

Platte Canyon SD Update on Finances and Facilities
By Dr. Brenda Krage, Superintendent

Last spring, during the budget planning process for Fiscal Year 2017-18 (FY2018) I began sharing information specific to the potential challenges our District will experience, if nothing changes within the State specific to school funding. I would like to provide you with an update on three items to continue our conversation.

First, at the end of the school year we utilized a Budget Survey on the District website designed to gather information and ideas for future budget discussions. The survey was open to the public and staff through the end of June. There were between 40-42 open responses with inconclusive results. In general, the people who responded to the survey want to maintain access to everything they currently have. This is very understandable as change is difficult and as humans we get attached to what we have. One section of the survey asked respondents to select items they would be willing to explore (93 total responses): the highest rated 2 items were shifting to a 4-day school week and returning to half-day kindergarten; the lowest item of interest was streamlining transportation to one route. Given the opportunity to write-in ideas, there were no clear overarching themes. However, consolidating buildings was mentioned five times. The District remains open to ideas and will continue to support the Board expectations through a balanced budget.

Second, in the final hours of the legislative session SB267 Colorado Healthcare Affordability and Sustainability Enterprise (CHASE) or more commonly referred to as Sustaining Rural Schools passed. Our District is considered a small rural school district and therefore received \$345,327 in revenue for the FY18 school year. This is a significant amount of revenue and we need to be very wise and prudent with how it is spent. We have since learned these monies are intended as a one-time source of revenue. Currently, the funds are in District reserves. We will have many discussions about the use of these funds later this fall through spring as we engage in mid-year and then FY2019 budget planning discussions. There is no deadline for the funds to be spent.

Last, ten years ago the Colorado Department of Education conducted a School Facilities Assessment process and report for every district across the State. The District strategic planning and facilities committees utilized these reports as supporting documents throughout their process. As mandated by Statute this process will happen again at no cost to school districts. Platte Canyon is currently working with CDE to schedule a second facility assessment. We are hopeful that it will be conducted sometime this fall. This is a great service for our district.

There are many important topics of discussion in our District. The more we work together and keep open and honest discussion occurring, the better off our District will be. While these topics are near and dear to everyone, we have to keep 'what is best for kids' at the core of our decision making process.

Watch for District updates on our website at www.plattecanyonschools.org or call to make sure you are receiving our District newsletter.