ability to administer the COVID 19 Antigen test for teachers and students as needed. All faculty, staff, and parents must sign a consent/release form to receive the test. The board approved COVID testing for faculty, staff, and students.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Wilson updated the board on the of future virtual programs, discussed the spring semester, and changes to the middle school parent pick up lines. Dr. Wilson also asked each building principal to give an update on their school.

Hires:

Julie Dunn - Educational Diagnostician (2021-22 School Year)
Jermyn Vance - Paraprofessional
Hope Lyon - Paraprofessional
Tamara Davis - Paraprofessional
Alexis Hayes - Paraprofessional
Lindsey Henderson - Paraprofessional

Resignations

Pam Topliff - Full time route bus driver (Transportation) - Retirement
Susan Wells - 2nd Grade teacher (WPES) - Retirement
Dena Shannon - FACS teacher (WPMS) - Retirement
Katie McKee - Nurse (SFES) - End of school year
Barabara Rutledge - 2nd Grade teacher (WPES) - Retirement
Stephanie Dow - Process Coordinator (SPED) - Retirement
Melissa Morton - SPED teacher (WPMS) - End of school year
Jeanne Harris - Social Studies teacher (WPMS) - Retirement
Teresa Earnhardt - Paraprofessional (WPES)
Alina Johnson - Paraprofessional (WPMS)
Cameron Howell - Paraprofessional (WPMS)
Trish Brown - Full time route bus driver (Transportation) – Retirement

The next board meeting is scheduled for December 15, 2020 at the South Fork Elementary. *School board meetings are held monthly on the third Tuesday of each month, unless otherwise posted.*