

## April Spotlight 2017

Hello everyone,

Long agendas seem to be indicative of spring time for school boards and this April was no exception. We reviewed our working budget for next school year and heard several committee reports with itemized budget recommendations ahead of the anticipated May approval. Our Business Manager, Keith Johnson, and Board Treasurer, Nicholas Meyer, feel very good about the way our 2017-18 budget is shaping up. There has been significantly more work to do in order to set the stage for ongoing reporting requirements by our bond holders.

Sean Koster, Principal, shared that our enrollment for next year is at 534 (which is great) and described several summer marketing events that will take place at town celebrations near our school in Crystal. The Marketing Committee is making plans to reach some new markets, such as the summer movie theater patrons at the New Hope Cinema Grill via a pre-movie advertisement. Mr. Koster briefed us on a potential block schedule option for middle school. It is exciting to see how a slightly higher student enrollment will allow us to increase our course offerings and also provide middle school teachers the latitude to do more in each class period. In addition, it makes sense to move to a quarter system, which is in line with a majority of other school districts.

One additional discussion was about a school uniform policy change recommendation from the Governance Committee. The recommendation came from a desire to simplify, both for our families and also for our teachers who help enforce the policy. The changes also reflect a desire to show respect to our school, to ourselves, and to each other. So, you will hear more directly from Ann Marie Roder in the office, but the changes include eliminating white shirts from both elementary school and middle school, requiring all tops to have the Beacon Academy logo (from Land's End and also from a new uniform vendor with very affordable offerings), and requiring black dress shoes for all students every day, except k-2 can wear gym shoes all day on gym days. Spirit wear with uniform bottoms will still be allowed on Fridays. And the plaid jumpers for elementary girls will still be allowed as well. Please don't use this spotlight as the source for detailed information on this. Just know that it was a good and lengthy conversation where we discussed the pros and cons of these changes. In the end, uniforms help to take away the distraction of social pressure and also the time-consuming effort of getting dressed before school. We want our students to feel a sense of belonging and trust that this will help. Thank you to the Governance Committee for all of your work and thought on this policy change.

Todd Alle presented a discussion on the Concordia Language Villages as he is suggesting that we move to make it an annual overnight trip for all-seventh grade students. Profe Alle has done a lot of leg work to think through all the logistics and fundraising options. It would be handled similarly to Wolf Ridge in fourth grade and families would know about it as their students grow up in the school. Making this field trip exclusive to seventh graders seems like the right decision. Concordia Language Villages has a good reputation and their vision closely supports our value of teaching Spanish at Beacon Academy.

On behalf of the Beacon Academy Board of Directors,  
Heidi Sheard, Board Secretary