

**BULLYING:** Peer programs seek to help with problem solving

*Continued from page 14*

rolling out a program called Sources of Strength (SOS), first at the high school, then the middle school.

“How do we rely on kids’ strength as part of their problem-solving so we can build a toolbox of responses and support systems, not just adult support systems along the way?” he asked.

SOS helps make progress in that regard.

SOS works to prevent suicide, bullying, and substance abuse, according to program materials. It’s also “about building networks for kids to talk with both adult and peer networks and to build on their strengths on problem solving,” according to Scholl.

When a kid gets in a difficult situation, ideally they will have people they know they can reach out to, people who recognize their strengths and potential, “instead of making poor choices.”

Scholl is frank about the difficult task the district faces.

“Our real work is, how do we support *all* kids in our buildings? How do we make *all* kids feel welcome? That is the interesting or challenging work that is never finished.”

He said, “We know that kids who are more connected to their systems are more successful; that’s the support we need to provide. The more I learn the more I understand it’s messy and interconnected.”

Scholl and the district have become more immersed in these issues since Oregon Department of Education (ODE) investigated the Natalie Soleim case and found evidence of discrimination. ODE mandated a follow-up timeline of items for the district to achieve, along with meetings between the district, an ODE representative, and the Soleim family.

During this process, Scholl said, “I reflect more on my childhood and things we would not even say today that were part of the vernacular... grandparents and the way they would refer to things.” Changes in how people speak represent “a reflection of how far we’ve come, yet we’ve still not come far enough.”

For parents of kids who experience bullying or harassment, Scholl encourages reporting first to the teacher involved. He said of the procedures for reporting and then following up on an incident, “I believe they should be clear. We’ve done work to improve our website, to put up information about what the next step is or communicate that verbally when people come to us.”

On the district’s website

at [www.ssd6.org](http://www.ssd6.org), a search on the word “bully” brings up a link to a page titled “Equity, Title IX, and Discrimination.” Names, phone numbers, and email addresses are listed for district staff members who handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination.

Numerous PDF files are available for download, often thick with legal and bureaucratic language. Scholl acknowledged there was room for continuing improvement.

Scholl was asked how people in the wider community can help Sisters School District improve the learning environment in terms of bullying and discrimination. What can individuals do if they feel concerned?

“I think the first thing is to not engage in rumor-spreading,” he said. “That’s the challenge from the District side, is that we cannot talk about other people’s children.”

He said it’s hard to respond to the rumor mill, and hard to promote approaching the principal every time a new rumor comes up.

“I don’t want our administrators responding to rumors all the time instead of really actively supporting kids,” he said. “If we play the Telephone Game on social media... an issue [such as a bullying incident] becomes much different than it really was.”

For those that are really concerned, dialogue with a staff member is a good step.

“Typically we like to respond to issues at the lowest level,” he said.

A concerned community member should first approach a staff person involved with an incident, such as a teacher.

Scholl said if someone has a question about a policy, or wants to address a hypothetical situation about how the school would respond to a particular type of bullying or discrimination among students, they should also approach a staff member.

Scholl stressed the importance of each building — meaning each of the district’s three separate schools—having its own chain of communication. Phone numbers are listed at <http://ssd6.org/contact/>.

“I think your community is your strength,” said Scholl. For example, “the outreach around some of the mental health issues that have impacted this community, that’s not only a school issue.”

