

# Quick Hits: BHSD Opposes New Legislation; Discusses Building Improvements

Board members also commit \$993,916 for significant equipment upgrades at Andover, Lahser and East Hills.

- By [Art Aisner](#)



The [Bloomfield Hills Schools Board of Education](#) on Thursday passed a resolution that opposes a bill package in Lansing to [increase](#) the cap on charters schools and open all districts to school of choice.

The 7-0 vote followed little discussion from board members and was just a few hours after the Michigan Senate narrowly passed the bill package in Lansing. It now moves on to the House of Representatives. Board President Ingrid Day explained that while she believes every child should have access to a quality public education, this bill package erodes local control and has the potential to hurt public schools financially.

Bloomfield Township resident Delores Rida, who has three children in the district, told the board she was opposed to opening the district to choice because she believes it could hurt the schools and property values simultaneously.

"We moved to this area three years ago and researched and felt Bloomfield Hills Schools was the best for our children," she said. "I wouldn't want to compromise the education of our children or devalue the investment we made."

During his regular report to the board, [Superintendent Rob Glass](#) said he was not opposed to studying a new method for implementing choice for students, but it would have to be a comprehensive approach that looked at [funding](#).

"There are things that need to be thought out and I don't think they are in this bill," he said.

Also in his report, Glass discussed the importance of the Oct. 18 meeting at the Doyle Center, where Field Nair International will unveil [its consolidated high school design](#) to the public at 7 p.m. Glass called it the first step toward understanding what the district will get and at what cost to merge [Lahser](#) and [Andover](#) high schools. The meeting will be streamed live on the district website and shown on BHS-TV, on Comcast digital channels 902 and 903.

Glass also addressed e-mails he received with concerns from residents since published reports showed that 21 percent of the district's 2009 graduates took remedial course work in college, according to the state's first Center

for Educational Performance. He emphasized it was based on new data, and although interesting, lacked some context. The study, for instance, included students only attending Michigan universities and did not account for those that go out-of-state, he said. It also didn't account for other variables, such as students that may take courses to pad grade-point averages.

"I don't think the sky is falling," he said. "Ninety percent of our students go to their first-choice college. I'd like to look at that (21 percent) number over time and drive it down."

## Facility Improvements

The board unanimously approved \$993,916 for key improvements to three schools.

- The air-conditioning unit above the [Lahser](#) auditorium will be replaced after completely failing last spring. Conditions for several events conducted there by students from Lahser and other schools were unbearable because of the temperature, according to multiple school officials.
- The mechanical system that operates the [Andover](#) pool, including the humidifier is completely inoperable and must be replaced.
- The district will install a full-service elevator at [East Hills Middle School](#) to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Currently students and staff need to climb stairs in order to enter the girl's locker rooms and gym. A lift system that was installed several years ago is prone to malfunctions and no longer works, officials said. This was the priciest of the projects, coming in at more than \$485,000.

Several board members questioned the cost and the significant increase from what was initially designed (roughly \$195,000). They were told the project was much more complex, and now a builder is under contract to help manage and communicate costs.

"While I struggle with the amount of this, it's something we have to do," Trustee Mark Bank said.

## Personnel Development

- The board unanimously approved Scott Sugg as new associate principal at [Andover High School](#). He replaces Jason Rubel, who became principal at [East Hills Middle School](#) this year.
- Board members also received a presentation from district counselors on becoming part of the Recognized American School Counseling Association Modeling Program (RAMP). The counselors from both high schools and middle schools must apply for the nationally-recognized certification, which could take a year to complete. The certification is granted building by building and is designed to enhance the diverse and important roles counselors play in each school. There are targeted benchmarks and methods to measure student growth and achievement. The cost is \$200 per school, and the district could become the first to have all buildings certified in the state.