

# PIEDMONT FOCUS

MONTHLY NEWS & UPDATES FROM PIEDMONT PUBLIC SCHOOLS





# PIEDMONT Public Schools

## BOARD OF EDUCATION MARCH 2024 MEETING UPDATES

### ROLL CALL

All board members were present.

### BOARD MEMBER OATHS

President, Layne Jones administered the Oath of Office to newly elected member, Neal Cast, Seat #4



### BOARD REORGANIZATION

The board was reorganized into the following:

- Mr. Layne Jones, President
- Mrs. Katie Cornman, Vice President
- Mr. Derek Jones, Clerk
- Mr. Jerrod Moser, Deputy Clerk
- Mr. Neal Cast, Member

### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Jonathon Hisey, City Council Member, and Piedmont parent, addressed the board regarding the residential growth in the area. He believes the Zonda growth report was inaccurate, reporting 2,700 homes. According to his account, there are 6,000 future lots identified. Several developments were left off of the report, according to Mr. Hisey. He believes area growth outpaces what the district can build to accommodate students. He urged the community to send letters to Piedmont City Council asking to slow the growth in the area.

### SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Mrs. Lisa Campbell and Mr. Mark Melton addressed the board in celebration of our school site teacher of the year honorees. The PPS Board of

Education thanked these individuals for their work and contributions to our students.

- Piedmont Early Childhood Center - Dr. Rae Lightfoot
- Northwood Elementary - Jennifer Lawson
- Piedmont Elementary - Lisa Nunes
- Stone Ridge Elementary - Emily Buckingham
- Piedmont Intermediate - Amanda Baustert
- Middle School of Piedmont- Hannah Sawyers
- Piedmont High School - Kelly Beck

### BOARD REPORTS

Dr. Eichelberger highlighted a few points in the district and school site updates provided to the board.

### BUSINESS ITEMS

A. The board discussed the Executive Director of Special Services job description. Dr. Eichelberger explained how the district is reorganizing the special services department where one individual is in charge. The board unanimously approved this job description.

B. The board discussed the Assistant Athletic Director job description. Dr. Eichelberger explained that the Department of Athletics and Activities will add another assistant director. This change allows the assistant athletic director to also coach. The board unanimously approved this job description.

C.-J. The board discussed and approved changes to the following policies:

- CO-R2 Food Allergy Guidelines
- EFBCA-R2 Social Media and Digital Communication.
- EHBC Special Education
- EIED Graduation Requirements
- FFACA Medication - Administering to Students
- FNCE Report Students Under the Influence
- FNCGA Weapons Free Schools
- FNG Wireless Telecommunication Devices

The drafts of these policies will be finalized and added to the website by Monday, April 15th, 2024.



# PIEDMONT

## Public Schools

K. The board discussed approving a contract with S&B CPAs & Associates for the 2023-24 Audit. There was discussion regarding how the previous auditor is downsizing and the lead auditor has more than 15 years of experience in education auditing. She also lives in the school district. The contract was unanimously approved.

L. The board discussed the consolidation of six (6) district bank accounts at F&M Bank to two (2) accounts. This action was approved.

M. The board approved the following: In the absence of the President and/or Clerk, the acting President will be Katie Cornman, and/or acting Clerk for the School District will be Jerrod Moser. This will allow the board to execute any and all documents pertaining to setting the maturities, date, time, and place of the bond sale.

N. The board approved a special board meeting on Thursday, May 2nd at noon to determine the maturities for the sale of the \$9,920,000 Taxable Combined Purpose Building Bonds for this School District; and designating bond counsel for this issuance of bonds.

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### CONSENT AGENDA

Items A-I were approved on the consent agenda with the amended attachment A.

