

November 13, 2023

# BEARCAT BOARD STORY



Educating for Excellence....the Bearcat Way!

## IT'S ALWAYS EXCITING TO BE A BEARCAT!

The Gasconade County R-1 School Board met on Thursday, November 9, 2023 for the regular board meeting and an executive session.

The Regular Board Meeting began the MOCAAT Investment Strategies presentation. Mr. Hoffman from PMA Financial Network LLC, shared the investment strategy their firm uses and how it will positively impact our district. PMA Financial works with over 195 Missouri Schools; they project and provide financial safety, liquidity and yield for schools. We anticipate positive financial results from their investment management and bond management programs.

The next presentation was from Adariana Samuelson. Adariana is an FCCLA Student who's FCCLA Star Project was on Upgrading the Bearcat Auditorium. Her project focused on creating funding to help replace the lighting and sound system as well as painting the stage. She shared her research and recommendations with the Board, which included next steps of identifying grant opportunities for funding as well as adding the recommended upgrades to the district's facility plan. The Board praised Adariana for her work on this project and agreed to review her recommendations.

Mr. Houska, community member, requested a letter from the Board that will approve his company to move forward in their plan to build a hotel, convention/conference center and potential restaurant, in the land where Creekside Nursery is housed. Given the proximity to the school, Mr. Houska needs a waiver letter from the GCR-1 Board to apply for a liquor license. The Board approved this request.

Dr. Neill read this month's Board Norm:

- We will not Major in the Minors. The Governance Highlight was: The Superintendent, or designee, will create a process to evaluate the integration of technology into the curriculum and instruction practices utilized by educators.

The building reports were reviewed with the following additional comments:

- The Elementary Trunk or Treat event was a success, with participation from our High School and Community.

- The High School is reviewing the option to combine Bearcat time and lunch to one period. This model has been positively adopted by numerous other schools; the additional time would allow more opportunity for students to meet with teachers for academic assistance.
- Our fall sports resulted in strong standings: Volleyball Team placed 2<sup>nd</sup> at State; Cross Country Boys placed 6<sup>th</sup> at State, Cross Country Girls placed 3<sup>rd</sup> at State (we had several individual medals in cross country as well) and our Football team placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in Districts.
- Parent Teacher conferences went well overall but we had some overlap with sporting activities, which prevented a few teachers from being at the conferences; our calendar committee will take that into consideration when scheduling conferences next year.
- The Elementary new assessment tool is working well; it appears to be measuring foundational skills more in-depth.
- Our Special Education Department is working with the Community Foundation to set up a 501(c)3 for the annual Special Olympics Day in May; this will allow more external donations for the event.

The Board listened to the MSBA October Board Report. The following items were shared:

- Dr. Margie Vandeven has resigned her position as Missouri's Commissioner of Education, effective July 1, 2024. MSBA recognized her for her leadership over her tenure and thanked her for her service. At this time, no replacement was named.
- The influx of funding (ESSER funds) and DESE grants due to the pandemic will be going away this year. In addition, state revenues are down due to the tax cut two years ago and enrollment and attendance is down throughout Missouri schools. All these items will affect school budgets. MSBA is offering a School Finance Webinar Series to help districts ensure they are budgeting appropriately this fiscal year.
- MSBA thanked districts for their participation in the fall regional meetings; our Board was in attendance.

We will have two school board seats (three year terms) available for the April 2, 2024 election. Candidate filing begins on December 5<sup>th</sup> and will run through December 26<sup>th</sup>; candidates can file at the Central Office. Details will be on the front page of our website in mid-November. The MSBA website is a great resource for potential school board members who want to understand what is required to serve on a school board.

The next item of business was our district's finances. We continue to track positively with our financials. The district is trending towards a 1% surplus. However, we are cognizant of the rising costs in all areas (ex: food, supplies, etc.) and are projecting accordingly. We continue our trend to a balanced or ahead of budget at year end.

The Board set the annual data review meeting for November 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.; this will be closed session, as the results are still embargoed.

In Old Business, the Board approved the following updated MSBA policies:

- Approved the following updated MSBA policies: IGAB (Instructional Interventions), IGC (Extended Instructional Programs), IKE (Promotion, Acceleration and Retention of Students), IL (Assessment Program), and IND (Ceremonies and Observances).
- The two policies from the September meeting – AC (Prohibition Against Illegal Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation) and EF (Food Service Management) were approved for first read; these were edited from the original MSBA version presented in September.

In New Business, the Board:

- Approved Dr. Neill to move forward with negotiating engineering services with FSG for services outlined in the RFQ that was due 11/3/23.

- Approved Dr. Neill to move forward with purchasing an additional vehicle for the district. The district vehicles are in continuous use and it is needed to accommodate our student and athletic needs.

The Consent Agenda was approved, and the regular Board Meeting was adjourned.

In executive session, the Board approved the hire of two new substitute teachers. In addition, the Board approved the transfer of Tim Leibach to MS Day Custodian and Shelly Abbott to MS Evening Custodian.

***The next regularly scheduled Board Meeting is Thursday, December 14th at 6:00 p.m. at the Central Office Board Room.***

### Upcoming events:

- Athletics – Please see the events section or the athletics page of our website
- November 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> – Fall Musical
- November 22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> – Thanksgiving Break
- November 27<sup>th</sup> – Professional Development Day – no students
- December 13<sup>th</sup> – Band Concert
- December 20<sup>th</sup> – Choir Concert
- December 22<sup>nd</sup> through January 4<sup>th</sup> – Winter Break

