



# Board Briefs

INFORMATION FROM THE JULY 23, 2024, BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

## Board moves forward with lease revenue bonds

The Board of Education of Iron County School District unanimously approved a resolution Tuesday night authorizing the issuance of lease revenue bonds by the local building authority it created in the June meeting. The bonds will be issued to cover the cost of an expansion at Canyon View High School and to replace and relocate the current transportation facility.

The vote came after a public hearing with no comments.

Superintendent Dr. Lance Hatch explained that a proposed tax increase is closely related to the approval of the lease revenue bond.

“A lease revenue bond is really just a loan and we pay for that loan through a levy,” Hatch said. “When we talk about raising our rates, one of the reasons we want to do that, get up to that .001 is so that we can do this lease revenue bond and pay for it.”

The addition at Canyon View High was on the narrowly defeated 2023 bond proposal. Dance classes and girls and boys wrestling are currently sharing a room. The weight room is too small and additional classrooms will serve an increasing number of students.

The transportation facility was on the list of projects on the voter-approved 2021 bonds. However, Business Administrator Todd Hess explained, there were unforeseen cost increases on other bond projects leaving little to no funding for the bus garage.

The current bus facility is about 30 years old. Increased student enrollment also means increased bus needs and the bus fleet alone has grown to 90 buses. Currently, the bus garage has three bus bays. At times, however, about eight buses are being worked on daily. Additionally, parking is extremely tight with many buses parking on dirt and gravel. The existing site does not have enough space for employee parking. Some employees park off site to allow more room for buses.

Hess reminded board members that the current tax yield per student is second to last among school districts in the state. Property owners are currently receiving tax notices, Hess said. There are four levies in the combined Basic School levy. The district’s proposed budget includes increases to two of those levies, but the other two levies will actually decrease.

“Due to us having paid off bonds, the rates would have dropped ... and we have to report what the increase is from those lower rates as the (change in tax),” Hess said. “If you’re looking at people budgeting from year to year, there really just isn’t that much difference between 2023 and 2024.”

The proposed tax increases require a truth-in-taxation hearing to be held at 6 p.m. August 20 where the public can address the board.

The Board of Education is also proposing a general obligation bond to be placed on the November ballot. The new proposal has been narrowed down to two projects: A 10th elementary school to be built in a growing area of the district and a building to house alternative programs including Southwest Education Academy (SEA), Launch High and online programs.

Currently there are 14 classes in portables. Those portables do not have water or bathroom facilities. Additionally, special programs like music or art have been moved either to a portable or a cart. Student access to alternative programs is capped because of facility size. A new facility would allow SEA and Launch to double their capacity.

Board Member Dave Staheli said it’s time to move forward in providing adequate facilities for students.

“We’ve had sharp criticism from a few people in our community about raising taxes for anything to do with anything,” he said. “The needs are already there ... we need to get moving forward on it.”

## Proposed increase to lunch fees helps meet increase in food costs

Board members approved a slight increase in the costs for school meals. Business Administrator Todd Hess said it’s been many years since the district looked at an increase. The cost would help cover the increasing cost of food to make the meals.

The district has a fund balance that it will continue to use to cover some of the cost increases. However, as that fund balance is reduced, the cost of meals also needs to cover those costs better.

The increase is 25 cents for breakfast and lunch for students, except reduced price lunch where the cost will stay the same. For adults, the increase is 50 cents for lunch and 25 cents for breakfast.

In other business, board members considered:

- A conflict of interest policy;
- An electronic meetings policy
- And approved a Utah Fits All Provider Plan.

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