

THE

Ell-Saline



ECHO

JANUARY 2012 EDITION

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CARDINAL GRANT RECIPIENT PRESENTATIONS

At half-time of the High School Varsity Boys' Basketball game with Canton Galva on Tuesday, December 13, members of the Cardinal Foundation for Educational Excellence Board of Directors presented certificates to the recipients of this fall's grants. This fall's recipients were Amber Fouard & Stephanie Svaty, Andrea Pickering & Susie Omli, Lori Scuitte, Lee Weis and Michelle Werner. Helping with the presentation were Board of Directors Chairperson Jamie Bradley and members Mitch Drees, Michelle Griffin and Tom Omli. Pictured are: Left to Right – Lee Weis, Susie Omli, Andrea Pickering, Michelle Werner, Lori Scuitte, Tom Omli, Amber Fouard, Michelle Griffin and Jamie Bradley.

KSHSAA CLASSIFICATION RUMOR

It was recently brought to my attention that there are rumors circulating through the community and parents regarding our current enrollment numbers at the high school. The rumor or concern involves our KSHSAA (Kansas State High School Activities Association) classification. Rumors are circulating that our current enrollment has grown to the point of moving us to a 3A classification in the near future. That is incorrect. In this article I will try to get out current, accurate information about this issue.

I agree that if we were to become a 3A school it would be extremely difficult for us to maintain our small class sizes and compete in activities and sports year-in-and-year-out. We should be able to compete in Class 2A for several years in most activities. We have accepted new students since the September 20 count date, some of them in-district and some of them out-of-district. However, we have also lost several students that were here on September 20. As of today, our enrollment in grades 9-12 is 148 which is the

exact same number as we had on September 20. Last year our enrollment was 152 students in grades 9-12 so we're not as big this year as last year.

If all currently enrolled students in this year's grades 8-11 are still here next September 20 we will be at 155 students which are 7 less than the smallest Class 3A school this year (Moundridge 162). The rumor also has it that we are the third largest Class 2A school this year. In reality, we are the 8th largest 2A school this year behind Eskridge-Mission Valley 158, Prairie Village 156, Sterling 156, Arma-Northeast 155, Ellsworth 154, Smith Center 153, Berean Academy 150 then Ell-Saline at 148. In football we are currently the largest 2A school because that classification is based on different grade levels than for all other activities and sports. However, reclassification for football won't happen for another two years. If all students currently enrolled in grades 7-9 are still here for the football reclassification, then our enrollment for football purposes will be 116 which is 2 less than our current number.

It's hard to predict what will happen in future years regarding school enrollments across the state. Add to that the likelihood that there will be additional consolidations and the future gets even cloudier. We will continue to look closely at all out-of-district requests that come our way. For now, though, our enrollment numbers don't put us as close to the 3A classification as the rumors are saying.

I'm hoping this article eases the anxieties that the rumors have caused. As I stated earlier, I don't think it would be in our best interest to grow to a small 3A classification size as I don't think that it would be best for our students either academically (larger class sizes) or activity wise. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you would like further clarification.

Jerry Minneman, Superintendent

DECEMBER 12 BOARD MEETING REPORT

Marty Kramer was the only board member absent. Action taken was on a 6-0 vote unless noted otherwise. Susan Rose, board clerk, also was absent and Dana Sprinkle was appointed to serve as clerk for the meeting.

7:00 P.M. REGULAR MEETING

AUDIENCE WITH THE BOARD
None

REPORTS

BOE – Jeff Parker reported on the KASB Annual Convention and the SQE Issues Caucus.

Mrs. Sprinkle – Her report included: students are taking various assessments; the Schoolwide Leadership Team will meet again on December 15 to finalize the plan with another meeting planned in January with the External Team of Assistance; transitioning from our paper-pencil professional development plan process to the on-line MyLearningPlan process is underway; student and staff spirit of Christmas activities; and issues with youth basketball groups using the facilities.

