Lee’s Summit R-7 School District May 3, 2017
Citizens’ Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

FUTURE MEETINGS/EVENTS:
● None scheduled at this time.

May 3, 2017, meeting key talking points:
● Dr. Benson presented information on the Missouri General Assembly including legislation supported and opposed by the school district. The General Assembly is scheduled to adjourn May 12.
● Dr. Benson provided an update on the district’s administrative reorganization. It is designed to improve services for professional staff, enhance student instruction and better align staffing with TEAM Lee’s Summit priorities. The reorganization will not result in any net additional administrative employees.
● Dr. Benson provided information on changes to US News and World Report’s best high school ranking and how the elimination of International Baccalaureate courses from the publication’s criteria negatively impacted R-7 high schools and all IB high schools.
● New Board of Education members introduced themselves to CAC members and answered questions.

Members attending
CAC members attending included Chairperson Kent Kirby, Assistant Chairperson Elaine Bluml, Dr. Dave Benson, Chesni Bivens, Genevieve Boehm, Julie Doane, Jerry Evans, Trish Frevert, Dr. Dale Greer, Terri Harmon, Stephen Hill, Mike Johnson, Kris Koenig, Roby Little, Jaime Lyon, Manne Magady, Sherri Mansfield, David McCaughey, Judy Noland, Janice Phelan, Alethea Rollins, Dennis Smith, Linda Thee, Cita Trice, Mark Van Blaricum, Dorothy Walk, Cheryl Ward and Ying Zurbuchen. Kent Kirby opened the meeting at 6:32 p.m. and adjourned around 8:20 p.m. Guests were Tony Yarbrough (representing Tom Jackson) and Kim Fritchie, new Board of Education member.

Legislative Update
Dr. Dave Benson shared information on Missouri General Assembly legislation supported as well as legislation opposed by the R-7 School District. Legislation supported includes:
● House Bill 90 Narcotics Control Act.
● Senate Bill 43 Unlawful Discriminatory Practices (modifies the burden of proof for employment discrimination, bringing Missouri in line with national standards).
● House Bill 97 Visiting Scholars Certificate (including Northland CAPS program).
● House Bill 138 Virtual Education. This is an enhancement of an existing law and opens the door for more students to participate in virtual education.
● A fully funded formula. Both the House and Senate have agreed to this, although the governor has line item veto power that could change this. Last year, lawmakers redefined funding making it easier to hit this target and use adjustments to the "state adequacy target" (SAT) to fit the amount of available revenue. For Lee’s Summit R-7, this would be an estimated $749,847 increase in the district’s approximately $233.6 million revenue budget (based on 2016-17 budget).

Legislation opposed includes:
● Senate Bill 313 Establishes Missouri Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Program (tax credits). Concerns include cost, accountability of schools accepting taxpayer funding, student transfers, tuition rates and a phase-in for early childhood. Numerous amendments have been added to this legislation which is more than 100 pages long.
• House Bill 634  Charter School Expansion. Concerns include provisions that allow open enrollment between school districts and the fact that most Missouri charter schools are underperforming (17 out of 39 would be unaccredited if charters were granted accreditation). As of May 3, the bill had passed the House and is in the Senate.

Administrative reorganization
Dr. Benson discussed this spring’s administrative reorganization, approved by the Board of Education in March. It is designed to improve services for professional staff, enhance student instruction and better align staffing with TEAM Lee’s Summit priorities. The reorganization does not result in any net additional administrative staff and does not result in any additional expenditures in administrative staffing. Changes for 2017-18 follow.

- Dr. Judy Hedrick, currently assistant superintendent for business services, will become associate superintendent for business and operations. She will replace Dr. Brent Blevins, deputy superintendent for operations who is retiring in June.
- Dr. Hedrick’s position is not being replaced. Instead a new position, director of accounting, is being created.
- With the retirement of Donna Southwick, the position of special services director, is being eliminated and replaced with expanded contracts (more days worked each year) for special services coordinators. Dr. Emily Miller, assistant superintendent of special services, will continue to lead this important area.
- Dr. Katie Collier, currently assistant superintendent of elementary instruction, will serve as associate superintendent of instruction and leadership. She is replacing Dr. Kevin Daniel, who will serve as executive director of professional development next year.
- Dr. David Sharp, currently principal at Lee’s Summit West High School, will become assistant superintendent of secondary instruction. He replaces Dr. Don Andrews, who is retiring.
- Dr. David Carlson, currently principal at Summit Lakes Middle School, will serve as executive director of classified personnel. He replaces Dr. Dianna Rentie, who is also retiring.

Information on R-7 schools and US News and World Report’s Best High Schools
Dr. Benson shared information related to changes in US News and World Report’s annual Best High Schools list, which was recently released. This year’s rankings by US News were changed and did not include International Baccalaureate stats (including students enrolled in courses and test scores) and instead relied only on Advanced Placement enrollment and test scores. As an International Baccalaureate district, Lee’s Summit R-7 students enroll in IB programs at a much higher rate than they do AP, which places our schools at a significant disadvantage when IB enrollment and test scores are not credited in US News ratings. Lee’s Summit R-7 believes IB is a broader and more rigorous approach for students and a better preparatory program for college success than the AP program. The handout distributed at the CAC meeting is available on the last page of these minutes.