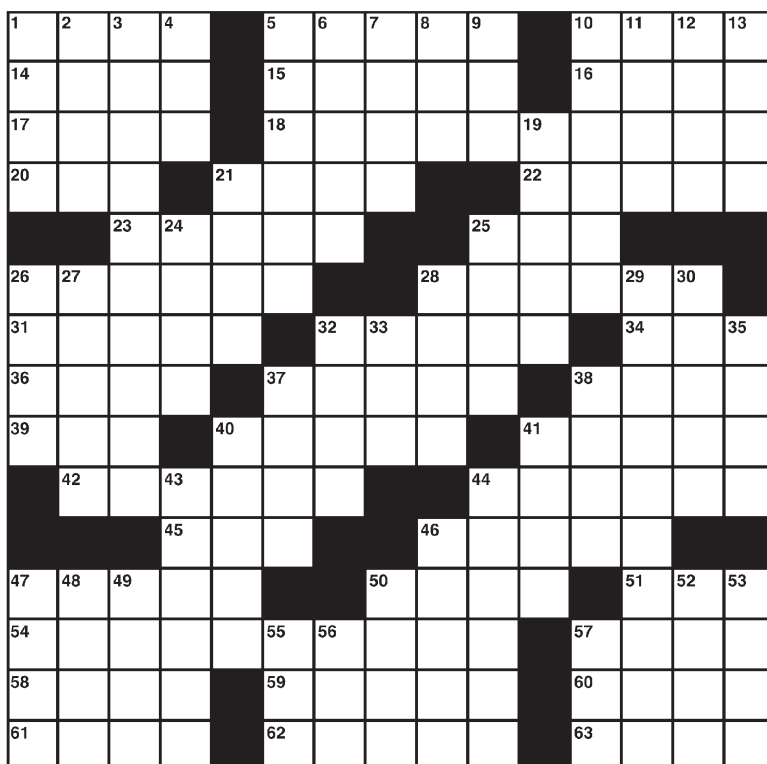
He noted that communities across the nation have demonstrated to support equity changes.

“That’s the strength of the Sisters community,” Scholl said. “We don’t always agree on every issue, but we do agree on: how do we support kids? Ultimately that’s what it’s about, at least for us in education — supporting our kids.”

# The Nugget Newspaper Crossword

By Jacqueline E. Mathews, Tribune News Service

- ACROSS**
- 1 Tear to \_\_; shred
  - 5 \_\_ point; center of attention
  - 10 Curved lines
  - 14 Yodeling effect
  - 15 Bakery allure
  - 16 Begin a card game
  - 17 Harbor bird
  - 18 \_\_ cherry; mai tai garnish
  - 20 “Without further \_\_...”
  - 21 Not at all harsh
  - 22 Refresh
  - 23 Sounds of pain
  - 25 Not up to \_\_; substandard
  - 26 Reprimand
  - 28 Most recent news
  - 31 Began the day
  - 32 Tranquillity
  - 34 Waiter’s hope
  - 36 Nearly all
  - 37 Flower, shrub or tree
  - 38 Wraparound dress
  - 39 Part of the Greek alphabet
  - 40 Way to go
  - 41 Traveler’s stop
  - 42 Respect greatly
  - 44 Taunt; laugh at
  - 45 Pink meat
  - 46 Game of chance
  - 47 Thread holder
  - 50 Brooches
  - 51 Org. for Raptors & Rockets
  - 54 Wakener
  - 57 Rough up
  - 58 Bouquet greenery
  - 59 Misrepresent
  - 60 2nd Amendment subject
  - 61 Effortless
  - 62 Like a chimney
  - 63 Secretary’s boo-boo



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

- DOWN**
- 1 Alpha’s follower
  - 2 Treated a sprain
  - 3 Blood clot formation
  - 4 Male delivery
  - 5 Widespread food shortage
  - 6 Doctorate exams
  - 7 Drape puller
  - 8 “I \_\_ Rock”; Simon & Garfunkel hit
  - 9 Notes of the scale
  - 10 Stick firmly
  - 11 Bridle strap
  - 12 Mr. Peanut’s prop
  - 13 As \_\_ as molasses
  - 19 Wooden box
  - 21 \_\_ up; reconcile
  - 24 Remove from power
  - 25 Treaty
  - 26 Freeway entrance
  - 27 Uneven
  - 28 The Beatles’ “Penny \_\_”
  - 29 Standing still
  - 30 Exhausted
  - 32 Little Jack Horner’s prize
  - 33 Munch on
  - 35 \_\_ up; accumulate
  - 37 “The Raven” or “To a Mouse”
  - 38 Kind; variety

— Last Week’s Puzzle Solved —

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