

# La Grande Pride

**Love, Care, Serve**

La Grande High School, La Grande Middle School,  
Central Elementary, Greenwood Elementary, Island City Elementary



**La Grande**  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Love, Care, Serve*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### BOARD MEETINGS

May 13, 2020

7:00 p.m.

La Grande High School Commons

June 10, 2020

7:00 p.m.,

District Office Conference Room

### MIDDLE SCHOOL EVENTS

May 4th - 8th

Tentative dates for  
LMS Greenhouse Sale

May 5th

2:00-6:30 p.m.

Home Track Meet

May 6th

7:00-8:00 p.m.

Parent Night for Incoming  
6th Grade

May 13th - 15th

6th Grade Outdoor School

May 21st

:00 p.m.

Choir Concert at LHS

### CENTRAL ELEMENTARY EVENTS

April 30

Scholastic Book Fair

May 6 & 7

5th grades to OMSI

May 9

PTO yard sale

## SUPPORTING MUSICAL TRADITIONS

# La Grande goes to State Solo and Ensemble competition

By Trish Yerges

Music director Kevin Durfee is happy to announce that he has two ensemble groups that have qualified to compete at the State Solo and Ensemble competition on May 2 at Pacific University in Forest Grove, Oregon.

This isn't their first year participating in the State competitions, but it is the first year that the school district has dedicated a class period and classroom for the ensembles class to meet and rehearse. It is an exciting change for the high school's music department.

"Over past years, the students have been practicing their ensembles and solo work almost exclusively on their own time, during lunches and after and before school," said LHS Principal Brett Baxter. "But now, this small ensemble class really helps capture and give a place and time designated for that."

The new class has been met with great enthusiasm by the ensemble students. "We have about 15 kids that have committed to take a class that starts at 7:00 in the morning, so

that's what they've been doing, coming in and rehearsing," said Durfee. "It's made a big difference in their preparedness."

At any given time in the new ensemble classroom, there are between two to four ensembles working independently and concurrently. Just being able to get together like this allows the ensembles to train and prepare regularly. Durfee has noticed the refinement in the quality of their performances.

Baxter is very impressed with the small ensembles. "I can't say enough--Mr. Durfee prepares these kids so well, and the kids, to some extent, self-select their groups, and just find those groups that gel really well and harmonize for the ensembles."

Students involved in the small ensembles have performed locally at school choir concerts and other community events. "They are incredible," said Baxter. "We're proud of the kids. It's not all about sports despite all our other successes at sports. We have a strong tradition in music at both the university and the high school, and it's well supported by the community. To see these kids do well

just reflects on the support from the community."

One of La Grande's qualifying ensembles is a large treble ensemble called "Oto Bella Voce" meaning eight beautiful voices in Italian. These are eight girls, singing four part music with two on a part. Sometimes it's six-part music, and sometimes they are singing a part all by themselves. Each member of the ensemble must therefore be a strong, independent voice that knows how to harmonize with the others.

"The reason it's called an ensemble contest," said Durfee, "is because that's what the test is, to see how well you can sing and blend with each other without a director in front of you. They get their starting pitch and go to work."

The second qualifying ensemble group from La Grande is called "A Choired Taste." That group is made up of five guys and four girls, a large mixed ensemble.

"The ensemble groups only have 10 minute slots to perform, so they'll be going with two pieces each," said Durfee. "It's a chamber ensemble so

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## The word on Enrollment...enrollment numbers as of March 4, 2020

Central Elementary  
477 students

Island City Elementary  
313 students

Middle School  
544 students

Greenwood Elementary  
294 students

La Grande Learning Aca.  
92 students

High School  
676 students

Total Elementary  
Enrollment 1,084 students  
LGSD Total Enrollment  
2,416 students