Mr. McDaniel – His report included: second semester dual credit courses being approved (English Comp II, Sociology, College Algebra); formative data meetings have begun; MTSS intervention model is going well; classroom observations; semester finals; the MS/HS receiving recognition from the Confidence in Kansas Public Education Task Force in the Challenge Awards Program as being one of the top 60 performing high school across the state for gains on the state assessments last year; and student performance in the play directed by Mrs. Marrs.

Mr. Minneman – His report included: closed circuit TV from the Bernie White Gym to the commons area is in operation; December 22 Work Day; wrestling program having no students involved this year; the Governor's proposed school funding formula; and dates that he will be attending meetings out of the district before the next meeting.

BUSINESS

MS/HS Cell Phone Policy—The following policy was approved to begin with the second semester (January 3, 2012) of this school year. Cain Fouard and Keenan Toll, representing the Student Advisory Council, helped in the presentation of this proposal.

“Communication devices and other electronic devices, i.e. cell phones and music playing devices, are allowed in school during passing periods, at lunch, and in class according to staff and administrative discretion. USD 307 is not responsible for replacement of any personal property brought to school.

(Remove cell phones and pagers from the inappropriate items at school list within Offenses and Consequences listing)

Offenses and Consequences policy addition:

Inappropriate cell phone/electronic device use that is referred to the building principal:

- 1st —Removal of item(s) for the rest of the day;
- 2nd —Removal of item(s) for 5-10 school days; and
- 3rd —ISS/OSS.”

MS/HS Tardy Policy—The following policy was approved to begin with the second semester (January 3, 2012) of this school year.

“If a student is late to school he/she should report to the office. Students are allowed two (2) excused tardies per 9 weeks.

Unexcused tardies will be dealt with by the following guidelines per each 9 weeks;

- 1st unexcused tardy per class per 9 weeks will result a 15 -minute detention;
- 2nd unexcused tardy per class per 9 weeks will result in a 30-minute detention;
- 3rd and subsequent unexcused tardies per class per 9 weeks will result in a 60-minute detention.”

All-Day Kindergarten—It was approved to move to required all-day kindergarten beginning next year (2012-2013). (5-1 Geena Kejr) Since all-day kindergarten is not funded by the state, there will be a \$110/month fee for high socio-economic students and a \$55/month fee for low socio-economic students (students that qualify for free or reduced price lunches) for 9 months (September through May) to help fund this program. (4-2 John Fouard, Cheryl Higgins)

Out-of-District Students—Mickayla Bigham (10th) and Dustin Stone (7th) were approved.

Adopt 2012-2013 School Calendar—The option favored by the teacher vote was approved. The first day for teachers will be Tuesday, August 14, the first day for students will be Monday, August 20. A copy of the calendar can be found on the district web site.

Fall Sport Supplemental Positions—All current fall sport coaches were approved to serve in the same role next year.

Select Board Negotiations Team—Anita Bird and Jamie Bradley agreed to serve in this capacity again this year.

February Board Meeting Date—The date of the February board meeting was moved from February 13 to February 20. One week later than was originally scheduled.

There were two Executive Sessions (Personnel). The second session followed the BUSINESS portion of the meeting and was to conduct my evaluation. No action was taken following either of them.

The meeting adjourned at 10:59 p.m.

The next regular meeting will be Monday, January 9, 7:00 p.m. at the District Office in Brookville. If anyone wishes to have an item added to the agenda, please contact President Jeff Parker, Vice-President Anita Bird or the District Office two weeks prior to the meeting.

FFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The Ell-Saline FFA Chapter has recently started an Alumni Association. The Alumni Association is affiliated at the State and National level. We will be holding our first meeting Wednesday, January 11 at 6:30pm at the HS in the Food Science Room. We would like to invite anyone interested in being a part of this association to join us. You do not have to be a former FFA member or Ell-Saline graduate, just be interested in helping to further our local FFA chapter.

