

Window open for early retirement

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

Friday, 17 January 2014 15:44 -

PATRONS WANT POLICY	
<p>The mother of a Gothenburg High School seventh grader thinks the district needs a policy dealing with the notification of parents in certain circumstances.</p> <p>At the Monday night meeting of the District 20 school board, the mother said she wasn't notified when another student snapped a cell-phone photo of her daughter in a state of undress in a locker room during gym class.</p> <p>Although administrators made sure the photo was deleted and the offending student suspended, the mother said she wants a policy dealing with such issues in addition to parental notification.</p> <p>School board president Scott France said the board would do everything it could to have a policy in place and would set up a meeting for the mother to talk to</p>	<p>administrators about the issue.</p> <p>The student's grandmother said she felt her granddaughter's privacy was grossly invaded.</p> <p>"You guys are supposed to make students feel safe while they're in school," she said.</p> <p>District 20 does have a policy with consequences, dealing with "sexting," or recording others through photographs, texts, videotaping, sound recording, etc. that is sexual in nature.</p> <p>The district also has an anti-bullying policy in place to provide a physically safe and emotionally secure environment for students and staff.</p> <p>Students can carry cell-phones in school but cannot use them without administrative approval and are asked to keep them out of sight.</p>

Policy offered for 12 days

Teachers wanting to retire early have until mid February to let administrators know they plan to retire early.

At their meeting Monday night, the District 20 school board passed a temporary early retirement incentive policy that will be in effect from Feb. 3-15.

A staff member asked the board to consider offering the policy, last active in 2007, to offer insurance incentives or an equivalent to assist employees considering long-term early retirement and to reduce costs to the district.

Maximum-salaried employees would be replaced with those making less money, said personnel board chair Nate Wyatt.

Employees must be at least 55 years old with at least 10 years of service to the district.

In other action, the board accepted the resignation of Bailey Koch who has taught special education, entrepreneurship and Spanish in the district for six years.

On another matter, the board extended Teahon's superintendent contract through June 30, 2017.

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Board members also discussed the 2014-15 school calendar which they'll approve at the Feb. 10 meeting.

School is proposed to start Aug. 14 and end May 17 with the last day determined by dismissals during the year for snowstorms or tournaments.

Early dismissals for staff to collaborate would begin at 2 p.m. instead of 1:30 p.m.

At the end of the meeting, the board went into closed session, for about 10 minutes, to discuss a real estate purchase, a student and a personnel issue and campus safety and security.

No action was taken.

In other business, the board:

learned that school officials are considering a design/build approach for a north gymnasium rooftop project.

were informed that the city can proceed with application for a Safe Routes to School grant.

discovered that students, staff and a board member attended a digital citizen conference in Kearney to learn about technology and changes to social media.

were apprised that student detentions are higher for fall semester compared to last year—223 to 163— and that the number of kids having to attend Saturday school is about the same.

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were told that kindergarten and first grade will celebrate 100 days of school on Jan. 24 and that JumpStart, a preschool program for incoming kindergartners, is tentatively set for July 14-Aug. 1.

listened to a presentation by reading intervention specialist Claudine Kennicutt about a corrective reading program she's implemented for junior high and some elementary students.

heard an update on FFA activities by vice-president Courtney Brown and sentinel Carson Messersmith. Board members learned that the organization sold \$37,000 worth of fruit during the holiday season.

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