

Business / Agriculture

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Irvine continued, “It also does not account for any improvements that may have been gained from last summer’s supplement reading program.

“I agree that standardized tests cannot fully capture a student’s ability and knowledge. However, the data from the Baker School district on standardized tests is not just the best measure of students’ academic performance over time, it is the only measure. Let me be clear, this data is undeniable. There is no different analysis that will come to any other conclusion: the performance of Baker students at Brooklyn Primary, South Baker Intermediate, and Baker Middle Schools has declined significantly between 2011 and 2016.”

Irvine explained that he personally does not see how the Board has any other choice than to go forward with the five-day student week and that the evidence shows a cumulative decline in students’ understanding in fundamental subjects due to the four-day student week.

Following Irvine, Amanda Wilde, the head teacher at Keating Elementary, read an article from her daughter.

Katie Wilde is a middle school student and asked the Board in her article to keep the student weeks at four days.

“There is various research to support a four-day week,” explained Katie’s article. “And, of course, the most obvious is students love it. One of the many reasons we should keep a four-day school week is because many parents schedule doctor, dentist, and orthodontist appointments on Fridays. Parents do this so their child will not miss valuable instruction from teachers during the week. It gives families the flexibility to make sure they are meeting their responsibilities as parents but also supporting the school system.”

Katie’s article gave examples of sports events at the high school that happen on Fridays. She explained that unlike the five-day school week, students would not miss instruction from their teachers with the four-day week.

“Don’t think that just because our teachers work four days a week that they are lazy,” said Katie’s article. “This is quite the opposite of what really happens. My mom is a teacher and is always bringing work home whether it is grading papers, coming up with a new lesson, or working on lesson plans. Anyone that has a parent as a teacher knows what I’m talking about.

“I can’t imagine going to school five days a week because that would take away one more day that I have with my family. Even though our teachers are working a four-day school week at school, they are working a seven-day week for their students.”

Wilde followed her daughter’s article, explaining that she is the Lead Negotiator for the Baker Education Association (BEA).

Wilde, representing the BEA, thanked the board

for not making major changes planning to follow through with the negotiation process.

“We’re here tonight asking that you maintain the current calendar,” said Wilde. “We would like you to allow administration and teachers to make decisions about the implementation of curriculum and then measure the data so it can be an accurate reflection of what’s happening in the classroom.”

Wilde explained that they are asking the board to give students room to learn and breathe.

“We encourage you to allow principals and their staff the creativity to include hands-on learning in the day,” said Wilde. “Some schools are already doing this, so, why not build upon that? Overcrowding of schools leads to tense learning environments and this affects students. Behaviors increase. We would like you to give your principals and staff the chance to put behavior systems in place that are going to help all students succeed.”

Wilde explained that they invited Board members to visit their classrooms. She explained that it would help the understanding of the best way to provide a safe and secure learning environment for the students.

Following Wilde was Elissa Morrison, who shared her presentation on maintaining the current four-day schedule. Morrison is a teacher who taught privately, corporately, and at a community college level.

“First, as a teacher, our goal is to inspire, train, and develop our students in a manner that shows academic achievement,” explained Morrison. “While most importantly, inspiring our students to become life-long learners. Nothing is greater than seeing the passion and desire to learn as a student grasps a concept or begins to feel a clear direction for their future. This is, and will continue to be, a personal goal for me in instruction; developing a level of learning that will sustain an individual for a lifetime. The current calendar supports this from my perspective along with the input of students including my own.”

Morrison explained that meeting for a fifth day would not give students enough time to learn material that day.

Kim Mosier presented at the meeting for the Baker Valley Education Foundation (VEF). She explained that the VEF will have Community Open House and Fundraiser on May 5th for first Friday.

The focus of the event will be to inform the community about the VEF and what they are trying to do. There will be a student art sale, with art from students in the district, including Haines and Keating.

The sale will be held in the basement in Crossroads Carnegie Art Center from 5:30-8:00 p.m.

Hyrum Bradford was presented with Haines “Promise of Baker Student of the Month.”

Hollie Mays was presented with Baker Middle School’s “Promise of Baker Student of the Month.”

The Board approved Wes Price as the new Budget Committee Member.

Teacher Appreciation week will be May 8th-12th. Graduation is June 4th, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. in the Bulldog Stadium.

Editor’s Note—For informational purposes, below is BEA’s proposal as presented in full:

Due to recent press releases, regarding negotiations and frequently asked questions, the Baker Education Association recognizes the importance to provide an accurate reflection of the negotiation process. The Baker Education Association met on April 13, 2017 to exchange Proposal #3. The following summary explains in detail the rationale behind the proposal submitted by the BEA.

Article XIV: Calendar and Workday

BEA presented a proposal that had two different options.

The first option was to maintain the 174-day contract, as is, with no changes. This is the current calendar that a significant portion of the community and majority of teachers has been supportive in maintaining. This option allows parents the choice to participate in programs specially designed for students by community partners. Enrichment opportunities provided by these community partners have proven to be priceless. Also, it allows families to take advantage of Enhanced Friday opportunities. Opportunities for Enhanced Fridays have increased over the last year, which is evident by the increased frequency of offerings. We believe this calendar provides robust opportunities to meet families needs, while meeting the Districts goal of creating more opportunities for students throughout the school year.