The Alumni will assist our local chapter in many ways. Some of the ways we will be helping our local chapter will be in supporting the scholarship fund, helping with the annual awards banquet, and possible various other events. We know there are many of you that live out of the area that will not be able to physically participate but we don't want to exclude anyone as we will need your input with many ideas. For more information feel free to contact Cindy Lindsay at sandpit@wtciweb.com or Pat Pieschl at taf_298@hotmail.com. We are excited to help the FFA chapter and community have a closer working relationship and hope you will be a part too.

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

With some of the weather that we have had recently it is sometimes hard to imagine that we are fast approaching the start of winter. The rains of last week were much appreciated, though, and will help the wheat that was planted this fall. Unfortunately it's not sounding likely that we will have a White Christmas!

This week we will be starting our Winter Vacation—a time to enjoy family and friends, to look back on all the memories (good and bad) of the current year, and to look forward with anticipation to the excitement and promise that always comes with a new year. As a district we enjoyed many successes and experienced a few disappointments. Through it all, we have continued to work to improve and not be satisfied with where we are.

Part of what goes into providing a quality education and continuing to improve is having the necessary funding to support the programs that help each student have the opportunity to succeed. Last week Governor Brownback presented a new school funding formula to the Kansas State Board of Education and it will be introduced as a bill next month for the legislature to pass this session but it would not take effect until the 2013-2014 school year. In the paragraphs that follow I will try to explain it and how it will affect us.

The Governor's School Funding Proposal

In my opinion, the Governor has made an honest and reasonable attempt to stabilize and simplify the current system of financing public schools. Frankly, I feared further funding cuts. As currently proposed, however, the plan does create potential disadvantages for districts that are poorer or less likely to vote for additional local taxes.

The Governor's plan would pay school districts in several ways. First, school districts would receive \$4,492 (known as Base State Aid Per Pupil or BSAPP) for each student. This is the amount required by statute but has not been funded. Second, each school district would continue to levy the present 20 mills of property tax.

Those 20 mills are "equalized", which means the money is redistributed to school districts based on their property wealth. In other words, the lower your assessed valuation, the more money you get. School districts with low assessed valuation are generally referred to as "poor" districts because their valuation does not allow them to easily raise additional funds through mill levy increases. School districts would also continue their current local property tax (Local Option Budget or LOB).

Districts with lower assessed valuation or poorer districts, like Ell-Saline, would get more money but that amount is capped at 106% of the amount we would have received under the current system. Simply put, we would get a 6% raise in funds. Wealthier school districts would receive a Supplemental Equalization payment to make sure they are receiving the same amount of money they did under our current system.

The good news for Ell-Saline is that, using this year's budget figures, we would initially receive \$255,546 more. The bad news is that new and permanent costs (new teachers, fuel, insurance, etc...) would probably eat through that money in a few years. Worse still, we would have to rely on our comparatively meager ability to raise additional funds by increasing our LOB because, unlike our current LOB, this tax would not be equalized based on property wealth.

Our district's property wealth currently allows us to raise about \$20,000 per mill without state equalization. Some districts near our size can raise several times more money per mill due to various types of commercial or industrial properties that are in their district. There would no longer be a limit on this tax but it would now be subject to a protest vote of the district's patrons.

The proposal allows for the 106% cap on poorer districts to be raised if wealthier districts go above that amount. It is also possible that the state would occasionally increase the BSAPP. Since school districts could now raise the money on their own, however, my fear is that increases in the BSAPP would be rare and/or small. For each of the past several years there has actually been a decrease in the BSAPP.

Another issue with inequity is the fact that for any bond issues passed in the future, bond and interest costs would not be equalized. Again, that means that poorer districts would have to rely on their lower property wealth to finance facility improvements. For example, with our current bond issue, 40% of the cost is paid by the state. Under this proposal, the equalization aid would no longer exist for future bond issues.

To sum up, the Governor's plan would help us in the short term because we are comparatively poor in property wealth. In the long term, however, it could become increasingly difficult to sustain our quality of education and our facilities without large local property tax increases. It is important to remember that this is only the Governor's proposal and would still have to be approved by the legislature. Between now and then it could undergo several revisions as there are numerous unanswered questions. We've not been told if funds could be carried over from year-to-year, whether or not Special Education funding is included in the amount of increase or if that is a separate amount, is the hold harmless provision on a per student basis or on an entire budget basis just to list a few. It will be important to follow this as it works its way through the legislative process.

