

School student count certified for funding

Written by Brenda Johnson Brandt

Final October student count information for Holyoke School District Re-1J showed a certified count of 630, down three from a year ago. Superintendent Bret Miles reported the count information at the Nov. 20 school board meeting.

The average funded full-time equivalent pupil count was 587.7. Miles said the 2012-13 budget was built on a pupil count of 587, so it is very close to the actual funded figure.

When the pupil count is put together, the district not only certifies the enrollment for funding, it also gets a look at demographic data, explained Miles.

Ethnicity in the district pupil count reflected 57 percent white, 42 percent hispanic and one percent other.

Forty-nine percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced price meals, up one percent from last year.

Additionally, Miles reported 21 percent receive English as a Second Language (ESL) services. This is the fourth year in a row of percentages in the low 20s for this statistic.

EAGLE-Net agreement clarified

At the close of a work session which followed last week's board meeting, an impromptu conversation centered around EAGLE-Net and its recent coverage on talk radio. Supt. Miles was asked to clarify the school district's current agreement with EAGLE-Net as its Internet provider.

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Miles said last spring the district entered into a three-year contract with EAGLE-Net, and EAGLE-Net also entered into a three-year agreement with PC Telcom.

At that time, it was agreed by all three parties that this joint venture was in the best interest of all involved. As a result, the district received only one bid for the Internet services from EAGLE-Net, said Miles.

He pointed out that at the conclusion of this three-year contract between the three parties, the district will be going through a bid process again. EAGLE-Net and PC Telcom may rebid as partners or separately.

Miles and the board members reiterated their interests in an open bid process which allows the district to participate in the federal E-Rate program.

They also expressed their interest in carefully looking at the advantages of a local provider—such as prompt and reliable service and keeping money local whenever possible.

Educator Effectiveness Act reviewed

A work session following the regular meeting last Tuesday found the board going through an overview of the Educator Effectiveness Act, Senate Bill 191.

Miles walked the board through an overview of the law and some of the decisions the district would get to make on their own. He also outlined some of the processes in place to make sure the policy is implemented well.

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Board member Linda Jelden cited the role of the leadership team in the process and said she is impressed with the level of engagement from the teachers.

Other business

In other business Nov. 20, the Re-1J board:

- —approved minor revisions to Policy JS on student use of the Internet. The word computers was changed to technology throughout the document.

—reviewed a thorough fall sports report from athletic director Sandra Rahe. She highlighted the seasons for HS and JH football, HS and JH volleyball, HS softball and HS boys' golf, including coaches' comments.

—noted HHS senior Caitlyn Kramer was recently on 9News for her participation with a stock market game.

—heard from board member Kim Killin that she'd recently interacted with Senator Michael Bennet, a former Colorado public school superintendent. She shared information about the district's academic opportunity center and grading practices and said the senator was very impressed with what's being done in the district to keep kids successful.

—held a practice following the work session for a presentation the local board will be giving at the Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB) convention this week.

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