

Shaker schools seek the public's help with strategic plan

By DAVID CARKHUFF, LACONIA DAILY SUN

BELMONT — The Shaker Regional School District intends to host a strategic planning workshop on March 10-11, and district officials hope the public will attend to help brush up the district's planning document.

The 2012-2017 strategic plan lists objectives, such as offering a comprehensive educational experience "that will engage and challenge all students within the district"; and assuring that "the percentage of Shaker Regional School District students accepted to post-secondary education will continue to exceed the state average."

"Vision areas" in the 2012-2017 plan focus on facilities and physical resources; curriculum, instruction and assessment; safety, health and a "respectful environment"; technology; communication; community outreach and partnership; and human resources and personnel.

Many of the facilities-related goals and recommendations were accomplished. These included providing a new gym floor at Canterbury Elementary School; and repairing the roof and replacing the bleachers at Belmont Middle School. Shaker Regional's Director of Building and Grounds Doug Ellis reported that the gym floor at Canterbury Elementary School and the bleachers at Belmont Middle School have been replaced.

The roof at Belmont Middle School was partially replaced, and this job will be finished this fiscal year, Ellis reported. At the Jan. 24 School Board meeting, the board learned that Melanson in Bow put in a bid for \$170,000 to complete roof repairs on the gym, fifth-grade unit and memorial building next to the gym, according to records of the meeting. This bid was under a budget of \$171,000, and these three roofs will finish off the middle school roofs, the board reported. The bid was accepted by unanimous vote.

Goals and recommendations from the existing plan that await completion include building an auditorium for performing arts at Belmont High School, which Ellis reported is still in the planning stage; and improving the traffic flow at Belmont Middle School by moving or removing the historic Gale School to free up space for a bus loop and additional parking, which also is still in a planning stage.

Last year, voters narrowly voted against tearing down the old Gale School at the annual School District Meeting. No action regarding the Gale School was taken at this year's deliberative session, the first such session to be held in Belmont under the newly implemented SB2 format of School District Meeting.

The existing plan also recommended a host of comprehensive educational programs, including preschool and full-day kindergarten; literacy programs; STEM — science, technology, engineering and math — integration in curriculum; school-to-work and extended learning opportunities; and expanded advanced placement programs. According to a press release from Superintendent Michael Tursi, Shaker Regional families, staff and community members are invited to update the school district's current "strategic direction." The plan, developed in 2015, "serves as the foundation for educating our students. It is now time to update the eight vision areas as outlined in the plan by adding action steps and timelines," Tursi reported in the press release.

During the two-day workshop, discussions will lead to identifying strategic goals for the next five years, Tursi reported. "The community's input is very important in this process," he reported. The workshop is Friday, March 10, from 4 to 8 p.m. and Saturday, March 11, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Belmont High School.

The current plan is available on the district website (www.sau80.org) under the "District Information" tab.

Interested parties are urged to RSVP to register for one or both days, by Wednesday, March 8, to Alicia Sperazzo at 603-267-9223 or asperazzo@sau80.org (<mailto:asperazzo@sau80.org>).