Regardless of what funding formula we are working under or the amount of budget that we have, you can be assured that we will do all that we can with the resources that we have available to continue to provide a quality education for our students. Thank you for your continued trust and confidence in the Ell-Saline USD 307 school district. As always, please feel free to contact me at jinneman@ellsaline.org or 785-225-6813 if you have any questions. I wish each of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Check for changes at www.ellsaline.org

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| Jan. 1 | New Year's Day | Jan. 18 | 1:00 HOA HS Scholar's Bowl @ Moundridge |
| Jan. 2 | NO SCHOOL—Teacher In-Service Day | Jan. 19 | 4:00 MS BB @ Bennington |
| Jan. 3 | CLASSES RESUME | Jan. 19 | HS Boys' BB Canton-Galva Tourney |
| Jan. 3 | 4:30 HS BB @ Trinity Catholic | Jan. 20-22 | K-State Honor Band @ Manhattan |
| Jan. 5 | 4:00 MS BB Trinity Catholic @ ES | Jan. 20 | HS Boys' BB Canton-Galva Tourney |
| Jan. 6 | 4:30 HS BB Sedgwick @ ES | Jan. 21-22 | Booster Club Elementary BB Tourney |
| Jan. 7 | State KMEA Band Auditions | Jan. 21 | FFA @ Manhattan |
| Jan. 7 | 9:00 MS BB "C" Tourney @ Southeast of Saline | Jan. 21 | HS Fr. BB @ Marquette |
| Jan. 8 | 6:30 After-Prom Meeting at Ell-Saline Elementary | Jan. 23 | HS Fr. BB @ Marquette |
| Jan. 9 | HS Scholar's Bowl @ Washington | Jan. 24 | 6:00 HS Girls' BB Tourney vs. Bennington @ Little River |
| Jan. 9 | 7:00 BOE Meeting at Ell-Saline District Office | Jan. 26 | 4:00 MS BB Berean Academy @ ES |
| Jan. 10 | 4:30 HS BB Berean Academy @ ES (2010-2011 State Wrestling, Girls' Basketball, Softball, Girls' Track Recognition Night) | Jan. 26 | 7:30 HS Girls' BB Tourney vs. Little River @ Little River |
| Jan. 12 | HS Scholar's Bowl @ Southeast of Saline | Jan. 27-28 | FFA @ Pittsburg |
| Jan. 12 | 4:00 MS BB Remington @ ES | Jan. 27 | 6:00 HS Girls' BB Tourney vs. Lyons @ Little River |
| Jan. 13 | 4:30 HS BB @ Canton-Galva | Jan. 30 | 4:00 MS BB @ Canton-Galva |
| Jan. 14-16 | FFA @ Denver, CO | Jan. 31 | 4:30 HS BB Inman @ ES (Little Cheerleaders Night) |
| Jan. 14 | 9:00 MS BB "B" Tourney @ ES | Feb. 2 | 4:00 HS Regional Scholar's Bowl @ Little River |
| Jan. 16 | HS Boys' BB Canton-Galva Tourney | Feb. 2 | MS BB HOA League Tourney |
| Jan. 16 | 6:30 CPTA Meeting at Ell-Saline Elementary | Feb. 3 | 4:30 HS BB Bennington @ ES |
| Jan. 17 | HS Boys' BB Canton-Galva Tourney | Feb. 4 | Regional Piano |
| Jan. 18 | FFA @ Abilene | Feb. 4 | MS BB HOA League Tourney @ Sedgwick |

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The Ell-Saline U.S.D. 307 Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, handicap or age in admission or access to, or treatment in, its programs or activities. Any questions regarding in the board's compliance with Title VI, Title IX, or Section 504 may be directed to the Title IX coordinator, who can be reached at (785) 225-6813, 412 E. Anderson, P.O. Box 157, Brookville, KS 67425, or to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education.

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