

September 22, 2016 10:23AM

Board honors Allred at monthly meeting

Christopher Burnett | Staff Writer

The Sept. 20 Unified School District 207 Board of Education meeting began with an awards presentation in recognition of the service of board Vice President Elizabeth Allred. Allred was presented the Department of the Army Outstanding Civilian Service Medal on behalf of Lt. Gen. Michael Lundy, commander of the Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth.

The Outstanding Civilian Service Award is the third highest Department of the Army award that can be given to a private citizen. The secretary of the Army or a major commander can award this medal for outstanding service that makes a substantial contribution or is of significance to a major Army command. Allred distinguished herself through her service on the board from 2011 through 2016.

Board President Myron Griswold also presented Allred with an award on behalf of the Military Impacted Schools Association. MISA is a national organization of school superintendents whose mission is to serve school districts with a high concentration of military children. MISA is also part of the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools. Formed in 1986, MISA works on funding, legislation, partnerships and programs for military families on the move. MISA partners with the Department of Defense Education Activity, National Military Family Association and military leaders to ensure that all military children are afforded a quality education. MISA works with local school districts and commanders to highlight best practices and partnerships that can further meet the needs of military families. Allred, whose children have attended USD 207 schools, will soon be leaving the board.

The Superintendent's Report reflected a decline in military dependent student enrollment numbers over a four-year period beginning with school year 2013-14. Superintendent Dr. Keith Mispagel presented detailed figures that showed annual enrollment figures, including a variance consideration that reflected enrollment with kindergarten students factored using a different measurement. According to Mispagel, the downward trend in student enrollment figures correlates directly with the Command and General Staff College student enrollment numbers, which he said have stabilized. He further concluded that the district's total student population is anticipated to remain at current levels for the foreseeable future.

Among the many notable items in the Superintendent's Report were updates on "Project LEADSS" – Leadership, Education, And Development of Social Skills – which is designed to address the current challenges and issues faced by military dependent students in USD 207 (See below).

The board also considered a school field trip for MacArthur Elementary School sixth-graders to the Pompeii exhibit at Union Station in Kansas City, Mo., in February 2017. This would replace their field trip to Science City in April that the board approved in August. The exhibit about Pompeii ties to social studies standards.

In his annual message to the district, Mispagel wrote, "Our annual intent is to maximize the time we have with our students, whether they are here with us for one year or if they have been here through all grades. We strive to provide all students experiences that are positive and meaningful in their future academic and career ready pursuits. We look forward to challenging their critical thinking and problem solving while fostering creativity through learning. We look forward to introducing our students to a variety of academic resources to include a TEAMS (technology, engineering, arts, math and science) focus at each school. I am confident our students will be engaged and excited about learning as we focus on their individual academic growth."

The next meeting of the USD 207 Board of Education has been rescheduled to 4:30 p.m. Oct. 24 at the board office. Visit the district's website at www.USD207.org for more information.