

Parent Advisory Council

Question of the Month - What priorities should be considered during budget planning?

Dr. Huff provided an update for the month.

- COVID numbers are still looking really good:
 - 33 student positives
 - 15 employee positives
 - 874 students between ages 5-11 who have received the vaccine
 - These may be CMCSS students, but they may be students in other schools
- Last meeting, our board decided they would go with a search firm for the permanent Director of Schools (TSBA).
 - After the initial review, the interviews will begin around April, and then the person will have a July 1 start date.
- We are going through a rezoning; we are opening up a new Middle School and a High School the following year.
- Parents had an opportunity to preview the logo for the Kirkwood Complex to offer feedback. Parents overall liked the logo and did not have any additional feedback for improvement.

Carol Joiner, General Counsel for the District, delivered a review of legislation from the 2021 Legislative Sessions that the district is expected to follow.

- Typically the General Assembly meets in January-April; once things happen, I spend time interpreting and determining how things will affect our school system.
- Sometimes the laws that come into effect will require additional rules and policies, so we await those processes as well.
- Periodic updates with the Board - we will review our local policies, and discuss them with the Board so they are aware of any changes.
- **Specific Legislation from 2021 Sessions - Links to Public Chapters on the Secretary of State's Website**
 - Licensure Flexibility
 - [Permits/exemptions](#) - Allows flexibility for the commissioner to issue endorsements in certain areas so that districts can hire more teachers without the added steps of pursuing a teaching license.
 - [Reciprocity](#) - Out of state teachers with the equivalent professional license will receive a TN license without taking Praxis exams.
 - [Nonrenewal](#) - LEA must send any notice of nonrenewal to an educator within five business days following the last instructional day. Major change was that the nonrenewal is effective on being "sent," rather than "received."
 - [Coach Training](#)

- Makes requirements of training for coaches, whether they are employees or volunteers (use of AEDs, CPR training, etc.); it will require us to provide notification to parents of these trainings, which is a new expectation.
 - This legislation was a great example of ways that we are ahead of the game.
- [Immunization records for military dependents](#)
 - Out-of-state immunization records are sufficient to allow students to enroll in public schools.
- [Accommodations](#)
 - Must accommodate a student or employee who desires greater privacy when using restrooms/changing facilities.
- [Academic Acceleration Policy](#)
 - LEAs must approve a policy that mandated certain requirements for determining advanced course eligibility. Also requires parents receive written notice of students' eligibility for advanced coursework.
- [Family Life Program](#)
 - All LEAs required to adopt a family life curriculum.
- Curriculum
 - [Parent Notice](#) - 30-day notice prior to commencing instruction on sexual orientation or gender identity. The parent has the right to review and opt-out.
 - [Prohibited Topics](#) - LEAs cannot include or promote certain concepts regarding race or sex.
- [Child Abuse Reporting](#)
 - Corrected certain concerns from legislation in 2020. The 2020 legislation prohibited districts from letting parents know if there was an allegation that could rise to the level of a Title IX offense, which was a violation of federal law. Provided certain conditions for which districts can notify parents.
- [Teacher's Discipline Act](#)
 - We are working toward implementing this one - it doesn't go into effect until January 1, but we are in the process of implementing a new process to bring us into compliance with a law.
- [Open Enrollment](#)
 - Required an open enrollment process of all districts; this was something we were already doing pretty much in alignment with the law; we look every year at projected enrollment and we will provide notice of schools that have open spots.

Questions:

- How will open enrollment be affected by rezoning?
 - We will not post open seats until after we finalize rezoning, but we will have our standard enrollment process for schools and programs of choice.

Carol Joiner's full presentation can be accessed [here](#).

Dr. Kimmie Sucharski, Director of Assessment and Accountability, delivered an update about ESSER funding and special grant funds that the district receives.

