## Warrenton wrestles with school expansion options

By EDWARD STRATTON

The Daily Astorian

While every other school district in Clatsop County has shrunk over the past 16 years, Warrenton-Hammond School District grew by 94 students. That, combined with an economic recovery meeting expectations is a reason enough to start looking ahead, Warrenton's Superintendent Mark Jeffery said.

"What I see clearly is that in the next three to five years, we're going to need to grow in our capacity," said Jeffery, who's already buying portable classrooms as a stop-gap measure to house the glut of new students entering Warrenton Grade School.

Jeffrey and his school board looked Tuesday at all the options for the future of Warrenton-Hammond's buildings, including land on Dolphin Avenue.

The district, Jeffery said, was approached by Martin Nygaard and Stephen Fulton of Warrenton Fiber Company, offering them about 40 acres of land along Dolphin Avenue in 2011. At the time, Jeffery added, an appraiser for the district valued it at \$1.8 million. But at that time, enrollment was falling, along with the budget.

The school board and Jeffery agreed that it would likely take a bond to build a new campus. Board Chairwoman Debbie Morrow said that at a recent Oregon School Boards Association conference, she heard that a successful bond takes a three- to five-year process. Board member Isaac



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The Warrenton-Hammond School Board talked Tuesday about building a bigger campus. The options included land possibly for sale on Dolphin Avenue that Superintendent Mark Jeffery said he was approached about by owners Warrenton Fiber Company and the Nygaard family his first year in Warrenton.

Anderson added the district needs to make sure the public support is there if they pursue a bond.

Jeffrey said he's planning to have OSBA experts come in and talk to Warrenton about bonding, along with representatives from Seaside, which unsuccessfully floated a \$128 million bond in 2013 to build a new campus outside of the tsunami zone. Morrow added that Warrenton should bring in President Lawrence Galizio from Clatsop Community

College, which successfully passed a bond for the redevelopment of Patriot Hall.

#### Land to work with

The district owns four separate pieces of property. They include about 34 acres at the site of Warrenton High School, much of it wetlands. The district owns a square block in the middle of Warrenton for WGS. And the district still owns about 8.5 acres in Hammond where a middle school once stood.

Board members and staff used Tuesday as a springboard for ideas, including: · Anderson, who said a

good idea could be to build a new K-12 campus on Dolphin Avenue, demolish WHS and sell the Warrenton Grade School property. · Morrow, who wondered

whether the district could build a kindergarten through third-grade school at the Hammond property.

• WGS principal Tom Rogozinski, who lamented over the need for more gym space in the face of increasing time requirements for physical education by 2017-18. Řogozinski recommended building a track on the Hammond property. The move would provide space for expansion or a new building at

· Board member Adam Neahring, who wondered whether the district could still operate in the same schools with a redistribution of grades. Rogozinski said districts of a like-size have run a K-6 split

SVENSEN — The Oregon

Hunters Association will hold

a garbage pickup at 9 a.m.

Saturday in the area of Palm-

the existing WGS site.

at an elementary school, with grades 7 through 12 at a high

school. · Board member Kelly Simonsen, who said the district might be able to use the

property in Hammond as mit-

igation for the impacts of ex-

panding at the existing WHS

#### More kids, fewer rooms

School administrators at the meeting Tuesday said they're running out of rooms to put the increasing number of kids in.

We blocked a hallway, so we could do dental services for kids," Robbie Porter, an assistant principal at WGS,

The district's preschool program, Warrenton Prep, she added, most recently filled its enrollment quota within three

Marah Bonneau, a kindergarten teacher at WGS, said it's become increasingly difficult to use the library because of all the other school events happening there already. Rogozinski added that office space is at a premium,

The district faces a kindergarten class of more than 110 this year, up from the classes in the 60s when she and Jeffery started three to four years ago. Part of that is because Warrenton and Knappa are the only districts offering full-day kindergarten.

Even as most schools begin to receiver funding for full-day kindergarten from the state next year, Jeffery said, Warrenton's still likely to see 80 or more kindergartners a year coming in.

Koppish Road, off U.S. High-

way 30, between Svensen and

Knappa. Garbage bags will be

available at the intersection of

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office, or at Ecola\_watershed@yahoo.com

The 2014 Gaylord Nelson Award winner will be announced at the city's 12 Days of Earth Day potluck, which is taking place at 6 p.m. April 17 at the Cannon Beach Community Center, 207 N. Spruce St. This year's winner will be selected by a committee consisting of the honorees from previous years: Jerome Arnold, Ed Johnson, Jan Siebert-Wahrmund, Tom and Gretel Oxwang, Barbara

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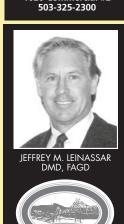


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