

## SCHOOLS: District uncertain of pandemic impact on budget

*Continued from page 1*

yet-to-be-revealed impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Swisher expressed some potential pros and cons as consequences of the virus.

Most school funding is based on enrollment, and Swisher speculated that it is possible that families seeking to move to less populated areas after experiencing the virus may choose to come to Sisters. He also spoke of work being done at the county level with the Deschutes County Planning Commission, of which he is a member, regarding vacation rentals, noting that many family homes in the area have been converted to short term rentals. If some restrictions on these dwellings are put into place, some could revert to full time residences for families, which could bolster enrollment in the school district.

A tremendous amount of construction of family dwellings, though slowed in recent months, continues as well.

A concern raised by Swisher included whether families might choose to move to online charter schools in light of the virus, which would impact enrollment, unless families chose to engage with the Sisters Educational Options (SEO) for online homeschooling.

He said, "I think this pandemic will have some permanent long-lasting effects and I think for the board and the administration will need to take a look down the road as to how might the changes that we have gone through (doing distance learning) affect how we do business as normal while keeping robust that personal connection."

Following Swisher's comments, board chair Jay Wilkins underscored that budget issues have "certainly changed a lot" in the last few months and that everyone is anxiously awaiting word from the governor's office in the upcoming weeks regarding guidance for schools.

Business manager Sherri Joseph reported that enrollment in the district stands at 1,134 and that the district has seen an overall decrease in expenditures since the lockdown of schools, but didn't have a specific estimate, though she estimated as much as \$100,000, mostly due to savings in substitute teaching, travel, and athletic costs.

Curt Scholl estimated the savings could be as much as \$200,000, but it is hard to know without fuller analysis.

Scholl began his report by thanking the teachers, including the union leadership, for their work with him on navigating decision making that included calendar issues for this year and next year. He

said he doesn't anticipate needing to consider furlough days for next school year in the district and anticipates being able to keep staffing levels intact.

Financial questions remain until schools hear more from Salem, including whether the Legislature is called for a special session to grapple with the state budget.

"Once we get some real numbers (from the state) about the percentage of cut, we will be able to start sharing that and make the appropriate operational reductions," he said.

As to how school will look when fall rolls around, Scholl said, "The devil's in the details" in regard to health and safety precautions related to COVID-19.

"There will be challenges I am sure along the way, but we have a good team so we will keep maneuvering as we get guidance," he said.

Wilkins, acknowledging that in-person education is the best model, asked for Scholl's opinion of how well-prepared the district is to provide quality distance learning education if it is required.

Scholl explained that he believes our elementary school has adequate materials for core subjects, but the challenge becomes greater in the upper grades and that the district would need to access more comprehensive online options for students.

"Our staff has been doing a good job in the current circumstance, but my concern is the inequity for some of our students when it comes to distance learning," he said. "Because we had the technology and staff we were able to pivot fairly quickly to distance learning."

Scholl believes enrollment will remain steady and likely grow in part due to the closure of Sisters Christian Academy, the influx of students from Tumalo after the Redmond School District ended grades 6-8 there, and continued construction of family homes in the district.

Joan Warburg, Sisters Elementary Principal, reported that Kindergarten Round-Up is underway with about 30 students signed up thus far and that the grant submitted for the Pre-School Promise has been put on hold by the state for the time being. Sisters Middle School Principal Alison Haney shared her thoughts on how much better it would be for her students to be in regular classrooms during these troubling times to help comprehend and process what is happening. She announced virtual celebrations June 10 and June 15 for middle school awards and eighth grade promotion.

Sisters High School Principal Joe Hosang explained plans for remediation and completion of unfinished courses for high school students during the summer, stating that the goal is for all students to be finished up so as to not start next year in a deficit.

Scholl praised the staff, building leaders, the community and board for their work and support.

"It's a lot of moving parts as we go and I think everyone has kept the kids as their focus and I am very impressed with the response," he said.

An organizational board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 8 at 6 p.m. likely to be conducted once again via Zoom.

## REOPENING: Phase 2 may last for a considerable time

*Continued from page 1*

measures in place, can reach a COVID-19 occupancy limit of up to 250 people.

