

# Board at Work

News from the Pattonville School District Board of Education

August 14, 2003

## Schools are ready for Monday's start

School will start in Pattonville on Monday and according to Jim Siervo, director of facilities, "We are going to have a great start of school." Siervo made that comment during a report to the board on August 12 about the status of the construction projects. Not everything will be complete, but according to Siervo, as of August 12, the district is in full clearance and compliance with all safety issues for students and staff to be in all buildings on Monday, August 18 and classrooms will be ready. He thanked the district staff, especially the custodians and maintenance staff who have worked extra hard this summer and especially the last couple of weeks. He said the contractors and district staff have been an excellent team. Superintendent Hugh Kinney added his thanks for all the hard work by everyone including Siervo and Ron Orr, chief financial officer, who have been making frequent trips to all sites to make sure things are progressing on time.

## Early childhood programs meeting goals

Programs for Pattonville's youngest learners are growing and expanding according to an evaluation of the District's Early Childhood Program presented to the board on August 12. "The program has soared. We truly built it and they came. It was amazing," said Laurie Wenzel, director of early childhood, referring to the tuition preschool expansion.

Since 1998, the staff involved with the Pattonville School District preschool, Parents as Teachers and adolescent parenting programs have worked to achieve coordination and collaboration among the programs. This work was enhanced by the Board of Education's adoption of an Early Childhood Strategic Plan in June 2000, the employment of a director of early childhood in July 2001 and the implementation of early childhood special education (ECSE) services within the district in the 2002-03 school year.

Prior to the 2002-03 school year, the Pattonville Preschool served 68 children, ages 3 through pre-kindergarten age 5. During the last school year 112 tuition-based children participated in preschool classes in an inclusion classroom model with 93 children in the ECSE program. Two preschool students participated in a multi-age kindergarten/preschool class located at Briar Crest Elementary School. Twenty of the tuition students were funded through Title I funds. The ECSE program is funded by a state grant. In addition, 45 children received itinerant level ECSE service in the elementary schools or in area childcare or preschools. Wenzel said she was really excited to report that in the coming school year two additional preschool classes will be provided through a collaboration with Head Start. Those programs will be located at Briar Crest and Drummond.

During the 2002-03 school year, the Pattonville Parents as Teachers (PAT) program served 1,177 families with 198 new families enrolled in the program. In addition to personal visits, developmental and health screenings and group meetings, the program provides orientations, child-centered playgroups, seasonal parties, support for families transitioning from First Step early intervention service to early childhood special

education services and a newsletter listing articles, resources and activities for families and children. The parent educators screened 894 children, an increase of 24 percent over the previous year. Thirty-six of the children were enrolled in First Steps, an early intervention program for children birth through age 3 with disabilities. Of the children, ages 3 to pre-kindergarten, who were screened, 89 were found eligible for early childhood special education.

The adolescent parenting program continues to serve teen parents by providing programs for both the parents and their youngsters. Support group meetings and educational classes are provided at Pattonville High School through the collaborative efforts of PAT and high school staff. Child care is provided for up to eight children while the parents attend high school. During the 2002-03 school year, the daycare center was moved to the high school and was awarded MO-A accreditation. All of the students with children in the daycare program participated in the life skills class through the family and consumer science department at the high school and participate actively in PAT. Over 90 percent are involved in a parenting support group sponsored by the high school guidance/counseling department.

Recommendations for the Early Childhood Program are

1. Re-establish an Early Childhood Improvement Team consisting of early childhood representatives in the community (i.e. parents, child care professionals, social service agencies, etc.) and district staff to develop assessment strategies of current programs and make recommendations for future improvement efforts.
2. Further expand the preschool program with a collaboration effort between Head Start and Pattonville to add preschool classes in the district targeting children who meet qualification guidelines for Head Start.
3. Increase the number of eligible families enrolled in Parents As Teachers that receive full-service personal visits, attend at least one group meeting and have their children screened.
4. Establish a procedure to track children participating in various Pattonville early childhood programs to study their future achievement in elementary school as a way to further evaluate the effectiveness of the early childhood programs.
5. Implement necessary changes that result from the special education compliance review performed in April 2003 that will be included in the report from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

## New plan to honor top graduates begins in 2006

Beginning with the graduating class of 2006 Pattonville High School will eliminate the valedictorian and salutatorian program. Instead, the top graduates will be recognized through the following cum laude system which will be based on the graduates' weighted grade point average:

4.03 and above, summa cum laude

3.75 – 4.02 magna cum laude

3.74 – 3.50 cum laude

This recognition will be announced as the graduates cross the stage and their diplomas will be marked appropriately.

