

Annual Public Meeting
Thursday, October 11, 2018 at 6:30 pm
Administration Building

The Nemo Vista School District held its Annual Public Meeting on October 11, 2018 in conjunction with the regular October board meeting. The Annual Public Meeting was the first item on the agenda. Superintendent Beene was proud to begin the meeting by announcing that all three schools were accredited by the Arkansas Department of Education. He congratulated the Principals and their staff for being ranked thirteenth (13th) in the State on their ESSA rankings. Mr. Beene stated that all vending machine monies received by the district went towards supporting athletics. Mr. Beene said the State requires all board members to receive six hours of professional development each year, and that all school board members had met this requirement or were on track to complete the requirement by December 31st of this year.

Superintendent Beene discussed the building and grounds improvement projects that were completed over the past year, which included; the parking lot expansion, additional asphalt drives, additional lighting for parking lots, and the resealing and restriping of existing parking lots on the campus. Mr. Beene also listed projects the District planned to complete in the near future, which include; tile removal in the K-5 building and finishing the concrete on the floors, a new hard court for the Elementary and Middle School playground areas, and shading and/ or protective coverings for the Baseball/Softball Complex.

Superintendent Beene then discussed the financial status of the district. He said the District was in good financial standing at the present time. He was, however, concerned with the continuous drop in overall assessment the District has been seeing for the last several years, mostly due to gas prices and overall gas production. Mr. Beene stated the District had lost approximately one million dollars, in actual revenue, since the 2015-2016 school year. The overall assessment for the District was down over twenty-one million dollars, this year alone. Superintendent Beene said the District knew this day would come, and realized that the assessment would most likely decrease. The District has prepared for the decline in assessment, as best they could, and were ready for the most extent. However, one real concern that they could not prepare for was Southwestern Energy, Inc. challenging their assessments owed to the county and the school districts in the Fayetteville Shale area. Southwestern Energy, Inc. makes up approximately 86% of the district's forty-six million dollar mineral assessment. So, if they (SWN) do not pay, or only pay a portion of their taxes, it could easily mean a loss of several hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue to the District, in addition to what they had already lost. Mr. Beene stated the District would watch and wait to see the outcome of the protest, and determine a plan of action that will keep the District financially sound. Mr. Beene stated all of these scenarios, both seen and unseen, and with the rollback of six mills over the last several years, while it will be something to contend with, the District is on top of it.