

Administrators, non-teachers get salary boost

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

Saturday, 15 August 2009 21:56 - Last Updated Saturday, 15 August 2009 22:01

Negotiations continue for teacher pay, benefits

Administrators and non-certified staff got a raise but teachers will have to wait.

At their meeting Monday night, District 20 board members approved a salary and benefit increase of 4.99% for administrators and 5.8% for non-certified staff who are employees who don't teach or administrate.

The board entered into an hour-long closed session to discuss teacher salaries and benefits but made no decision when the meeting reopened.

Last year, administrative salaries and benefits were boosted 4.78% while non-certified employees received raises ranging from 2.5% to 6.7%. In 2006-07, non-certified staff saw a 5.35% increase.

Nate Wyatt, who serves on the negotiations committee, said what non-certified staff is paid affects a large subset of employees.

"We want to stay competitive," Wyatt said, noting that an increase in minimum wage this year impacted the salary/benefit package.

Cash for clunkers hopeful

On another matter, the district hopes to be part of the federal "Cash for Clunkers" program in

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which new vehicle buyers receive money to trade in older vehicles for newer, fuel-efficient ones.

Members voted to buy a 2009 Chevrolet Impala from Pony Express Chevrolet by trading in one of their 15-passenger vans that must be eliminated from the fleet because of safety concerns.

Even if their application in the federal program is denied, the board authorized superintendent Mike Teahon to buy the vehicle at a price not to exceed \$21,881 which includes a \$2,500 rebate.

If cash for clunkers is approved, the district will receive the \$2,500 rebate and \$4,500 for the van trade-in which would bring the cost of the car to \$17,381.

New computers for district

Board members also approved the purchase of 50 MacBook laptop computers:

- 25 for a mobile cart and 10 for the elementary media center at Dudley
- 12 to complete a mobile computer cart in the high school
- three for federal programs

Thanks to federal stimulus funds, the cost of 20 of the new computers in the elementary will be covered.

In other action, the board transferred \$200,000 from the general to the bond fund to retire long-term debt and \$200,000 into the depreciation fund before the fiscal year ends Sept. 1.

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Money in the depreciation fund will be used for capital outlay such as for the purchase of vehicles, roofs or instructional equipment.

Board members also approved putting \$15,000 from the general fund in the activities fund to cover such things as uniforms or equipment.

No speakers at hearing

Two separate public hearings, where no one spoke, were conducted on the district's student fees and parental involvement policies.

After closing the hearings, the board approved both policies for the 2009-10 school year.

The student fees policy outlines fees charged to students and the kinds of supplies and materials they are expected to provide while the parental involvement policy defines the process parents must follow when reviewing textbooks or monitoring classes.

An addition to the policy will be a \$25 fee for a new art club this year.

Parental involvement guidelines cover such things as reviewing textbooks and curriculum, how complaints are handled and other things.

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Polices approved

During other action, members passed several policies and revisions dealing with the use of school facilities, admission and immunization, option enrollment and capacity, assessments, use of public resources by board members and employees and conflict of interest which now allows board members to substitute teach.

In other business, the board:

- voted to re-enter into membership and an interlocal agreement with the Nebraska Association of School Boards Medicaid Reimbursement Consortium. As part of the consortium, Teahon said the district receives about \$200,000 annually for health-related costs such as partial salaries for the school nurse and physical education teachers.
- approved requests for the following students to option into the district—fourth grader Noah Larson and ninth grader Amanda Larson from Cozad and 11th grader Jordon Baxter from Brady. Optioning out of the district will be eighth graders Katherine Mitchell and Sierra Schumm and 10th grader Sarah Steele into Brady and ninth grader Lucas Foster and 10th grader Alec Foster into Cozad.
- designated superintendent Teahon as the district representative for federal and state programs in 2009-10.
- set the board retreat for Sept. 2 at 2 p.m. The next regular school board meeting will be Sept. 14 at 7:30 p.m.
- learned that work is progressing on the remodeling of upper-level classrooms and the media center at Dudley Elementary. The area is expected to be ready for students in early to mid September. The board learned that fourth graders will be moved into the Community Building and classrooms set up in a health room, board room and wrestling room, fifth graders will be bussed to the former 100R Attendance Center in the morning and returned to Dudley for lunch and afternoon classes in kindergarten classrooms (until Sept. 8, kindergartners attend only for half days) and sixth graders will relocate in classrooms in the north hallway and a computer lab. A nearby high school classroom, used for industrial technology, will also serve as a sixth-grade classroom.
- heard that junior and senior high enrollment is expected at 417 students.
- were informed that the district will receive a \$13,000 dividend check from an insurance pool in which it is a member.
- found out that Dawson Public Power District is charging for service to idle buildings like the 100R Attendance Center the district owns.

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