The board approved the recommendation, which was made by the Pattonville High School Improvement Team, at its meeting on August 12. Students, parents and staff were surveyed and a large majority of those responding supported the proposal.

Rationale for the change included:

- increased recognition for high achieving students,
- minimization of the potential negative impact of weighted grades on elective and/or non-weighted classes,
- better cooperation and support among students
- and less manipulation of the weighted grade system.

According to Jeff Marion, high school principal, the goal is to have each student take the classes and make the progress that is best for him or her and not to have the students worrying about a competition. "We

definitely don't want anyone to get the impression that we are lowering our expectations," he said. The high school will continue to maintain class rankings and those will be noted on the students' transcripts. The students will have two class rankings, one with weighted and the other with non-weighted grades. According to Marion and other representatives from the School Improvement Team, most colleges have indicated that reporting both weighted and non-weighted class rankings is acceptable. He added that eliminating valedictorians and salutatorians is a growing trend nation-wide. "When you get right down to it, it (having valedictorians and salutatorians) is not best for kids," Marion concluded.

## Trip approved for Varsity Drill Team

The Pattonville Board of Education on August 12 approved a trip to Orlando, Florida, for the Pattonville High School Varsity Drill Team the weekend of January 30 through February 2, 2004. The students have qualified to participate in the National Dance Team competition at that time. The students will miss one day of school and will be responsible for all expenses of the trip.

## Kinney's Corner

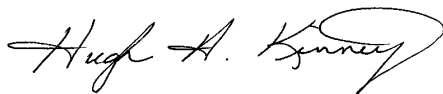
Update from Superintendent Hugh Kinney

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Dear Pattonville family,

- Congratulations and thanks to Dr. Mike Fulton, assistant superintendent for planning and assessment; Ms. Shelly Mills, Remington Traditional interim principal; and Ms. Diane Langston, Remington Traditional teacher; for their presentation on student achievement focusing on Pattonville's efforts to narrow the achievement gap for African American students. The presentation was made at the request of Missouri Commissioner of Education Dr. Kent King. They presented to superintendents and assistant superintendents from across the state at the commissioner's annual conference in August.
- Welcome to all the new staff members. New teacher orientation was conducted last week. New teachers have been working with mentors and participating in training sessions for the literacy project and technology. They were introduced to members of the Board of Education and met with Learning Center administrators and coordinators at a special event held last Thursday.
- Many of you will find buildings that look almost new as you return to work. Thanks to staff members who have worked extra hard to get our facilities ready.
- This is always an exciting time of year—let's all do our best to "Change the world...one child at a time."

Sincerely,



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

# Business Bits

## Approval of bills

The Pattonville Board of Education on August 12 approved the following:

- \$4,098,050.22 for regular bills;
- \$8,364.10 to Kohn, Shands, Elbert, Gianoulakis, and Giljum for professional services in general legal matters; and
- \$67,779.40 for 60 percent payment of membership dues to Cooperating School District for the 2003-04 school year.

## Bid Awards

The Pattonville Board of Education on August 12 approved the following bid awards and contracts:

- \$14,274.24 to Corporate Express; \$3,818.06 to Corporate Interiors, and \$2,625.84 to Office Solutions for a total of \$20,718.14 for Pattonville High School furniture;
- \$12,165 to Stratacache for Packetshaper 4500-10M Shaping (This is equipment that will increase the district's network speed.);
- \$5,688 to Midwest Technology for Vemco 3500 detailer compact elbow drafting machines;
- \$65,191.16, after trade-in, to Weber Chevrolet for four commercial cargo vans;
- \$18,000 to Computer Aid for the E-Lunch Cafeteria System software;
- \$74,220 to Ponder Equipment to renew the lease on six special needs buses for the 2003-04 school year;
- \$8,298 to Nevco for an outdoor LED wireless soccer scoreboard; and
- \$46,381.49 to Colonial Carpet for tile, carpet and installation at Pattonville High School.