New Board members
Newly elected Board of Education members Kim Fritchie and Dennis Smith introduced themselves to CAC members and answered questions. New Board of Education member Jackie Clark was unable to attend. The three new members were elected in early April.

Kim Fritchie shared that she is a Lee’s Summit High School graduate and returned to LSHS as an English and journalism teacher after college. After 12 years of teaching, Mrs. Fritchie became an administrative assistant at Campbell Middle School where she served for two years. She served for 16 years at PLMS as assistant principal, retiring in 2011. She is involved in many community organizations including Lee’s Summit CARES, Lee’s Summit Educational Foundation, Lee’s Summit Beautification Committee. She also teaches Sunday school. Mrs. Fritchie said she was very committed to the community and education and believed this was an opportune time to join the Board of Education. Her priorities include developing a communications plan for our district to make sure our
community is well-informed on issues such as *US News and World Report*’s ranking. Mrs. Fritchie said the district needs to develop a system for critical input from the community.

Dennis Smith said that he has served on the CAC for around 15 years as a school administrator and a community member. He is a lifelong resident, a graduate of Lee’s Summit High School. He served as an R-7 government and American history teacher and Pleasant Lea Middle School assistant principal, ending his career with R-7 as principal of Campbell Middle School. He retired in 2003 but returned for one year after retirement to serve as the principal of Lee’s Summit West High School during the year before it opened to students. Mr. Smith also served for three terms on the Lee’s Summit City Council, is an elder in his church, a noon Rotary Club member, a member of the Lee’s Summit Historical Society and Friends of the Lee’s Summit Symphony. He has also been active in the Lee’s Summit Educational Foundation since it formed in the early 1990s and has served as a Foundation president. He currently works with the MU Fellows program and with UCM where he helps mentor new principals. He said he ran for Board of Education because he received the best education possible as a Lee’s Summit R-7 student and believes the staff is also among the finest. His priorities include early childhood program expansion, addressing enrollment growth and future needs.

Dr. Benson shared that the new Board of Education is having a workshop with Dr. Carpenter in June and will set the priorities for 2017-18. These will likely include discussion of a boundary study and future facility needs. Board of Education members have all met with Dr. Carpenter in individual sessions.

Roundtable/Adjourn
Elaine Bluml facilitated roundtable, the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:20 p.m. In addition, team members thanked Dr. Dave Benson, interim superintendent, and Dr. Brent Blevins, deputy superintendent who is retiring in June.

**Thank you for being a part of the Citizens' Advisory Committee!!**

Please visit the CAC website at:
http://www.lsr7.org/district/community/citizens-advisory-committee/
US News and World Report’s Best High Schools changes methodology, disadvantages International Baccalaureate schools

In recent years, Lee’s Summit R-7 high schools have been listed among U.S. News and World Report’s annual Best High School rankings with our high schools achieving honors and often earning a spot among the top 20 in Missouri. This year, Lee’s Summit West earned a bronze medal while Lee’s Summit North and Lee’s Summit High School did not earn any recognition.

According to the publication, this year’s final step in achieving top rankings no longer includes International Baccalaureate test data and instead focuses on Advanced Placement data. According to the magazine, the International Baccalaureate organization informed the magazine that it was unable to supply U.S. News with IB data for 2014-15 as it had in previous years.

All three R-7 high schools scored well in graduation rates as well as mathematics and English test scores. In fact, our district’s three high schools’ combined ACT average scores were second in the Missouri-side metro area the last three years. Due to the change to an Advanced Placement emphasis, the three schools did not score as well on the college readiness index, which includes just two scores -- the number of students taking Advanced Placement courses and the number of students passing Advanced Placement tests, with both numbers divided by the total student count. Since the vast majority of Lee’s Summit R-7 high-school students take IB courses rather than AP courses, the schools’ scores in this college-prep area dropped significantly when the number of students in the AP courses and the number of students passing AP tests are apparently the only factors considered in the determination of college readiness.

For example, here are the number of students taking IB and AP at each high school:

- LSHS: 332 in IB and 23 in AP
- LSNHS: 328 in IB and 9 in AP
- LSWHS: 294 in IB and 35 in AP

If our district did not offer International Baccalaureate, it is estimated that nearly all students in IB would be enrolled in Advanced Placement. Our three high schools are among 12 Missouri high schools offering International Baccalaureate, a rigorous world-wide academic program with high standards of teaching, leadership and achievement. International Baccalaureate is offered at all three R-7 high schools.

For more information about the U.S. News and World Report methodology for this ranking, read this article titled “Why High Schools Moved Up or Down in the 2017 Rankings.” Additional information related to the ranking system is available via this link (especially relevant are pages 6 and 16).