



# Board at Work

News from the Pattonville School District Board of Education

June 25, 2003

## Randy McArthur sworn in as board member

**R**andy McArthur was sworn in as a member of the Pattonville Board of Education by Board President Ralph Stahlhut at the June 24 meeting of the Board. McArthur was appointed to the position at a special meeting of the Board on June 12. He will fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Michael Stewart who is moving out of the District. McArthur will serve until the next Board election on April 6, 2004. At that time voters will elect someone to serve the remaining one year of Stewart's term as well as two members to fill three-year terms.



McArthur previously served as a member of the Pattonville Board from December 1999 to April 2002. He is the president and chief executive officer of McArthurs Party Cake Bakery Inc. He and his wife are the parents of two daughters, both Pattonville graduates. "Pattonville is a great District, all of us who have served feel we are making a difference in the life of people. I'm happy to be back," McArthur said after being welcomed by the other members of the Board.

## Challenge of Ninth-Grader Transition being addressed in Pattonville

"The issue of transitioning eighth-graders to ninth-grade is a challenge across the nation," said Dr. Mike Fulton, assistant superintendent for planning and assessment, as he introduced the report from the Ninth-Grade Transition Task Force at the Board meeting on June 24.

Fulton and Leonard Sullivan, Pattonville High School teacher, who co-chaired the Task Force, gave the report. This group of parents, staff members and students was formed as part of the high school's school improvement plan to develop strategies and structures for ensuring a positive academic and social transition from eighth- to ninth-grade. Its purpose was to understand issues related to student success and failure in the freshman year of high school and recommend research-based solutions that lead to improved student achievement. "The committee involved a strong group of parents with staff and it was a very positive effort," commented Sullivan.

The group studied specific data on Pattonville students and reviewed literature regarding this challenge including the ways other districts address the issue. They also looked at the school improvement team plans from the feeder schools and the high school.

They concluded that there is a decline in grade point averages in the transition from middle to high school and that while the cause is not known it does need to be addressed if students are to be successful. The task force found that there is need for a comprehensive plan from both the high school and the feeder schools for transitioning students into high school. The plan must involve parents, staff and students with a variety of structures and strategies including a rigorous course of study at the middle schools.

Improving communication between teachers from grade-level to grade-level and more timely feedback to parents when students' grades fall will receive major focus this coming school year. Staff development time has been set aside before school starts to begin the work. "This is a high priority for the Board, it is something we really want to work on with your help," stated Ralph Stahlhut, president of the Board of Education.

The task force made the following recommendations:

To implement the following beginning August 2003:

1. Improve vertical communication by requiring middle school and high school staff to participate in professional development that involves:
  - teacher understanding regarding the connection between middle school and high school curriculum;
  - using common grading, assessment and reporting practice;
  - using learning strategies appropriate for 13-15 year old students (implication—don't treat freshmen like seniors); and
  - teachers from one level shadowing teachers at another level.
2. Provide regular feedback to parents through PowerGrade by updating grade books at least every two weeks and by contacting and/or conferencing with parents when grades fall below a "C."
3. Maintain and update an academic watch list every three weeks for each department, monitoring freshmen who have less than a "C" in a course in that department. Administrators and counselors will facilitate timely contact of parents and students.

Planning should occur during the 2003-04 school year on the following recommendations with implementation beginning August 2004.

1. Develop a consistent policy on homework/make-up/tardy/planners within the high school and connecting those policies to the middle school.
2. Using data from the freshmen academic labs during the 2003-04 school year, develop a comprehensive freshmen transition program that connects the feeder schools and high school by:
  - building knowledge and skills,
  - nurturing connections,
  - involving parents—this includes involving parents during the high school day, with specific duties such as hall monitors to build relationships and connect with students,
  - monitoring student progress,
  - motivating students (e.g., incentive programs; motivational speakers to connect with kids who need to be reached; help students see the bridge between what we do now and what happens later; honor all improvements, not just improvement for high performing kids).
3. Have teachers conduct peer reviews to promote quality teaching.

Planning should begin during the 2003-04 school year on the following recommendations with implementation beginning August 2005.

1. Create smaller learning communities within the high school that promote academic achievement and support the social/emotional needs of students. The planning process should include an examination of such issues as:
  - Creating a regularly scheduled homeroom where a student has the same homeroom teacher all four years,
  - Ensuring students are involved in an activity (e.g., required intramurals),
  - Promoting cultural awareness.

## Changes to behavior guides lodged

At the June 24 meeting of the Board the members lodged for action changes for the student behavior guides. The following is a summary of the changes:

### Elementary School

- Modification of the attendance section to provide a more structured response to students who have high rates of absences.
- Inclusion of information regarding the Electronic Communication Policy and its application to students.

