

IN BRIEF

Alzheimer support group meets Feb. 19

Those supporting people who have Alzheimer’s disease often need support themselves. Silverton Senior Center offers a support group for anyone who is a spouse of loved one of someone with Alzheimer’s. The group meets on Tuesday, Feb.

19, at 2 p.m. The senior center is located at 115 Westfield St., in Silverton and can be reached by phone at 503-873-3093.

Lunaria Gallery showing paintings, jewelry

Through Feb. 24, Lunaria Gallery is exhibiting the paintings of Judith

Frohreich and the jewelry of Helen Nute Wiens. In the Loft, a collection of drawings by Deborah R. Denno, titled, ”The Sounds of the Earth Are Like Music,” is on display. Both shows are open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily at 113 N Water Street.
– Christena Brooks



Teacher Jennifer Bethers keeps an eye on her kindergarten classroom of 34 students with one instructional assistant at Pringle Elementary School in Salem on Monday. ANNA REED/STATESMAN JOURNAL

Teachers

Continued from Page 1A

They have needs in- and outside of school that many of our members are not equipped to deal to with.” The report was released just two weeks into Oregon’s 2019 legislative session. Lawmakers are expected to have a large focus on education, especially since the Joint Committee on Student Success is set to develop a comprehensive budget and policy road map to improve K-12 schools. Larson said the association will make sure every legislator has a copy of

this report. While the association estimates another \$4 billion over the current service level is needed to get schools where they need to be, Larson recognized it has to be a long-term, sustainable investment and it won’t happen immediately. “Oregon is filled with quality educators, quality support professionals who care about every student,” he said. “But the conditions in our school make it nearly impossible for them to do their jobs successful. “We need to make sure we aren’t selling our future short.”

Disruptive behaviors in the classroom

According to the report, a disruptive learning environment is defined when student behavior significantly interferes with instruction and/or school staff members’ ability to maintain a stable classroom or ensure student safety. At times, these behaviors can become dangerous to the student exhibiting them, or the classroom as a whole. The report lists myriad negative behaviors educators see regularly — verbal abuse, person-to-person abuse, weaponizing the classroom and destruction of property. At listening sessions across the state, educators told the association about the “atmosphere of violence that was palpable,” of attacks that came regularly and of trauma students experience in that environment. And while these behaviors may not all be new, educators have reported an increase in the severity and frequency in recent years. School districts are not required to keep formal data on incidents like room clears. A room clear is when students temporarily leave a classroom to reduce the likelihood of injury or trauma as a result of extreme behavior. This typically happens when one student is exhibiting behavior that puts the rest of the class at risk. The association surveyed educators and students across Oregon on these issues. Of the respondents, 32 percent said they were scared for students’ safety at school, 25 percent said they were concerned for their own safety and 56 percent said their classroom or their child’s classroom had experienced at least one room clear this year.

Anecdotally though, many families, administrators and staff have reported to the association that weekly or daily room clears have become commonplace, according to the report. And according to the bi-annual poll called the Oregon Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning survey, educators feel less safe now than they did in 2014, with the percentage of staff who agreed the environment they work in is safe dropping from 92 percent in 2014 to 82 percent in 2018. “There is not a reliable, timely or effective system in place to intervene when there are consistent disruptions,” one respondent told the association. “It feels like a Band-Aid ap-

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“We also have to realize today ... we have many students with unmet needs. Housing insecurity, food insecurity, unmet mental-health needs. They have needs in- and outside of school that many of our members are not equipped to deal to with.”

John Larson
President of the Oregon Education Association

proach.” Photo gallery goes here: gallery - 2769698002 - unpublished

Affecting students, staff

These behaviors can affect everyone in the classroom. The student exhibiting the behaviors often lose instructional time and needed supports, and educators said they can experience social isolation and emotional trauma as a result of how peers treat them in the aftermath of the events. The students witnessing or being harmed by the behaviors also lose out on instructional time, when Oregon already has one of the shortest school years in the country. Some of these peers have been physically injured. According to the report, others have a hard time learning even when an event isn’t occurring due to the stress or fear that something will. Educators told the association they feel discouraged “that often the only intervention available is for students to be removed from class and ‘babysat’ in an office, rather than addressing their unmet needs or receive tools to manage their behavior.” “Quite honestly, this is a community problem,” Larson said. “This is something that we really need to solve together. “Our students are at risk,” he said. “We need to make sure they are safe and able to learn.”