### FINANCIAL REPORT

Jennifer Fuller, Piedmont Schools Chief Financial Officer, provided a financial report update to the board.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

The board convened into executive session at 7:29 p.m. for the purpose of:

- Discussing employment as listed on Attachment C. 25 O.S. § 307(B)(1)
- Discussing re-employment of district and site administrators as listed on Attachment D. 25 O.S. § 307 (B)(1)
- Discussing re-employment of certified staff as listed on Attachment E. 25 O.S. § 307 (B)(1)
- Discussing re-employment of support staff as listed on Attachment F. 25 O.S. § 307 (B)(1)
- Discussion of possible purchase and acquisition of real property. 25 O.S. § 307 (B)(3)

The board returned to open session at 9:09 p.m

### ACTION ITEMS

A. The board unanimously approved the amended version of employment as listed in Attachment C. This included the title change of Mr. Matthew Shellenberger to Athletic Director.

B. The board unanimously approved the amended version on re-employment of district and site administrators as listed in Attachment D.

C. The board unanimously approved re-employment of certified staff as listed in Attachment E.

D. The board unanimously approved re-employment of support staff as listed in Attachment F.

E. There was no action taken on the acquisition of real property.

### NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

### SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Eichelberger's report is included in the April Piedmont Focus under "Superintendent's Report"

### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:19 p.m.



# PIEDMONT

## Public Schools



## SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Thank you to our entire school community for your overwhelming support in approving our bond by 81% in the recent vote. It is truly a privilege to serve in a district where the community demonstrates such incredible support for our schools.

The statistics speak volumes: with 2,049 yes votes and only 473 no votes, totaling 2,522 votes, the 2024 bond's success is evident. This is a remarkable increase from the 1,541 total votes cast in 2020.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the Piedmont Education Foundation and F&M Bank for their invaluable support throughout this endeavor. Their assistance with yard signs, stickers, t-shirts, social media, and banners played a crucial role in spreading awareness and garnering support. Special recognition goes to Riley Thomas, PPS Communications Coordinator, whose ownership and efforts were pivotal in achieving a bond approval rate exceeding 80%.

Additionally, I want to express gratitude to our staff. The dedication and tireless efforts in engaging with our community members have been instrumental in securing their support for the bond.

As I've always believed, a great school district is built upon the foundation of hiring and retaining outstanding individuals. Our recent Piedmont Schools Job Fair was a testament to the district we are building, with a great turnout and letters of intent extended to four outstanding educators. Thank you to Patty Balensiefen, her staff, and all others who contributed to making the job fair a resounding success!

These are exciting times for Piedmont Public Schools!



# DISTRICT UPDATES



## PLANNING FOR NEXT SCHOOL YEAR PIEDMONT INTERMEDIATE

As we plan for the upcoming school year, 5th-grade teachers from Piedmont Intermediate had an opportunity to visit Redstone Elementary, a Yukon school site. Their visit allowed them time to collaborate with the Redstone team to gain insights into their instructional methods, particularly how they provide only one transition for 5th-grade students for core classes.

We are confident this change will help us continue to shift to a more age-appropriate approach for our students at Piedmont Intermediate.



Our Piedmont Intermediate 5th grade Academic Team and their leader, Jammie Kimmel won the Academic Team Beta Bowl, undefeated 4-0! They out scored three of their four opponents by more than 400 cumulative points! We are so proud of our Wildcats!

## ENROLLMENT CENTER

	3-5-2024	5-4-2024
PIEDMONT ECC	636	637
NORTHWOOD ELEM.	489	489
PIEDMONT ELEM.	447	444
STONE RIDGE ELEM.	644	644
PIEDMONT INTERMEDIATE	859	859
MIDDLE SCHOOL	766	763
HIGH SCHOOL	1521	1526
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5369</b>	<b>5362</b>



## EXCITING CHANGES TO PRE-KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENT AT PIEDMONT ECC

This year, we made significant changes to our enrollment process at Piedmont Early Childhood Center. Transitioning from an all-online to an in-person approach, we provided families with a more immersive experience.

With four sessions to best accommodate differing schedules, Wildcat families had the chance to explore the school, meet our dedicated Early Childhood Center Administrators, and ensure enrollment paperwork was completed properly. This personal touch helped alleviate anxieties, especially for families enrolling for the first time.

Feedback from families was overwhelmingly positive, affirming the effectiveness of this revamped process. We're excited to continue providing exceptional educational experiences and welcoming new families to our schools.