### Middle School

- Modification of the attendance section to provide a more structured response to students who have high rates of absences.
- Notice of the availability of Saturday School Detention as a consequence of misbehavior.
- Inclusion of information regarding the Electronic Communication Policy and its application to students.
- Restructuring of the Level II offenses to identify, more specifically, the consequences associated with various behavioral violations.
- Inclusion of possession or transferring of pornographic or sexually explicit material as a component of “Sexual Misconduct.” (Level III)

### Positive School

- Modification of the attendance policy to reflect the revised school schedule and “Zero Hour” for students.
- Adoption of the High School Guide language for dress code violations, academic dishonesty, inappropriate use of school resources, forgery/fraud.
- Inclusion of the Electronic Communication Policy for Students.
- The Positive School has adopted the same language as the High School for all Level III offenses.

### High School

- **Student identification badges**
  - Changed consequences to the following:
  - Third temporary in first period—two-hour teacher-assigned detention; fourth temporary in first period—four-hour teacher-assigned detention; fifth and subsequent offenses—referral to administrator for additional consequences; and any failure to have I.D. showing after first period—one-hour teacher-assigned detention.
- **Tardiness to class**
  - Added to Attendance Guidelines: Less than five minutes late—tardy, five to 30 minutes late—referral for excessive tardiness, more than 30 minutes late—absent
  - Changed consequences to the following: fourth tardy—two-hour teacher-assigned detention; fifth tardy—four-hour teacher-assigned detention; and sixth and subsequent offenses—referral to administrator for additional consequences.
- **Truancy/skipping** and **unauthorized areas**, which were formerly one category have been separated into two distinct categories so that students understand that being in places such as the parking lot and athletic fields during the school day without permission is considered a truancy.

- **Dress code/inappropriate clothing and inappropriate objects:** Added a section that inappropriate objects should be kept in the student’s locker during the school day.
- **Computer/Internet:** Added a section which states that major violations will be dealt with under Class III offenses.
- **Inappropriate Use of School Resources:** A new section was added in Class I which states: “Student behavior that wastes the resources of the school district. This could be a Class II or III offense based on the severity and/or cost of the incident.”
- **Cafeteria Behavior:** A new category describing acceptable cafeteria behavior was added. “Students in the cafeteria and commons are expected to: throw trash away; refrain from throwing items; sit in chairs, not on tables and be respectful to all staff members.”

### Class II

- **Sexual Harassment** added - “pantsing” to the list of behaviors that would be considered sexual harassment.
- **Tampering with Security/Emergency Equipment** – added “eyewash” and “chemical shower” to list of examples of emergency equipment.

### Class III

- Under the categories of **Weapons, Aggravated or Physical Abuse or Assault of a Staff Member, Assault, Threats to Bring Weapons or Harm to Individuals or School Property and Selling or Distributing Alcohol, Drugs, and Related Paraphernalia** added “Students may not attend the Step Up Program.” The Step Up Program allows students who have been suspended to come to school after normal hours and receive tutoring to make up work they are missing.
- **Computer Usage/Internet** (new category) states, “Violations may include but are not limited to:
  - The placing of unlawful information on or through the computer system
  - The intentional receipt of unlawful information on or through the computer system
  - The use of obscene, vulgar, or other inappropriate language or images
  - Violating copyright laws, i.e. using someone else’s work for your own or downloading copyrighted software
  - Vandalizing the data of another user
  - Wastefully using finite resources, i.e. downloading excessive information or monopolizing resources
  - Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities
  - Invading the privacy of individuals
  - Using an account owned by another user
  - Posting personal communications without the author’s consent
  - Posting anonymous messages
  - Failure to monitor e-mail accounts
  - Forwarding “chain letters” or “broadcasting” inappropriate e-mail to lists or individuals
  - Publishing inappropriate materials on district servers including materials that are unlawful, obscene, or vulgar.

**First offense and all others:** Up to 10 days of out-of-school suspension with possible referral to the Superintendent for additional days of suspension up to 180 days or recommendation to the Board of Education for **Expulsion**. Police may be notified.

### Transportation Procedures

Riding a Different Bus (new section) “Students who wish to ride a different bus home should bring a note from a parent and have the request approved by an administrator.”

There are minor changes made to wording in several areas.

## Assurance Statements Approved

At the June 24 meeting the Board approved two assurance statements related to the provision of special education and related services to students with disabilities.

The first which pertains to school-age children is the “Assurance Regarding Implementation of the Requirements During State Fiscal Year 2004 for Component Districts of Special School District—Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, as Amended by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997.”

The second which pertains to Pattonville’s early childhood program is the “Assurance Statements for Sec. 611(Part B) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education for the 2003-04 school year.”