Evaluating root causes

When asked “Why do disrupted learning environments occur?”, one participant wrote, “More problems and less support.” The association said decades of “chronic and systemic disinvestment in Oregon schools” is perhaps the most influential reason for this, pointing to the fact that, over the last two decades, the Legislature has consistently financed schools at about 21 to 38 percent below what its own research suggested districts needed to be successful. However, the report also lists a number of other contributing factors, including increased class sizes; decreased student support specialists; students with high needs but no resources to support them; a marked decreased in “well-rounded education opportunities” and time for physical activity; a lack of appropriate training for educators and

an “unclear implementation of policies regarding restraint and seclusion, k-5 expulsion and suspension” and protocols for disruptions. Not every district is affected by all of these factors, though. For example, large class sizes are a significant issue in districts like Salem-Keizer Public Schools, which recently passed a capital-construction bond and is planning to change boundaries to address overcrowding. However, smaller, rural districts aren’t usually battling large classes. Instead, they may be facing increased percentages of students who are living in poverty and experiencing homelessness or food insecurity. And even within one school and one classroom, every student will have their own background and experiences. “It’s different for every, single child,” Larson said, adding that’s why the state needs more professional development to help better prepare staff. He said additional adults in the classroom and, in some cases, improved curriculum are also needed. Larson said the goal is to get the resources so each school can look at its population and ask what students need to get the best education possible.

Teachers’ recommendations

The Oregon Education Association includes a number of recommendations in the report that are meant to address the short- and long-term needs in classrooms statewide. Three key ideas were prioritized — increasing onsite student supports with a focus on mental health, reducing class size and caseloads, and fully funding targeted professional development and ongoing supports for implementation. Each recommendation includes steps for schools, districts and the state to take. For onsite supports, the association recommends more mental health counselors, school psychologists, social workers, school nurses, speech language pathologists, occupational and physical therapists and other mental health and trauma experts. Concerning class size, the state’s most recent class size report by the Oregon Department of Education documented 579 classes with 56 or more students.

Additionally, almost half of classes are 35 to 51 percent larger than research recommends, according to the department’s report. Oregon Governor Kate Brown has recommended paying for additional staff in order to reduce class sizes, especially in K-3 classes, where students are not only learning academic basics, but social norms and appropriate behaviors as well. The association is also recommending smaller case load ratios, as recommended by the National Association of School Psychologists and the National Association of School Nurses: ■ 250:1 for school counselors ■ 500-700:1 for school psychologists ■ 400:1 for social workers ■ 750:1 for school nurses (in healthy student populations; higher for more complex needs) And for professional development, the association recommends ongoing training and support for staff to “fully transfer new knowledge into practice.” “We have inadequate training for new curriculum,” one teacher told the association. “Teachers in my school are expected to be doing restorative practices/circles regularly in our classrooms; however not one hour of training has been given so that teachers do this in a truly inclusive and helpful way.” The association recommends staff getting thorough and consistent training on models of trauma-informed practices, social and emotional learning programs and positive behavior programs, to name a few. Though the report focuses on those three key recommendations, it also includes a number of other ideas that would reportedly help improve safety in schools. Family wraparound services, increased physical movement and clarified protocols for physical intervention and restraint of students are just a few. To read the full report, go to . For more information, go to https://www.oregoned.org/ or contact the Oregon Education Association at 503-684-3300. Contact reporter Natalie Pate at npate@statesmanjournal.com, 503-399-6745 or follow her on Twitter @Nataliempate or Facebook at www.Facebook.com/nataliepatejournalist.

PUBLIC NOTICE
SILVERTON FIRE DISTRICT
INVITATION TO BID

Contractors are invited to bid on the Site Work for Silverton Fire Station (Project), located at the Silverton Fire District, 819 Rail Way NE, Silverton, OR 97381. The Project consists of drainage improvements, wash pad installation and pavement repairs located at the same address, per District specifications. Sealed bids will be received by Bill Miles, Fire Chief at 819 Rail Way NE, Silverton, OR 97381 at or before 3:00 p.m., **March 14, 2019.** Bids will be publically opened immediately following this closing.

This contract is for a public work subject to ORS 279C.800 to 279C.870 [or Davis-Bacon Act 40 U.S.C. 276(a)], relating to the payment of prevailing wages.

No prequalification will be required for this Project. A non-mandatory pre-bid walk thru will be held at 10:00AM **February 27, 2019.**

The terms, conditions and specifications for this Project (Project Documents) may be examined at Silverton Fire District (District) office located at 819 Rail Way NE, Silverton, OR 97381, between the hours of 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday until **March 14, 2019.** The Project Documents will be available at this location and are downloadable from the District website at www.silvertonfire.com from the date of this Notice until **March 14, 2019.** Paper copies may be obtained from the architect for a non-refundable fee of \$35. Electronic copies are free by email, please inquire per below.

Please direct all inquiries to Gene Bolante, Studio 3 Architecture 503-390-6500 gene@studio3architecture.com .

Bill Miles, Fire Chief
Silverton Fire District
819 Rail Way NE
Silverton, OR 97381

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February 13, 2019

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