- Offices can begin reopening and employees can return to workplaces with physical distancing and other measures in place, although remote work is still strongly recommended whenever possible.

- Increased travel is allowed throughout Oregon, though staying local is still recommended to prevent overloading county health systems.

- Restaurants and bars will have curfews extended to midnight.

- Pools and sports courts will be allowed to reopen under new guidance.

- Indoor and outdoor activities such as bowling, batting cages, and mini golf, will be allowed to reopen under guidance.

- Recreational sports can resume in a limited form, under strict physical distancing guidance.

"Approval for Phase 2 is a positive indicator of our collective efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19 in Deschutes County," said Deschutes County Commissioner Phil Henderson. "We heard during the State's press conference on Wednesday that our state has stabilized and Phase 1 reopening has not led to a resurgence in cases. While moving into Phase 2 is good news, we still need our community to continue being

smart about maintaining physical distance, practicing good hygiene and wearing masks so that we can keep our communities healthy and help Central Oregon's businesses stay open."

On Saturday, Oregon Health Authority confirmed 146 new and presumptive cases of COVID-19 as, bringing the state total to 4,808. Saturday's COVID-19 case count marked the highest daily count since the onset of the pandemic in Oregon. Deschutes has reported 135 cases. The case count in the 97759 zip code remains at zero.

Counties approved to enter Phase 2 must continue to meet Phase 1 metrics, including:

- Declining disease prevalence.

- Having an adequate number of contact tracers (trained and available), including people reflective of the communities they serve.

- Establishing and maintaining adequate testing, isolation and quarantine facilities, sufficient hospital surge capacity, and sufficient personal protective equipment supply.

The State is also monitoring the following public health indicators to inform recommendations on reopening:

- Counties need to demonstrate that they are able to trace new cases within 24 hours.

- As counties see new cases, they must be able to identify where they are coming from at least 70 percent of the time.

- Counties cannot be experiencing a significant increase in cases.



**THE ARENDS & SCOTT REALTY GROUP**  
*Discover the Difference*



**Phil Arends**  
Principal Broker  
**541-420-9997**  
phil.arends@cascadesir.com  
Licensed in the State of Oregon



**Chris Scott**  
Broker  
**541-588-6614**  
chris.scott@cascadesir.com  
Licensed in the State of Oregon

centraloregonvalleybrokers.com  
licensed in the State of Oregon

Cascade Sotheby's INTERNATIONAL REALTY

**Superior  
Escrow  
Execution**

**Ultimate  
Service**

**Western** Title & Escrow



Stop by and visit with Tiana Van Landuyt & Shelley Marsh.  
**220 S. Pine St., Ste. 102 | 541-548-9180**

**PENDING**

**Only 9 days on the market!**

16972 Royal Coachman Drive, Sisters  
3 bedroom, 2.5 bath, 3,309 sq. ft. on the golf course at Aspen Lakes. Custom home with log beam accents, floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace, gourmet kitchen. 1,900 sq. ft. RV garage, resort-like outdoor landscaping and lots of Aspen Lakes recreational amenities.  
MLS#220101682

**\$1,250,000**

**Khiva Beckwith - Broker**  
**541-420-2165**  
khivarealestate@gmail.com  
www.khivasellscentraloregon.com





**COLDWELL BANKER**

**Mayfield Realty**  
809 SW Canyon Dr., Redmond  
MLS



Cascade  
**Sotheby's**  
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

**Serving Central Oregon for over 30 years**

**Goodsell & Hicks | 290 E Cascade Ave | Sisters, OR**  
Commercial | Residential | Farm | Land



**SANDY GOODSSELL**  
Principal Broker | ABR, CDPE, CIAS, GRI, SRES  
541.480.0183  
sandy.goodsell@cascadesir.com



**JONATHAN HICKS**  
Principal Broker  
865.335.6104  
jonathan.hicks@cascadesir.com

Licensed brokers in the State of Oregon  
Each office is independently owned and operated.

[cascadesothebysrealty.com](http://cascadesothebysrealty.com)