



News from the Pattonville School District Board of Education

December 11, 2002

Pattonville earns perfect score on state report

The Pattonville School District recently learned that it scored a perfect 100 out of 100 points on its Annual Performance Report (APR) issued by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

The district met 12 out of 12 standards related to academic achievement in the 2001-2002 school year, making it eligible for a second consecutive “Distinction in Performance” award from the state of Missouri. Pattonville received the same award the previous year for meeting all of the standards measured on the report: Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) scores, reading proficiency, ACT scores, students taking advanced and vocational courses, college placement, vocational placement, dropout rate and attendance.

“It’s a tribute to our outstanding students, staff, parents and community that we have earned this recognition again,” said Dr. Hugh Kinney, superintendent. “Our students have made some incredible achievement gains over the last few years. Our scores are comparable to or better than many districts in St. Louis County and our students score consistently above state averages. I think this reflects our district’s focus on meeting the needs of ALL students.”

Each year, DESE releases an Annual Performance Report for each district in the state, which shows the district’s status on the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) performance standards using current data that DESE has on file.

Board approves budget revisions, projections

The Pattonville Board of Education approved on Dec. 10 its annual winter budget adjustments for the current school year, a move that continued to maintain a balanced budget for the district.

The board also heard good news from Chief Financial Officer Ron Mastin regarding earlier concerns over lower-than-expected revenues brought on by an unanticipated drop in assessed valuation of property in the district.

The district’s assessed valuation, which was projected to grow by 3 percent, actually declined by 1.6 percent. The drop resulted in a net loss of \$950,893 in revenue. Mastin told board members that adjustments were made to the expenditure budget to offset the loss and maintain a balanced budget, when one-time expenditures are excluded.

Specifically, the revenue loss was offset by lower-than-budgeted costs associated with salaries and fringe benefits, as well as sound management of the 2000 bond issue funds, which enabled about \$500,000 in roof repairs at the high school to be paid for with bond issue funds instead of operating revenue.

Included in the budget revision was approximately \$16 million of additional revenues and expenditures associated with refinancing the 1993 bond issue, a move that will save \$1.3 million over the next 8 years.

Also during its Dec. 10 meeting, the board approved enrollment projections and staffing ratios for the 2003-2004 school year. Due to a continuing decline in student enrollment, Pattonville will reduce staff by 17.5 teaching positions and the equivalent of nearly 7 administrative positions in the 2003-2004 school year. The reductions will be made through attrition and retirements, without employees losing their jobs.

Over the last six years, Pattonville has been experiencing a decrease in enrollment due to factors such as the airport expansion and changes in the desegregation program. Enrollment has dropped slightly more than 1,000 students from 1998 to the present enrollment of approximately 6,000 students. During this time, the district reduced staff through attrition each year.

“As our student population has declined, we’ve had to be proactive about making changes that continue to put student needs first,” said Superintendent Hugh Kinney. “We’ve been able to reduce staff through retirements and attrition, without anyone losing his or her job. This was accomplished while class sizes were lowered in all schools, student achievement improved significantly and the budget remained balanced.”

Kinney said the district would continue to maintain low pupil-teacher ratios, provide competitive salaries to attract and retain qualified staff, and keep the budget balanced.

High school modifies drug-testing procedures

A “third-party administrator” instead of an administrator at Pattonville High School will begin delivering letters to parents regarding test results gathered as part of the school’s voluntary drug testing program.

Currently, Pattonville’s voluntary drug testing program is designed to be confidential and non-punitive. The intent is to give students a voluntary opportunity - and a reason - to make healthy choices, while also providing parents with information they can use to help their child should a test be positive for drugs. Students who have a positive result on a test are currently not reprimanded or disciplined by the school. The current policy, however, appears to be in conflict with criteria established by the A+ Schools program that requires students to avoid the unlawful use of alcohol or drugs.

“In order to maintain our voluntary drug testing program in its present form without placing A+ students’ status in jeopardy, I am recommending that the high school hire a third-party administrator to receive drug testing results and notify parents and students,” said Principal Jeff Marion. “This would eliminate any record of test results in the district and would not violate the state’s policy regarding A+.”

Marion said a committee would be developed to take a look at how the voluntary drug-testing program would work in the future. Currently, the program is only available to athletes, cheerleaders and members of the drill teams.

“What makes our voluntary drug testing program unique in the state is that this program isn’t being done for punitive purposes,” said Dr. John Heskett, assistant superintendent for pupil services. “The program is being done to communicate well with parents. This program was never designed to catch kids doing wrong. It was designed to encourage them to do the right thing.”

Students will be able to get credit at Ranken

The Pattonville Board of Education approved an agreement with Ranken Technical College that will allow Pattonville High School students who take computer networking technology classes to receive college credit from Ranken for equivalent courses. Pattonville students who take any of the Pattonville courses noted in the agreement and earn a grade of “B” or higher and meet other eligibility requirements can earn the college credit at Ranken for free. The courses eligible are: Foundations in Electricity, Digital Electronics, Disk Operating Systems (DOS) and Windows Operating System.