- ESSER stands for the Elementary and secondary Emergency Relief Act
- Part of the CARES act, and American Rescue Plan that were passed by the Congress
- ESSER 1 - \$6,085,141 - Object was school reopening
 - March 2020 - June 2022
 - Includes non-public schools
 - Resources to meet needs of students to re-open buildings (PPE, technology for remote instruction, planning for long-term closures)
- ESSER 2 - \$26,035,378 - Shoring up infrastructure so buildings were accessible
 - March 2020 - June 2023
 - Resources to address local needs
 - Technology
 - Planning for long-term closures
 - Building upgrades (HVAC systems, deferred maintenance)
- ESSER 3 - \$58,471,762 (associated with ARP) - Reopening, continued navigation of the national pandemic
 - March 2020-June 2024
 - Facility needs
 - Learning loss (at least 20%)
- Associated Relief Funding
 - Learning Camps and Learning Camps Transportation - \$5,132,689, total
 - ARP Homeless (specifically to support homeless students) - \$625,521, total
 - Epidemiology & Laboratory Capacity (ELC) - \$9,772,164
 - Early Literacy Network - \$100,000
 - HQIM Literacy Implementation Network - \$83,000
 - Literacy Training Teacher Grant - \$300,000
 - ARP IDEA Grant - \$1,998,618
 - Innovative High Schools - \$1,546,847

Questions:

- What will happen to some of the positions when the money runs out? Specifically the positions to monitor the funding?
 - Typically, when we have grant-funded positions, we are very open about the expiration date of that grant. We support these positions by either folding their money into our General Purpose budget, or we support them by helping them find other opportunities in the district.
- How are students doing academically? Can we see that there was learning loss experienced in our students?
 - What we are seeing is not necessarily learning lost, but instruction interrupted. We have been working on assessing our students to see where they are, what

they missed, and how we can accelerate to make up the gaps. We are anticipating it will be 3 years, and our kids will be back to where they were before COVID. Not only recovering from what was interrupted, but moving them forward.

- As we're figuring out what to leave out, condense, etc...are we going to end up learning what concepts we need and what we don't? It will just be interesting to watch.
- Did you say that Algebra II is being taught in 8th Grade?
 - Essentially, the way the standards have changed in the last several years, it is much more demanding than it was in prior years.
- When did our three years start?
 - I'm starting our three years from Fall 2020.
- My son is having a circumstance where he has not had a teacher for 2 weeks as his old teacher left, and a new teacher has not come in...how do we make up that gap?
 - It is certainly a struggle. We have a lot of supports in our system for incoming teachers so they can really begin working effectively with students from the first day to make up for some of these gaps, but it is certainly a challenge.
- What is SchoolsPLP?
 - It is like having a bookcase and a school online. Schools can access their resources there to help them and support them. It requires independence from children, and it is lessons they can access themselves.
- I have a friend whose kids have struggled with PLP, and I just wanted to bring that up. Their grades have suffered with PLP, because they are not getting the level of instruction they are used to with a teacher.
 - I would recommend having her (parent) reach out to the school, because the school makes those decisions and they may not be aware that there are some grading issues at play in that classroom.
- In elementary, the online tests have made it hard for us to keep up with where students are missing things, how to help them make up where they have missed things, because they have already moved on to other things...because they do not have computers, they cannot pull it up as easily.
- It also seems like in elementary they are getting a lot of tests without a lot of preparation. She (daughter) gets a study guide the day before and it just does not seem like a lot of support.
 - Both of these points are great feedback points. We will ensure they are captured for our Senior Leadership Team.
- The grading scale is also a little frustrating (the 93-100). Protect their social time too - their playtime. We know we have got to accelerate, but it seems like our kids don't have a lot of time to unwind and have that social time.
 - Thank you for that feedback. We will take that back as well.
- My kindergartner - is she behind at all?
 - She is right on track! We are not factoring students who were not already actively learning in schools before the point where the pandemic began.

Dr. Sucharski's full presentation can be accessed [here](#).