## Other Business Items

The Pattonville Board of Education on August 12 took the following actions:

- Approved the financial statements for June 2003, subject to audit;
- Approved the payment of membership dues to the National School Boards Association for the period of October 1, 2003 through September 30, 2004;
- Approved the "Terms and Conditions Membership and Participation Agreement" between the Pattonville School District and the Missouri School Boards Association and the Cooperating School Districts of St. Louis to participate in the Cooperating School Districts Natural Gas Consortium for purchasing natural gas for the buildings;
- Approved change proposals for the bond issue projects in the amount of \$378,979.97; and
- Set the tuition rate for the 2003-04 school year for non-resident students as follows: K-8 students-\$9,870.28 and 9-12 students-\$10,542.60.

## Policy/Procedures

The Pattonville Board of Education rescinded the following outdated policies and procedures at its meeting on August 12:

- **Policy IKF (Graduation Requirements for the Classes of 2001-2003);**
- **Procedure IKF-R (Minimum Course Load and Grade Classification for High School Students Class of 2001-2003);** and
- **Policy IKFF (Graduation Requirements for the Class of 2001-2003).**

The Pattonville Board of Education approved the following policies and procedures on August 12:

- **Policy BBFA (Board Member Conflict of Interest and Financial Disclosure)**–The board re-adopts this policy every other year in accordance with the Missouri Ethics Commission’s requirements and school law 105.483 RSMo. and 105.484.4 RSMo.
- **Procedure CDQF-R (Administrative Retirement Incentive.)**–This procedure was updated to reflect a retirement incentive plan for administrators similar to the plan recently adopted for teachers. It is consistent with financial incentives and the number of years it will be offered.

The Pattonville Board of Education lodged for action the following policies and procedures on August 12:

- **Policy IKF (Graduation Requirements)**–The revised policy provides more information on community service and transfer of credit from other schools.
- **Procedure IKF-R (Minimum Course Load and Grade Classification for High School Students)**–The revised procedure reflects the changes in the graduation requirements;
- **Policy IKFF (Graduation Requirements)**–The revised policy includes changes in the curriculum and provides information on community service.
- **Policy JECBA (Admission of Exchange Students)**–The revised policy provides more guidelines for the program at Pattonville High School.
- **Policy IGAEA (Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco)**–The revised language includes a provision for following federal mandates.
- **Policy IGDK (Campaigns or Activities for Raising Money)**–Minor word changes will be made.
- **Policy IIAD (Special Interest Materials)**–An inaccurate word will be changed.
- **Policy IICC (School Volunteers)**– The revisions include guidelines for supervision of volunteers and a provision requiring a background check.
- **Procedure IKA-R (Grading Procedures)**–Several word and phrase changes will be made.
- **Procedure IKAD (Parent Conferences)**–Additional provisions were made for scheduling conferences.
- **Policy IKB (Homework)**–The policy has been completely reworded. It defines homework and the expectations for both students and staff.

The Pattonville Board of Education approved a review of the following policies at its meeting on August 12.

- **IGDG (Student Activities Funds Management);** and
- **INB (Teaching About Controversial Issues).**

## New Hires

- **Richard Baker**, part-time driver, Transportation
- **Henry Dunger**, part-time drive, Transportation
- **Stephen Schrader**, part-time driver, Transportation
- **Randolph Helms**, in-school suspension supervisor, Pattonville Heights
- **Michele Dyke**, library media specialist, Briar Crest
- **Alicia Spiegel**, first-grade teacher, Bridgeway
- **Julia Graham**, gifted education (PEGS), Drummond
- **Lori Kappler**, gifted education, Pattonville Heights
- **Jonna Campbell**, mathematics, Holman
- **Cheryl Gragert**, language arts, Holman
- **Scott Kiehl**, social studies, Holman
- **Rosellen Knapp**, ECSE paraprofessional III, Drummond
- **Nancy O’Leary**, speech/language therapist, Early Childhood

### Your Board of Education

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