

Eugene teachers vote for small schools project

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Teachers and staff members at North Eugene High School have voted to continue with plans to break the large school into three separate learning academies.

The school was one of eight in Oregon selected to receive a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Meyer Memorial Trust to divide into smaller schools in an effort to boost student achievement.

But some staffers at North Eugene had doubts about the plan, leading to

the anonymous vote over whether the school should proceed with the split.

A committee of both critics and supporters of the small-schools plan had agreed in advance that they needed a two-thirds majority to move forward. The vote was 72 percent in favor.

"I was relieved it's over," said Principal Peter Tromba, who has tried in recent months to calm concern over the proposed change among his staff, students and community. "Now we

don't have to keep asking 'if' — now it's 'how.'"

Cassandra Kamens, a French teacher in her eighth year at North, was among those who voted against the change.

"I voted no because I don't feel as a school right now we have a clear vision of why we're going forward," she said.

But other teachers, even some who confessed to having lingering concerns and questions, said they believe the small-schools model holds

great potential.

"I was nervous, but I know it's best for the kids," said fourth-year teacher Jesse Sherman, the yearbook adviser. "It's not going to be best for the teachers. It's going to be hard work."

North Eugene's \$900,000 grant is being used primarily for travel to visit other schools, training and staff time for planning. Staff members have come up with proposals for seven schools, each with a distinct focus; by the end of the year, with input

from staff, parents and students, three to five will be selected.

At least one will open in fall 2006, the rest in 2007.

Had the vote gone the other way, North Eugene might have been the first of many schools around the nation to turn down the remainder of a Gates small-schools grant.

Karen Phillips, director of the Gates-affiliated Oregon Small Schools Initiative, said North Eugene was the only grantee in Oregon to take a second vote on whether to move ahead.



Dana Harlan, left, places her jewelry out for display with assistance from junior Vanessa Ward. Harlan's show ran Saturday and Sunday at the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority house.

ZANE RITT | PHOTOGRAPHER

Jewelry: Harlan's business to hit the Web next month

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\$20 for a pair of earrings to close to \$100 for more elaborate pieces; about half of that pays for the cost of materials.

In addition to earning spending money, Harlan said making jewelry is also relaxing.

"When school gets stressful, I make jewelry," Harlan said. She said it takes her between half an hour to an hour to make a piece of jewelry.

Harlan has held jewelry sales at the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority house where she lives. A sale just before Christmas made almost \$1,500 in two hours, and a sale this weekend that coincided with the sorority's Mother's Weekend events garnered another \$2,000.

As her audience expands, Harlan said she sees her jewelry in public more frequently.

"I've seen it on people I don't know before," Harlan said. "I'm excited for the day when that be-

comes more of a normal thing."

"You can't wear her jewelry and not get a compliment on it," junior Sharon Howell said. Howell, who is studying public relations at the journalism school, is Harlan's friend and housemate and helps promote her jewelry.

Next month, Harlan plans to begin selling jewelry over the Internet. Senior Jen Ness is making Harlan's Web site.

"It's going to be a pretty cool, artsy Web site," Ness said.

Ness, who majors in advertising and minors in multimedia design, said she normally charges a fee for her Web site services, but Harlan pays her with jewelry.

"It's a pretty good trade," Ness said.

Harlan's next public jewelry sale will be held May 1 at the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority house, 821 E. 15th Ave., from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

evasywester@dailymerald.com

IN BRIEF

Strong earthquake hits Indonesia near Sumatra

JAKARTA, Indonesia — An undersea earthquake that hit Sunday near the Indonesian island of Sumatra sent people fleeing from their homes in panic, but the temblor was not strong enough to generate a tsunami, seismologists and meteorologists said.

The 6.8-magnitude tremor's epicenter was centered about 70 miles southwest of Padang, a city in western Sumatra, at a depth of nearly 19 miles, the U.S. Geological Survey said.

Tremors from the earthquake were felt in several areas surrounding the Malaysian city of Kuala Lumpur, national meteorological chief Chow Kok Kee told TV 3 news.

The quake was recorded at 5:29 p.m. (6:29 a.m. EDT) in the Kepulauan Mentawai region, the USGS said. There have been no reports of damage, USGS spokeswoman Clarice Ransom said.

—The Associated Press

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INTERNATIONAL WEEK

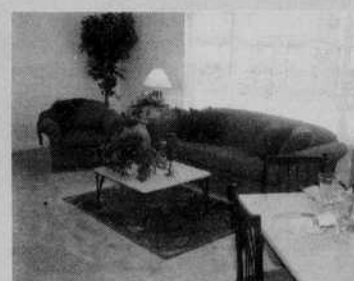
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