

Iowa test scores reported

Director of Research, Assessment, and Evaluation Darryl Thomas reported results of the Iowa Basic Skills Test. The national norm-referenced test was administered to third, fifth, and eighth grade students.

Dr. Thomas explained that norm-referencing does not show education quality because it is influenced by out-of-school experiences and because there is a mismatch between what is taught and what is tested. Such tests do compare a sample of students nationwide, and they show relative strengths and weaknesses with student growth over time.

Granite District students' Iowa total composite scores showed no significant difference between 2006 and 2007. Core subject totals by grade level indicate that the longer students are in Granite schools, the better they do. Dr. Thomas recommends identifying successful literacy and mathematics programs that have contributed to student progress in the district and replicating them in schools with the greatest at-risk populations.

Study session focuses on 'What Counts'

Having completed a series of high school network community "What Counts" meetings, board members are focusing on citizens' questions and suggestions received during those meetings. In Tuesday's study session board members reviewed a report on citizens' responses.

Board receives update on nutrition issues

Assistant Superintendent Martin Bates discussed vending contracts and federal and state nutrition requirements. The Utah State Board of Education recently passed nutrition guidelines, suggesting, but not mandating, that they be followed by local school districts.

Dr. Bates said there are a few minor changes that could be incorporated into Granite's policy, which is already closely aligned with the state's recommendations. Board members expressed a preference for making those adjustments. Local school community councils will have the final say about vending in secondary schools. District policy already prohibits vending machines from being used by students in elementary schools.

Newcomer Academy moves

Assistant Superintendent Martin Bates reported that the Newcomers Academy has outgrown available space at the Granite Peaks Learning Center and will move to Granite High School. The program will be supervised by Director of Educational Equity Charlene Lui. The program's goal is to provide intense focus on English to permit students to transition into their home school as soon as possible.

Citizen participation, student performances

Tiffani Leavitt, a district parent, voiced concerns about the proposed route for the Mountain View Corridor, a freeway planned to be constructed along 5800 West. She voiced air quality and safety concerns for students who attend five Granite District schools that are within 500 meters of the proposed roadway. School property at Hunter High School and Hillside Elementary School property is part of the proposed route. At the patron's request, the board will draft a resolution opposing the freeway corridor.

Shuree Chesnut asked the district to designate a hazardous bus route for West Lake Junior High School and Hillside Elementary School students living west of 3600 West. She is concerned that the current safe walking route passes near an apartment development at 3100 South 3600 West that is to house chronically homeless individuals.

Jenna Gardner, a Morningside Elementary School sixth grade student, read her essay that received national Reflections literacy acclaim during the 2006-07 school year. Kana Yoshigi, who is in the third grade at Howard R. Driggs Elementary School, played a piano composition she wrote, which also received national accolades.

Campus venue naming process defined

The board approved the first reading of a policy governing the naming of campus buildings, rooms, areas, features, or facilities in honor of individuals who make significant contributions to a school. Contributions may include exceptional service, community contribution, or financial assistance as well as contributions to the Granite Education Foundation.

The procedure calls for the Granite Education Foundation to initiate the process in writing with the school principal who will take the proposal to the school community council which then will approve or reject the proposal.

A second reading at the February 19 board meeting will determine whether it will become policy.

Consent agenda

The board approved the following administrative appointments and purchases as part of the consent agenda.

Appointments

- Terri Roylance, an LPP intern assistant principal in Jordan School District, will be assistant principal at Granger and Stansbury Elementary Schools, effective February 11. She replaces Jonathan Adams, the newly appointed principal at Taylorsville Elementary.

- Andrew Carbaugh, an LPP intern in Granite District, will be the new assistant principal at Jim Bridger and Fox Hills Elementary Schools when Karen Gregory becomes principal at Lincoln Elementary on March 10.

- Tysen Fausett, a teacher at Oquirrh Hills Elementary School, will be an assistant principal at a location to be determined. That appointment is effective on July 1.

Purchases

- Software and licenses for Instructional Services Department from En Pointe Technologies, \$141,669, capital outlay budget

- Fire alarm upgrade for Hillsdale Elementary School from Arco Electric, \$128,674, capital outlay budget

- Upgrade of SuccessMaker curriculum program from Pearson Education, \$186,750, federally funded secondary literacy budget

- Projectors and Smart Boards for Cottonwood High School from Chariot Group, \$29,191, Trustlands fund