Jeff McMillen, the Pattonville teacher who will provide instruction for the courses, said this could save students about \$6,000 in tuition in fees were they to attend Ranken after graduation.

“It’s a very generous offer from Ranken,” McMillen said. “They’re a very top-notch technical school.”

High school improvement plan update given

A principal, a teacher, a parent and a student shared with the Board of Education on Dec. 10 the accomplishments and future plans of Pattonville High School for continuing its trend of improving student achievement. The group, who represented the school’s School Improvement Team, presented an update to the board on the high school’s School Improvement Plan. The board accepted the team’s revisions to its improvement plan.

Among the accomplishments shared with the board: improved scores on the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) and the ACT and maintaining a dropout rate below 3 percent and attendance above 94 percent. Other accomplishments:

- Increased graduation requirements from 22 to 24 units of credit;
- Increased final exam weight (10 to 20 percent) in certain courses;
- Created more honors courses to add rigor to the high school course offerings;
- Implemented weighted grades for honors, advanced placement/college credit and gifted courses;
- Revised the system of graduate recognition to a cum laude system;
- Created a freshman advisory program to address freshmen failures;
- Achieved equal representation of parents and students (in relation to faculty) as members of the School Improvement Team;
- Began offering incentives to students scoring in the top two levels on the MAP tests;
- Created a Renaissance Program to recognize and reward students for excellence in academics and citizenship;
- Developed a building-wide MAP improvement plan to help students better master the state’s academic standards; and
- Offered free after-school tutoring for students.

The targets outlined in the improvement plan are 1) Student academic achievement will improve; 2) Students are responsible citizens; 2) All students are proficient readers; and 4) Increase a sense of ownership for teachers, students and parents.

The revised improvement plan for the period of 2003-2005 outlined several action steps to reach these targets. Among them were:

- Evaluate the curriculum, assessments and course offerings to maximize alignment with the state’s academic standards;
- Develop a proposal to make the learning environment more personal for students;
- Join the high school and middle school improvement teams to form a district task force and develop strategies to improve the transition from eighth to ninth grade;

- Evaluate and revise the freshmen mentoring program currently being piloted;
- Identify issues related to minority achievement and develop recommendations to help all minority students achieve at a high level;
- Revise the conflict mediation program;
- Identify ways to promote student responsibility; and
- Use newsletters, the high school web site (phs.psd3.org), surveys, public forums and other ways to engage parents in School Improvement Team activities.

Revisions to A+ standards approved

The Board of Education on Dec. 10 approved revisions to the performance standards for the A+ Schools program at Pattonville High School. The A+ Advisory Committee recommended the changes.

The revised performance standards and district indicators are as follows:

- A+ Goal A: All students graduate from high school. Performance Standard/District Goal A: The dropout rate will decrease.
- A+ Goal B: All students complete a selection of high school studies that is challenging and for which there is identified learning expectations. Performance Standard/District Goal B: All students will take a rigorous challenging course of study with identified, measurable learning outcomes.
- A+ Goal C: All students proceed from high school graduation to college or a post-secondary vocational technical school or high-wage job with work-place skill development opportunities. Performance Standard/District Goal C: The percent of graduating students who continue to either post-secondary educational institutions or high-wage jobs will increase compared to the June 1999 graduating class.
- Performance Standard/District Goal D: The A+ Steering Committee will continue to meet regularly to oversee the progress of A+ in the Pattonville District.

Curriculum revision, adoption approved

Revisions to the art curriculum for grades kindergarten through eight were approved by the Board of Education on Dec. 10, along with the adoption of instructional materials for the elementary science curriculum. The board approved spending \$152,436.14 for science materials such as flip charts, wall charts, student texts and support materials for students and teachers.

Kinney's Corner

Update from Superintendent Hugh Kinney

Dear Pattonville family,

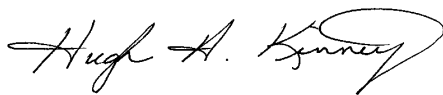
Here's a look at what's happening:

- Congratulations to our outstanding students, staff and parents, all of who made possible our perfect score on the state's Annual Performance Report (See story at the beginning of this newsletter). Only by working together can we do great things for our students and receive such

- outstanding recognition. Thanks to everyone who played a vital role in this accomplishment.
- More than 100 prospective educators came to our annual recruitment fair on Dec. 7. This is a great tribute to the outstanding learning community we have here in Pattonville. Thanks to the Human Resource Department for planning this event and to all the administrators who volunteered their time to assist last Saturday.
 - I hope everyone will join me in welcoming a new member to the team at Cooperating School Districts. Liz Gibbons, who has visited Pattonville before as a special projects coordinator for Sen. Christopher “Kit” Bond, is taking over the helm of the St. Louis area program called Characterplus. I know we’ll all be working closing with Liz to continue the tradition of excellence in helping our students become responsible and respectful citizens.

