



Board Briefs, July 20, 2023

At its July monthly meeting, the Maplewood Richmond Heights Board of Education approved a revised version of Board Policy GCPB, dealing with staff resignations. In light of regional and local challenges associated with teacher shortages and the challenges of properly staffing classrooms, the District's aim in revising the policy is to decrease disruption in the continuity of instruction for students and to establish clear expectations for teachers regarding contractual obligations. The revised language states that the Board reserves the right to pursue all available legal remedies when an employee breaks a contract with the District including, but not limited to, filing charges to have a teaching certificate or professional license revoked or seeking a monetary judgment, even if the employee pays compensation (i.e. liquidated damages) as prescribed in the existing policy. In addition, the District may share with potential employers seeking information about the employee the fact that the employee broke a contract with the District.

The Board also approved spending \$238,000 to furnish the new "Building A" with chairs, tables, desks, cabinets, shelving, bookcases and other office and classroom needs. Throughout the Proposition E renovations and construction, MRH has been collaborating with ColorArt of Olivette, MO. ColorArt, as part of the Education Plus purchasing consortium, holds the state contract for furniture purchases, eliminating the need for a bidding process. To ensure optimal furniture selection for each space, ColorArt and MRH engaged with teachers, counselors, and social workers in meetings. The Alternative Program teachers also visited the ColorArt showroom to test various options. Construction of Building A, a three-level addition on the MS/HS campus, is projected to be completed by mid-October. Operations Director Dr. Michael Dittrich stressed to the Board that to ensure timely delivery, it is imperative that the furniture is ordered as soon as possible.

An all-new policy was adopted by the Board. JFBB's purpose is to establish guidelines for the selection, role, eligibility, expectations and removal of student advisors to the Board of Education. Superintendent Dr. Bonita Jamison explained that including a student representative on the Board ensures that the voices and experiences of the student body are directly represented in the decision-making process. Students are the primary stakeholders in the education system, and their unique insights and perspectives offer valuable contributions to the development and implementation of educational policies.

The student board advisor would be a non-voting member of the Board, serving as a representative and advocate. The advisor's role would include providing insights and perspectives that contribute to discussions and deliberations on matters that could potentially influence the thinking of Board members. Student board advisors may be requested to report on specific issues relevant to the student body, ensuring that concerns and interests are heard.