# DISTRICT UPDATES



## RECRUITING THE BEST ACROSS THE STATE

In March, Piedmont Public Schools took full advantage of recruiting season. Our team engaged with candidates from Oklahoma State University, the University of Oklahoma, Southwestern Oklahoma State University, and Oklahoma City University.

Our tagline, "IT MATTERS WHERE YOU WORK," resonated with candidates, leaving a lasting impression. Testimonials from our alumni of these respective universities further emphasized what distinguishes Piedmont Public Schools from other districts!

Participation in these career fairs allowed us to develop meaningful connections with prospective employees. We were eager to showcase the fantastic opportunities in our school district and inspire the next generation of educators. By participating in these events, we hope to attract top talent and ensure the continued success of Piedmont Public Schools.



## PIEDMONT SCHOOL LEADERS ATTEND CCOSA WOMEN IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Female leaders from Piedmont Schools District Office recently participated in the CCOSA Women in School Leadership Conference, held over two days in Downtown Oklahoma City.

Attendees participated in a range of breakout sessions, including battling burnout, crisis communication, and navigating career advancements in educational leadership, providing valuable insights and strategies for success. Dr. Ebony Johnson, Superintendent of Tulsa Public Schools, delivered an empowering address, setting the tone for the conference.

Keynote speakers, panel discussions, and interactive sessions provided our team with tools to excel in their respective roles. The conference provided opportunities for networking, learning, and professional growth.



Thank you to Bob Henley from Servias Ministries. \$6,000 of student school meal debt at Piedmont Elementary has been wiped out thanks to his incredible generosity.

# DISTRICT UPDATES

## OPERATIONS

### MAINTENANCE UPDATE:

- In March, 126 work orders were completed district-wide.
- All maintenance staff plan to return for the 2024-25 school year.
- New dedicated floor covering tarps were delivered to Piedmont Elementary & Piedmont Intermediate.
- A new floor covering has been ordered for the new Middle School gym.
- Whiteboards were replaced in portable classrooms 1-8 at Piedmont Intermediate.
- Numbers have been painted in the back parking lot of Piedmont Intermediate, designating fire evacuation meetup spots for each class.

### TRANSPORTATION UPDATE:

Reviewing safety procedures for inclement weather with Mr. Bilyeu and our staff during severe weather season

- In the event of a tornado warning, we will hold at the school before students are released.
- If an unexpected tornado develops while transporting students, we will immediately report to the nearest school site with a tornado shelter.

Planning for next school year:

- Monitoring new housing developments
- Anticipating the need for new bus routes to accommodate growth
- Noting new street names and hundred blocks to input into our mapping system to stay up to date when new students enroll from these neighborhoods and need bus service
- We expect minimal turnover among our bus drivers next year.



### FUTURE CHEFS AT PIEDMONT SCHOOLS

Sodexo's Future Chef Program saw a remarkable turnout this year, with 14 talented young chefs showcasing their culinary skills. Amongst the impressive entries, six finalists emerged to compete in the district finals. Held at Stone Ridge on March 7th, the event centered around the theme of "Home Recipes."

The judges were blown away by the creativity of all the dishes, but Jon Jantz from Stone Ridge Elementary stole the show with his delicious recipe, Babbish Salmon. His victory earns him a shot at the regional competition and potentially Nationals later this year. What a fun opportunity to encourage students to explore cooking and new foods!





# DISTRICT UPDATES

## ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES UPDATE

### ACTIVITIES HIGHLIGHTS:

#### Band:

Both Middle School Piedmont 7th and 8th Grade Bands achieved O.S.S.A.A. Outstanding Achievement Awards with 'Superior' ratings at district contests. Additionally, several students excelled at the O.S.S.A.A. District Solo & Ensemble contest.

#### Winter Guard:

PHS Junior Varsity Winter Guard ranked 5th at the Winter Guard International Regional competition, while the Varsity Winter Guard reached finals, securing 7th place out of 26 groups, marking a first-time achievement for Piedmont.

