



BOARD BRIEFS

Authored by the Davis School District Community Relations Department

District implements statewide Portrait of a Graduate Program outlines learning characteristics for K-12 students

Davis School District is incorporating the Portrait of a Graduate learning framework approved recently by the Utah State Board of Education,

“Portrait of a Graduate is the structure the state has outlined for the expectations of what our students can do and what students obtain during their education in the K-12 system,” Assistant Superintendent Dr. Logan Toone told the Davis School District Board of Education Tuesday. “It is a framework to plug all of our instruction ... with a real focus on the needs of individual students.”

The model focuses on three main categories — mastery, autonomy and purpose. Each category contains four to five standard areas of learning to help students succeed. While districts in the state are not required to follow the statewide model, Davis School District has chosen to implement the program.

“The thing that’s great about the state Portrait is one, we believe it’s extremely relevant and applicable to what we want our learners to look like, particularly at the

exit points,” Superintendent Reid Newey said.

“And two, throughout the nation over the past 10 years, school districts have dumped a ton of money into developing their own portraits of a graduate,” Newey added.

“It’s something that we’ve been very interested in since I’ve been here. I know we had early conversations about it and we held off, and we’re happy about that because the state has developed it for us.”

The district has been developing priority standards over the past three years that

align with the state’s graduate model, District Teaching and Learning Director Belinda Kuck told board members. Additionally, the district developed proficiency scales and performance assessments to determine how students are applying their learning.

“The hallmark of the 21st and 22nd centuries will be that a person knows how to learn and to teach themselves for their life,” Kuck said. “We often talk about a life-long learner. We’re trying to help students define what that looks like and how to do it.”

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District continues conserving energy consumption

In the last 14 years, Davis School District’s square footage has grown by nearly 3 million square feet. The district has also been able to reduce its energy consumption by 13 percent during that time.

District Utility Services Director Doug Anderson told board members that while energy costs have gone up from the addition of air conditioning units and computers throughout the district, switching to LED lighting, replacing outdated boilers and using renewable energy systems in newer

buildings has enabled the district to reduce energy consumption also.

The district tracks each building’s heating and cooling systems, water and natural gas usage, carbon dioxide emitted and renewable generation.

“While we’ve gone up by 36 percent in square footage, our energy use has gone down,” Anderson said. “We’re able to provide a better learning environment for students, both in comfort and light, and also returning money back to the board to use for education.”

There was also a drop in energy consumption during 2018-19 when buildings and schools were initially shut down because of the COVID-19 pandemic, he said. The numbers have started to rise again with school back in session and air handler equipment running two hours before school and two hours after school, helping purge buildings of the virus.

Ten schools in the district are also helping reduce energy costs with photo voltaic panels on their roofs,

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PORTRAIT, from Pg. 1

Board Member Cheryl Phipps said the model will be extremely impactful for students.

“It’s more about not just having people regurgitate information, but instead ... there are multiple ways of being able to demonstrate it with critical thinking and the ability to express yourself,” Phipps said.

“You think about what it takes to have a person working in the workforce. It’s not just about the skills and knowing information, but how to communicate and demonstrate that,” she said.

ENERGY, from Pg. 1

generating the same amount of electricity used by the building. As a result, four percent of the district’s power usage in the last year has come from renewable energy. Sixteen schools also have ground source heating and cooling options, which use the earth’s heat to warm and cool the school.

“This is a big deal,” Superintendent Reid Newey said. “Energy cost avoidance is millions of dollars a year and it gives us the opportunity to continue to deliver on what the board intends our buildings to look like for students.”

Assessments show continued student achievement

A recent news release from the Utah State Board of Education revealed that Utah ACT scores rose for the class of 2021, while national scores decreased.

Utah students also bucked the trends with increasing individual component scores while national individual test scores fell.

District Assessment Director Janeal Magalei told the Board of Education Tuesday that many factors may have contributed to the positive ACT results. After COVID-19 initially closed down schools, the American College of Testing provided vouchers for students to sign up for subsequent ACT testing dates at specified locations.

The ASPIRE Plus test results also showed ninth-and 10th-grade students increased proficiency levels in English, but saw a decrease in science. Magalei pointed out that at the time of the test, ninth-grade students may have only taken one of the science classes reflected in the test — chemistry, biology and physics. Statewide data hasn’t been released yet to see if the district results mirror other students in the state.

“Data does nothing if it doesn’t compel us to ask questions and do some research,” Magalei said. “This will be the most helpful when we have state scores to compare to see if the trend (with the state) holds true, which it often does.”

Advanced Placement scores also remained consistent compared to past years, Magalei said. Adjustments were made because of COVID-19, allowing students to take tests on any device as long as they had a camera. Some AP test requirements were also adjusted since students were not in class during the time leading up to the test.

In other data, the district saw a 92% graduation rate for the class of 2021. The number is still awaiting official approval from the state and statewide graduation rates haven’t been released yet. The district experienced a steady increase in graduation numbers over the past 10 years, but this year’s graduation rates show a decrease of 2 percent compared to the 94 percent graduation rate for the class of 2020.