

**THE GIST**  
**BROOKFIELD R-III SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**OPEN SESSION --- REGULAR BOARD MEETING**  
**DECEMBER 14, 2021**

The Brookfield R-III Board of Education, Brookfield, Missouri met in open session on Tuesday, December 14, 2021, beginning at 5:30 p.m. in person in the HS Media Center. The following board members were present: Jim McIntyre, Blake DeVoy, Jered Wallace, Galen Hicks, Dave Shaw, and Noel Staddie. Mandy Tarpening was absent and Galen Hicks left the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

President McIntyre called the meeting to order and led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance. Dr. Collins asked that auditor's presentation and Bruce Johnson from L.J. Hart's presentation be moved forward in the Agenda to right before Program Evaluations so that these men would be able to get on the road earlier to travel back home. The board unanimously approved the Agenda as amended. The board unanimously approved the Consent Agenda items as presented.

CPA John Gillum, the district's auditor, presented the 2020-21 completed audit. He reviewed the overall audit and highlighted the review his firm did on district's federal awards for the 20-21 school year. The board was sent an electronic version of the completed audit earlier so they had an opportunity to review it prior to the board meeting. The board unanimously approved the 2020-21 completed audit as presented by John Gillum.

Dr. Bruce Johnson, with LJ Hart & Company, reviewed with the board the impact of what a recent court case (Blankenship vs. Franklin County Collector) has had on several Missouri school districts, including the Brookfield R-III School District. The main points he discussed were:

- On November 6, 2012, the Strain-Japan School District passed a tax increase.
- Assessed Valuation (AV) dropped in 2013 when setting the new rate for the first time, and Strain-Japan levied a tax rate higher than the voter approved rate so that revenue was the same as election day.
- The Strain-Japan District set the tax rate according to the State Auditor's Office (SAO), which included Section 137.073.2 RSMo that was modified by SB711 in 2008.
- Blankenship challenged the school district violated Hancock (State Constitution) in 2013-2018, by setting a tax rate higher than voter approved tax rate.
- School Districts affected did not do anything wrong. Districts followed SAO and state statute. State statute passed by general assembly was determined to be unconstitutional.
- Prior to the decision MO statute allowed rate to be higher than ballot language to maintain substantially the same revenue as election day + CPI. Tax rates can no longer exceed ballot.
- 144 Districts were impacted and approximately \$40M was reduced from school operating budgets statewide.
- Ruling is prospective only, and taxing entities don't have to pay back prior years. Only future years are impacted.

What all this means for the Brookfield R-III District is a loss of approximately \$170,000 in tax revenue each year, unless the district places a proposition on the April or August 2022 ballot to hopefully cover this loss in revenue. The board discussed how complicated this issue is and how difficult it will be to explain to the public, but still feels \$170,000 each year is too much to lose in revenue. The board discussed the current teacher shortage and how hard it is to hire teachers and how important it is to continue to improve the district's salary schedules, both certified and non-certified. The board looked at three options concerning presenting an issue to the voters in April 2022. The board decided

the best option was to ask the voters to increase the total operating tax levy by \$0.2374 to \$4.4519 per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation and to make permanent the existing temporary operating tax levy of \$0.4242 per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation in order to provide additional funds to attract and retain qualified certified and support staff, maintain facilities, and meet the operating expenses of the district. The board asked Dr. Johnson to prepare exact ballot language for the board to discuss and possibly approve at the January 18, 2022 board meeting. No formal action was taken.

Under program evaluations, Dr. Collins reported on the investment opportunities the district currently has for surplus funds. Basically, interest on our bank accounts is all we can count on right now. The currently interest rate .26%. Matt Anderson reviewed the district's technology projects from the past year or so and upcoming projects. Ms. Carlson reviewed the district's Title I and Special Services programs.

Upcoming calendar dates were reviewed.

Finance reports from 11/30/21 were reviewed.

Dr. Collins reminded the board that board filings remain open until 5 p.m. on December 28, 2021, at 5 p.m. So far no one has filed for the two open seats on the board. Jim McIntyre's and Galen Hicks' terms end in April 2022.

The board decided to deliver the holiday Brookfield Bucks to staff members on Monday, December 20, 2021, beginning at 9 a.m.

Dr. Collins reviewed all the different construction projects we have going on right now with the board – the HVAC upgrades, the Prop 2 building project, and the next phase of ESSER III projects, and the Greenhouse grant. He will continue to update the board on these projects. The HVAC and Prop 2 projects are very close to being completed.

Dr. Collins discussed recent developments related to Covid 19 state rules and regulations. On November 22, 2021, Judge Daniel Green ruled that state regulations granting local health departments the authority to issue health orders violated the Missouri Constitution. As a result, he declared orders issued unilaterally under the regulations "null and void." Since Green's ruling, more than a dozen health departments have halted aspects of their work to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus and numerous school boards have voted to allow COVID protocols, like mask mandates, to expire. Despite the state health department's request to appeal Green's ruling, Attorney General Eric Schmitt has refused and has sent cease and desist letters to school districts and health departments and warned of future litigation if they fail to comply immediately. As far as the Brookfield R-III School District is concerned, the County Health Department will no longer quarantine, conduct contact tracing, or assist entities like the school district by notifying them of positive cases or close contacts. The district will continue to exclude students, staff and faculty who are positive with any infectious disease, including Covid 19, influenza, chicken pox, etc., as we are required to do by law and board policy. The district will continue to contact trace, but only for the purposes of notifying close contacts to educate them on watching for symptoms, getting tested, and self-isolating if symptoms appear. We will discontinue the practice of quarantining school-related close contacts.

Dr. Collins reported to the board that the 2013 surplus school bus that was sold through Purple Wave was paid for but never picked up by the buyer. Purple Wave notified them several times that they needed to pick the bus up and finally informed them that if they didn't pick it up by a certain date that the bus would be resold again at auction. Currently Purple Wave is preparing to sell the bus again for the district.

Dr. Collins reported that the district received three bids on the two new 2022 school buses we bid out. The bids were as follows:

Central States	\$99,645.00 each
Midwest Bus Sales	\$96,748.00 each
Midwest Transit Equipment	\$99,962.00 each

Dr. Collins stated that Transportation Director Tim Speichinger's recommendation was to accept the bid from Midwest Bus Sales. The board unanimously approved the bid on two new 2022 school buses from Midwest Bus Sales for \$96,748.00 each, to be delivered early in the 2022-23 school year.

Dr. Collins and the administrative team presented information on the district's APR/EOC/MAP results and CSIP progress. Much of this information has been reformatted by DESE and can be found online under their public reports. All in all, each building performed well, especially considering what a complicated school year 2020-21 turned out to be.

The board conducted a first reading of MSBA Policy Updates 2021C/D.

There being no further business to discuss, the board moved into closed session at 8:20 p.m.