#### Vocal Music:

Middle School Choir students received Superior Scores at the OSSAA District Choir Contest.

#### Esports:

With 40 students on the roster, spring season commenced in five games including Mario Kart, Super Smash Brothers, Splatoon 3, and Rocket League.

#### Cheer/Pom:

High School Cheer Stunt recorded 3 wins and 3 losses, while Pom Tryouts welcomed new members for both High School and Middle School teams.

### ATHLETICS HIGHLIGHTS:

#### Winter Sports Awards:

Boys Basketball and Girls Basketball teams received OCA Large West All State selections and OSSAA Academic Achievement Awards. Wrestling teams also achieved OCA Large West All State Selections with notable individual achievements.

#### Spring Sports Highlights:

##### Baseball:

Varsity and Junior Varsity teams showed strong performances.

##### Golf:

Piedmont Golf teams have secured victories in various tournaments.

##### Soccer:

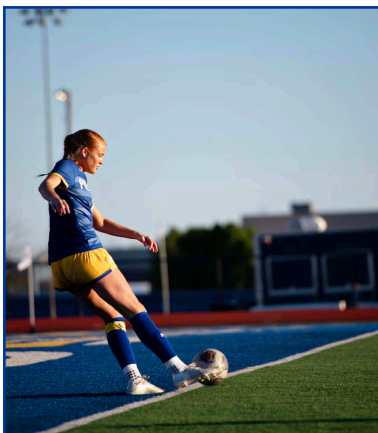
Both Boys and Girls Soccer teams kicked off their seasons are showcasing impressive skills at the 6A level.

##### Tennis:

Girls and Boys Tennis teams showcased impressive performances in multiple tournaments.

##### Track and Field:

Several school records were broken within the first four weeks of the season, demonstrating remarkable individual achievements.





# PRINCIPAL REPORTS



## **NORTHWOOD ELEMENTARY:**

On March 12, our 2nd-grade LEAP students visited Rose State, where they immersed themselves in the Tennessee Theatre's enchanting productions of Little Red Riding Hood and The Three Little Pigs. Throughout the year, these students have been exploring twisted fairytales and identifying point-of-view, making this theatrical experience both enjoyable and educational. The students loved seeing the vibrant characters come to life on stage.

March was a month of collaboration for our 4th-grade LEAP students, who devoted time to building the set and props for Mrs. Pope's 2nd-grade performance of The Bremen Town Musicians. They acquired valuable practical skills by safely mastering the use of power tools!

Using photographs taken by Ms. Kimmel during her Fund for Teachers professional development in Europe last summer, they showcased their creativity by crafting an educational slideshow entertaining parents and community members before the show started. Students researched the Grimm Brothers, Fairytale Road, and historical landmarks in Bremen.

## **STONE RIDGE ELEMENTARY:**

Stone Ridge Elementary teachers have shown exceptional dedication this year, prioritizing fun and engaging learning experiences. Committees comprising representatives from each grade level and focus area have been established to enhance our school environment and activities. The Professional Development Committee has spearheaded initiatives resulting in enhanced writing strategies, small group reading focus, and behavior visuals for classroom use. The DUCK Week Committee collaborated with high school representatives to align Stone Ridge's support for DUCK Week with elementary-appropriate initiatives. Additionally, a committee oversees school-wide events such as Grandparents Day and Veterans Day assemblies. The collective effort of our staff in creating a positive and engaging environment for all students epitomizes the essence of Stone Ridge Elementary.

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## **PIEDMONT INTERMEDIATE:**

As we wrap up the 3rd quarter of the school year and distribute progress reports to all our students, Piedmont Intermediate continues to see the positive impact of transitioning to Standards-Based Grading for our 5th-grade students. This change has given a clearer picture of a student's learning progress on the essential standards by concentrating on skills rather than scores. It has increased student academic engagement by reducing the emphasis on late, missing, or low-score work and placing value on what students can show consistently. This system has allowed teachers more autonomy in helping all students achieve by building multiple opportunities for assessment throughout the year instead of one test on one day. As we plan for next school year, our 5th-grade teachers are gearing up to train others to continue to build upon the success of all our students by sharing their own experiences and lessons they learned along the way.

