

League of Women Voters of Pullman Observer Report

Name of Agency: Pullman School District Date: 13 September 2023
Observer Reporting: Ndambuki Length of Meeting: 1 hour 42 minutes
Members Present: Allison Munch-Rotolo, Jim Evermann, Amanda Tanner, Nathan Roberts, Arron Carter

Other District Personnel Present: Bob Maxwell, Roberta Kramer, Joe Thornton, Diane Hodge, Andy Johnson (Director of Special Services)

Others Present: Juston Pollestad (PHS Principal), Stephani Bray (Franklin ES Principal), Heather Schroeder (2nd Grade), Marlon Nagel (Kindergarten), Haley Fishback (Physical Education), Chris Lippay (4th Grade), Julie Lippay (5th Grade)

No Members Absent: _

Business pertaining to League Positions or topics of interest: *Include in this section 1) issues discussed that relate to League priorities or positions. Do you recommend local league action? If so, please refer to the League position that supports your suggestion.*

Quality of Instruction:

- Franklin Elementary School Building Guiding Coalition
 - Professional Learning Community (PLC)
 - School improvement process
 - “Guaranteed viable curriculum” “ensured” “tight” (think curriculum taught with “fidelity”—in other words little teacher creativity)
- Alternative Learning Experiences
 - (think students doing credit recovery by themselves on the computer)
 - Credit retrieval is the number one reason students “participate” in Alternate Learning Experience (ALE)
 - 45 students “participated”
 - Earned 53+ credits
 - PHS is in the 90th percentile with regard to graduation rate, “ALE helps us get there”
- Summer school 2023
 - 19 elementary students in reading
 - 18/19 students “demonstrated growth”
 - 120 students participated in middle school transition
 - 42 students at high school participated in credit recovery
 - 54 classes assigned
 - 24 classes completed
 - Special Education
 - Extended school year
 - 5 elementary
 - 3 middle
 - 3 high
- Equity update regarding Dr. Sutton (WSU community outreach) training update, primer with staff about upcoming sessions
 - First session 6th of October, half day Learning Improvement Day training
 - Second session in February
 - Rescheduling session(s) with the administrative team which School Board Members may attend
- Will be creating a page on the district website where they will, “consolidate our information in this area” in order to improve our communication with the public regarding DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging)

- One idea is a student summit
- We have done a policy review
- Work is on-going
- Dr. Kramer and Dr. Sutton have joined the city's DEIB committee

Responsible Use of Public Funds:

- At open houses at both LMS and PHS parents were complaining that the busing schedules are not getting their students to school on time
- "The district's insurance bill is \$624,000...it has gone up 32.5%."
 - According to superintendent members on the insurance collective board, the district should expect a similar increase next year
 - Have notified the collective board that PSD is going to look for other options
 - Some other private insurance companies (other than the two cooperatives in the state for school districts) are not willing to ensure districts in the state of WA
- Another transportation update
 - The express routes have been very popular
 - The most popular are at Kamiak ES and Jefferson ES for secondary students to get to LMS and PHS
 - Express routes from PHS were not as popular
 - Pullman Transit has been willing to adjust one route slightly and timing is working much better now for LMS, but at the high school in the morning, the high school start time may need to be moved back (15-20 minutes) a little and those discussions are happening with the Principal (for the second bus)
- Two free flu and Covid clinics set at PHS and LMS in October
- Approved Pullman Education Association (PEA) collective bargaining agreement
- Discussion of upcoming Educational Programs and Operations Levy
 - Recommend what the collection rate should be for that
 - Current \$5.3 million, expires at the end of 2024
 - Pays for all the things that the State or Federal Governments don't
 - Example: State pays for 1.2 nurses, we have 4
 - PSD has MANY positions and pay that are beyond the "prototypical model" which is what the state uses to determine funding levels
 - Finance Committee on February 15th and June 28th of 2023
 - Recommending \$6.3 million
 - Projected on a 2% property valuation
 - The amount per thousand assessed value would be changing 1 or 2 cents
 - "So, by keeping our rates basically the same, we will be able to generate additional funds through our replacement levy." (Superintendent Bob Maxwell)
 - We have not increased the rate in 14 years
 - THIS IS AN APPROXIMATELY 20% INCREASE IN LOCAL FUNDING
- Technology Levy expires in 2024
 - \$200,000 currently
 - Recommended go to \$300,000
 - THIS IS A 33% INCREASE IN LOCAL FUNDING
 - Currently 10 cents/1000 assessed value
 - Recommended go to 11 cents/1000 assessed value

Additional comments/opinions: School District insurance (according to information from two school district insurance providers) often covers property insurance, general liability insurance (playground injuries, sports injuries, slip and fall injuries, fights and bullying, food poisoning, school bus accidents, toxin exposures, disasters, or emergency situations), and sometimes commercial automobile insurance.