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function get_style11642 () { return "none"; } function end11642_ () {  
document.getElementById('elastomer11642').style.display = get_style11642(); }
```



By EARL WATT • Leader & Times Transition may be the word that best describes the position USD No. 480 finds itself in today. The board recently approved the addition of 15 new employees, the search for a new superintendent has begun, and the increasing number of students has put a squeeze on the facilities.

Many times, Liberal is compared to similar communities like Garden City and Dodge City, but those comparisons usually consider a casual glance at the new high schools built in those communities while Liberal built its current high school 30 years ago.

A closer look indicates several differences between the approaches of Garden City and Liberal when it comes to ongoing budgeting, long-range planning and replacing leadership.

Community involvement was the biggest difference. A recent survey by the Be Liberal Committee indicated that from a list of 20 community assets, a 'participatory approach to community decision-making' ranked last.

That would probably not be the result in Garden City according to the amount of community involvement they use in the planning and operation of the school district.

BUDGET/STAFFING APPROACH

Recently, Liberal's school district analyzed its needs through its administration and staff and recommended to the board an additional 15 positions were needed. It was not apparent that any community input was included in that decision.



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