# PRINCIPAL REPORTS



## PIEDMONT ELEMENTARY:

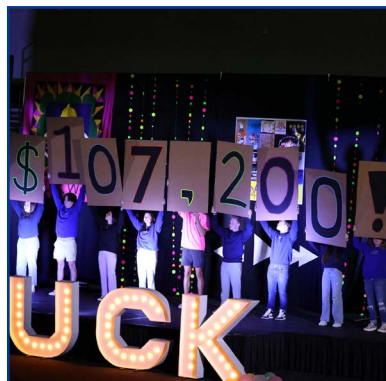
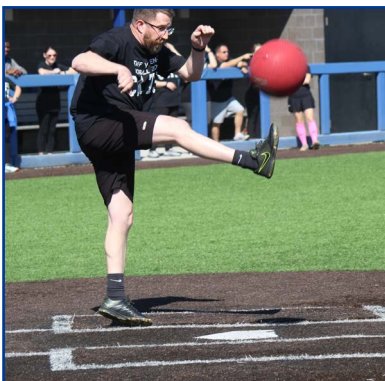
In March, our second-grade students participated in a Disney Sing Along led by Mr. Ham, our music teacher. The event featured a range of songs, including "You've Got a Friend in Me". The turnout was excellent, and our Wildcats were proud.

One parent shared their gratitude: "Thank you immensely for organizing such an enjoyable program for students and families. Olivia was thrilled to showcase these songs, knowing well the time and dedication invested in practice and refinement. Your evident passion for your craft and the genuine love you harbor for what you do shine through in every aspect of your work. We deeply appreciate your kindness and unwavering commitment to our students, particularly to Olivia. We consider ourselves fortunate to have you, Mr. Ham!"

## MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PIEDMONT

Middle School of Piedmont is preparing for STATE TESTING! Our first test is scheduled for April 23rd, and we're eager for our students to showcase their knowledge. Our teachers have developed essential testing strategies to maximize student success across all subject areas. We're actively practicing and discussing these strategies. After the tests, we have planned a Testing Celebration party featuring inflatable obstacle courses and treat trucks. Our grade-level goal is to achieve a 10% increase in academic growth, and we're providing various reteaching and review opportunities to ensure preparedness.

During state testing, we'll have volunteer opportunities for parents at MSP. They can join STUCO to decorate our hallways or assist as test session proctors if their schedule allows. With a deliberate focus on encouragement and effective testing strategies, we're confident our students will excel this testing season.



## PIEDMONT HIGH SCHOOL:

The week of March 11th was the annual Piedmont High School DUCK week. A smashing success with more than \$107,000 raised to benefit two recipients battling challenging health issues. The student council and DUCK Week committee did an incredible job organizing and preparing for such a busy week.



# PRINCIPAL REPORTS



## PIEDMONT EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

Spring is always an exciting time with DUCK Week, Spring Break, egg hunts, and the anticipation of opening enrollment for incoming PreK students for the following year. This year, we introduced a new in-person enrollment process with a Parent Forum. The PreK Parent Forum provided an invaluable opportunity for new families to familiarize themselves with our school community. Hosted within our building, principals guided parents through informative discussions, an introduction to key staff members, and a tour of our beautiful building.

Additionally, parents received practical tips on facilitating a smooth transition for their child at home, ensuring a seamless adjustment to the school environment. Discussions also outlined expectations for the upcoming fall semester, setting a clear framework for parents to support their child's educational development. The forum was pivotal for fostering collaboration and support between parents, staff, and the school community.

In addition to the enriching experiences offered during the ECC PreK Parent Forum, parents also had the opportunity to submit completed enrollment paperwork in person. This convenience ensured a streamlined process for parents, allowing them to directly address any questions and finalize essential documentation with school staff. By offering this service, we aimed to alleviate any potential stress associated with paperwork submission and foster a sense of reassurance among parents as they embark on their child's educational journey.