I wish everyone a joyous and restful holiday break this month. Please take this time to share with family and friends. I know I will enjoy this time with my wife, Jane, and our three children. Until next year, have a safe and happy holiday!

Sincerely,



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

Business Bits

Approval of bills

The Pattonville Board of Education on Dec. 10 approved the following:

- Regular bills in the amount of \$2,030,915.92;
- Cafeteria bills in the amount of \$81,071.58;
- \$4,544.18 to Kohn, Shands, Gianoulakis and Giljum for legal services; and
- Bond issue change orders in the amount of \$191,165.17.

Bid Awards

The Pattonville Board of Education on Dec. 10 approved the following bid awards and contract:

- A contract with the Special School District to rent classrooms at Willow Brook Elementary at a rate of \$750 per classroom per semester;
- \$10,295 to M-F Athletic Company for a pole vault pit;
- \$6,659.08 to A.D. Lift for a walkie adjustable stacker; and
- \$75,474 to Will Electronics for a video surveillance system at the high school.

Policy/Procedures

The Pattonville school board approved the following policies and procedures on Dec. 10:

- **GBE-R (Staff Health and Safety)** – Approved changes reflect minor grammatical and wording revisions.
- **GBK (Use of Tobacco Products on School Premises)** – Approved revisions add the words “health and” in the statement, “Reduce the economic consequences of use of tobacco products

for the individual and the school district,” and revises a sentence under policy requirements to read, “Employees while in the presence of students and/or being compensated by the school district are further prohibited from tobacco use on district field trips, activities and athletic events at locations away from school.”

- **GBL (Personnel Records for Professional and Support Staff)** – A new revision changes the word “certificated” to “certified.”
- **GBLA (Personnel Records)** – Revisions add the words or phrases, “or designee,” “or as otherwise required by law or court order,” and “the employee’s personnel.”
- **GDEAC (Support Staff Participation in Political Activities)** – The following paragraph will be removed: “D. Local tax levies and bond issue proposals are not considered ‘political participation’ for purposes of this policy, and section C herein does not apply. A staff member may take an individual position for or against a local tax levy or bond issue proposal.”
- **IA (Instructional Goals/Priority Objectives)** – Approved revisions make minor wording changes and add the following paragraph: “The goals adopted by the school district correspond closely to those that have been established for all Missouri schools by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The four categories of goals may be related to formalized school experiences or individual attainment. Regardless of the language, responsibility is placed upon both the school and the student. Appropriate outcomes necessitate that citizens, educators and especially the students make wise use of available resources.” New subheadings are also included (intellectual development, physical development, social development, career development, education for the disabled and organization of instruction), along with descriptions of the goals for each of these categories.
- **IF-R-1 (Curriculum Coordinating Council)** – Approved changes add early childhood as a group for instructional development. In addition, two sentences under the “meetings” heading are revised to read: “3. A quorum is required to take action on recommendations and shall consist of a majority of the staff and parent members plus two (2). 4. The council will work to achieve consensus. All recommendations made to the superintendent by the Curriculum Council must be passed by a 2/3 majority vote of those present at the council meeting.” Membership has been changed to add high school students and the A+ coordinator.
- **IGAC (Teaching About Religion)** – The title of this policy was changed from “Sectarian Instruction” to “Teaching About Religion.” Other minor wording changes were approved.
- **IGBD (At Risk Students)** – The title of this program was changed from “Alternative School Programs” to “At Risk Students.”
- **IGBHA (English for Speakers of Other Languages)** – This is a new policy that addresses the education of students with limited or no English-speaking ability.
- **IGDF-R (Student Fund-Raising Activities)** – Minor wording changes were approved.
- **IGDF-R-E (Fund-Raising Application for Clubs and Organization)** – Minor wording changes were approved.

The board also lodged for action the following policies. The board is expected to vote on these items during its regular Jan. 14 board meeting:

- **Policy GBEB (Communicable Diseases- Employees)** – Proposed revisions change a paragraph to read, “Employees with a disease have a right to privacy and a need for confidentiality. Only staff members and other persons in the school community who need to know, as determined by the administrative staff in consultation with medical/legal counsel, will be informed of such employee’s identity and condition. Except as provided above, unauthorized disclosure (willful or negligent) of confidential information about an employee’s medical condition will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.”
- **Procedure GBEB-R-1 (Communicable Diseases)** – Proposed revisions change a sentence to read, “The district’s policy and procedures on communicable diseases will be available in the district’s policy and procedure books and, at the discretion of the superintendent or designee, may also be posted at each work site.” Another sentence is proposed to be revised to read, “The

employee will be placed on sick leave in accordance with district policy until a decision regarding the safety of allowing the employee to return to work.” Other minor wording or grammatical changes are recommended.

- **Exhibit GBEB-E-1 (Communicable Diseases)** – Minor wording and grammatical changes are recommended.

Your Board of Education

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