Board meeting covers budget shortfall, accreditation

**Superintendent Frank Herrard discusses with Board of Education members Nina Wolford and Cindy Capagh.**

Grant Harrison Editor-in-Chief

On Dec. 8, the Bellevue Public Schools Board of Education held their monthly meeting discussing budget shortfalls and impending accreditation. The theme of the night was to keep spending $3 million over the upcoming two years.

“We need to reduce the use of cash reserves,” Herrard said. “We can’t afford to keep spending $3 million per year.”

Bellevue Public Schools lost much of its Impact Aid funding—a major source of federal revenue for the district—after the 12-13 school year. “Bellevue West lost much of its Impact Aid and another $2 million in Impact Aid during the school year after year.”

Wood said. “We can’t afford to use of cash reserve,” Harrison said. “We can’t afford to keep spending $3 million over the upcoming two years; the district—after the 12-13 school year—will have to draw from their savings in other federal funds for the 14-15 year. The district plans another $3 million in budget reductions. Around 50 percent of the previous reductions were in spending related, things like the $2 million in new state reimbursement monies. We didn’t spend it, so it wasn’t really saved,” Herrard said.

Other ways Herrard tended to reduce expenditures include cost saving efficiency, hiring delays or even taking employees for the day. “To reduce our enrollment, we are reducing staffing expenses,” Herrard said. The board had said the budget would be $5 million and extra for the 14-15 school year. For the coming 13-14 school year, the district remained just over $2 million a year, a decrease from previous years when Impact Aid was more than $6 million. The board predicted they would have to draw from their cash reserves in the 14-15 year.

After that, we will have to see how things are changing on the federal level,” Herrard said.

The other topic of the night was Bellevue-West accreditation. Advanced, a school accreditation organization serving thousands of schools across the country, will be sending an External Review Team on Jan. 13-14. Currently, Bellevue West is an accredited school, and to keep that, said Herrard, an External Review Team must visit the district every five years.

“Accreditation means that you are meeting a certain level of standards and standards,” Bellevue West school improvement chair Kim Gangstad said. The board had said the budget would be $5 million and extra for the 14-15 school year. “Bellevue West accreditation means that Bellevue West makes sure that Bellevue West is implementing the new law in the district to meet that.”

The path to citizenship is much longer than just the journey to America, applying for naturalization, among numerous other obstructions, requires a that a person has a past U.S. citizen. Out of a pool of 100 questions, 10 are chosen for the exam; to pass, an applicant needs to answer at least six correctly. Here are some of those questions. How would you do?

**Senior student scales halfway around the world granted citizenship.**

Superintendent Frank Herrard meets with Board of Education members Nina Wolford and Cindy Capagh. Among other things, the board discussed the coming budget and accreditation.

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