## Kinney's Corner

Update from Superintendent Hugh Kinney

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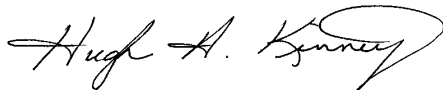
Dear Pattonville family,

Pattonville has been chosen to be featured in a video the Cooperating School Districts is putting together to be shown to the Black School Board Members National Conference which will be meeting in St. Louis in August. We were selected for our successes in improving student achievement and especially our success in narrowing the gap between our minority population and others. Again, I thank all of you for your efforts that have resulted in this achievement.

Summer school will be ending very soon. We had 1,912 students as of June 24. This is more students than we are used to but class sizes are well within state and federal guidelines.

I hope everyone is having a great summer.

Sincerely,



Hugh A. Kinney, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

## Business Bits

### Bid Awards

- The Pattonville Board of Education on June 24 approved the following bid awards and contracts:

- \$3,158.40 to Southwest Strings, \$924.20 to Woodwind Brasswind, \$4,571 to Steve Weiss, \$2,857 to Brook Mays, \$813 to Washington Music, \$71.50 to Music is Elementary and \$3,705 to NEMC for a grand total of \$16,100.10 for the purchase of musical instruments.

## Other Business Items

The Pattonville Board of Education on June 24 took the following actions:

- Approved the financial statements for May 2003, subject to audit.
- Approved the employment of three additional teaching assistants for summer school.
- Approved additional substitute teachers for summer school.
- Approved Phase I and Phase II bond issue change orders in the amount of \$164,532.86.
- Approved payment to Kohn, Shands, Gianoulakis, and Giljum for professional services rendered through May 31, 2003 in general matters in the total amount of \$5,460.
- Approved the renewal of the contract for Bank Depository Services with United Missouri Bank for the period July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004 at the same terms and conditions as their bid of May 22, 2001.
- Approved the purchase of one School Center Web Server and Software from sole source vendor School Center for a total amount of \$17,000.
- Approved the purchase of one Scantron Scanner and eListen Software from sole source vendor Scantron, Inc. for a total amount of \$10,845.

## Policy/Procedures

The Pattonville Board of Education approved the following policies and procedures on June 24:

- **Procedure GDBE-R-2 (Support Staff Holidays)**—Eliminates the need for a vote on how to use time off at Christmas, by making December 24 the holiday and includes provisions for that day falling on a weekend;
- **Policy GDPB (Resignations)**—adds wording regarding giving notice;
- **Policy GDPC (Retirement of Support Staff Members)**—addresses requirement to participate in Medicare;
- **Policy GDPD (Progressive Discipline and Termination)**—minor word change;
- **Procedure GDPD-R (Suspension of Support Staff )** — wording changes to update titles and review of status; and
- **Policy GDQB (PSNEA Rights)**—minor word changes to update.

On June 24 the Pattonville Board of Education lodged for action the following policies and procedures:

- **IHB (Class Size)**—replaces the listing of specific guidelines with the following statement, “Therefore, the goal for K-12 class size and assigned enrollments is to meet or exceed minimum Missouri School Improvement Program standards. The board may, when class size moves beyond this goal, approve of additional teachers and/or paraprofessionals if funding and space permits. A secondary course will be reviewed by the administration if class size drops below 10 students.”
- **KI/KJ (Public Solicitations, Advertising, and Announcements in the Schools)**—word changes which requires superintendent or designee to approve all materials and the addition of a requirement for a tax exempt letter to be submitted with material for approval. Addition of wording to allow municipalities in the district to have approved materials regarding children’s activities distributed to the students and to allow approved materials for staff to be placed in staff workrooms.
- **DLBA-R (Regulations for Payroll Deductions Tax-Sheltered Annuity/Deferred Compensation Plans)**—addition of wording to allow approved (by superintendent or designee) materials for staff to be placed in staff workrooms.

## New Hires

- **Ha Nguyen**, custodian, High School
- **Elisabeth Phillips**, custodian, High School
- **Jo Ann Walter**, part-time secretary, High School
- **Christina Northrup**, English teacher, High School
- **Olivia Rea**, mathematics teacher, High School
- **Tricia Piazza**, part-time speech/language therapist, early childhood, Learning Center
- **Darlene Sokol**, part-time PEGS coordinator
- **James Biggs**, seventh-grade teacher, Remington

**In other business from the Human Resource Center** the board approved extra-assignment contracts for the high school.

### Your Board of Education

- **Ralph Stahlhut**, President
- **Pat Bryant**, Vice President/Secretary
- **Keith Gillming**, Treasurer
- **Jeff Fitterling**, Director
- **Kathy Fitzgerald**, Director
- **Ron Kuschel**, Director
- **Randy McArthur**, Director