The second option was to add 6 days to the 174-day contract, which would create a 180-day contract. The BEA is aware and has heard the message from the Baker School District that they want more days and flexibility with those days. BEA very clearly told the Baker School District that these extra days were to be used at their discretion. We understand that the Baker School District wants more student contact time, more professional development opportunities, and shorter instructional time at certain levels. We believe that those additional days will accomplish their goals.

Article XVII-Professional Development

The BEA felt it was important to recognize the efforts that the Baker School District is making to empower their administration at the building level. According to the District/School Board, building principals will be allotted money that is designated for Professional Development. Building staff will have the opportunity to attend conferences or other professional development if approved by the building principal. BEA appreciated the District level administration relinquishing control, so that building principals can meet the needs of their staff. Therefore, BEA accepts the current contract language regarding Professional Development.

Article XXII-Professional Compensation

BEA presented two different proposals for professional compensation tied to the calendars in Article XIV. According to the Baker School District, there are many concerns about the forecast for the next biennium regarding school funding. We are pleased to learn that the Baker School District is looking to retain teachers and provide competitive salary compensation.

Compensation for 174-Day Calendar: The BEA presented a moderate 3% salary increase for the 2017-2018 and an additional 3% salary increase for the 2018-2019 school year. We believe that this modest request is in sync with their goals.

This is an example of how a beginning teacher will benefit from this modest 3% increase. A beginning teacher, with a Bachelor’s Degree and no experience, would make an additional \$79.79 each month, before taxes, on a 12-month salary schedule.

Compensation for 180-Day Calendar: In addition to the salary increase, we are asking for per diem compensation for each additional day added. The BEA has proposed an additional 6 days.

The BEA was appreciative of the Eastern Oregon School salary comparison created by Melissa Irvine. The data was very telling. According to the data, teachers are well below average in regards to base salary. The District has been very diligent in recruiting “fresh, new talent” to the school district. Our modest 3% increase makes the Baker School District a viable option for new teachers, especially if the salary is competitive. Proposing the 6 additional days, moves the Baker School District closer to the average number of contract days for schools in Eastern Oregon. After months of conversations, the District hasn’t proposed any number to the BEA other than 191 days or any increase in salary. We have demonstrated our flexibility, which will benefit Baker School District students, staff, and the community.

Article XXIV-Fringe Benefits

The BEA has reduced their original proposal from a \$75 increase in benefits for the 2017-2018 school year, to \$50 for the 2017-2018 school year. For the 2018-2019 school year, we have reduced our original proposal from \$50 to \$25 in a benefit increase.

Under our current contract teachers have a \$1,025.00 benefit package. This is below the Eastern Oregon average benefit package of \$1,191.00.

The current BEA proposal will increase the benefit package from \$1,025.00 to \$1,075.00 for the 2017-2018 school year and increase from \$1,075.00 to \$1,100.00 for the 2018-2019 school year. This is \$91.00 lower than the current Eastern Oregon average.

Summary Conclusion

The BEA is diligent in negotiating in good faith with the Baker School District and Baker School Board Directors, Melissa Irvine and Chris Hawkins. After months of discussions, we are concerned about the lack of progress. We believe that our proposal aligns with the interests of all stakeholders.

— WEEKLY HAY REPORT —

Friday, April 21, 2017 — Eastern Oregon

Prices trended generally steady in a limited test compared to week ago prices. Most demand lays with the retail/stable hay. According to some producers, horse owners prefer lower sugar, higher protein hay. Many producers are sold out for the year.

Tons	Price Range	Wtd Avg
Alfalfa / Orchard Mix — Small Square Premium	6 165.00-165.00	165.00
Timothy Grass — Small Square Premium	10 275.00-275.00	275.00

USDA Market News Service—AMS.USDA.gov

— CATTLE MARKET REPORT —

Wednesday, April 19, 2017
Vale, Oregon

Cattle sold through the auction: 1,120

Steer Calves

300-400#	Bulk	161.00-179.00	Top	183.00
400-500#	Bulk	159.00-174.00	Top	176.25
500-600#	Bulk	148.00-169.00	Top	171.00

Heifer Calves

300-400#	Bulk	153.00-171.00	Top	177.00
400-500#	Bulk	144.00-163.00	Top	170.00
500-600#	Bulk	133.00-142.00	Top	146.00

Yearling Steers

600-700#	Bulk	146.00-163.00	Top	165.50
700-800#	Bulk	126.00-137.00	Top	137.75
800-900#	Bulk	117.00-125.00	Top	126.50
900-1,000#	Bulk	109.00-116.00	Top	118.00

Yearling Heifers

600-700#	Bulk	124.00-131.00	Top	135.00
700-800#	Bulk	122.00-129.00	Top	129.75
800-900#	Bulk	113.00-119.00	Top	120.50
900-1,000#	Bulk	107.00-115.00	Top	116.00

Thin Shelly Cows 49.00 - 61.00

Butcher Cows 63.00-71.00

Butcher Bulls 71.00 - 84.00

Pairs Running age 975.00 - 1375.00

Hfretts 77.00 - 107.00

Pairs Young - 1375.00-1600

ProducersLivestock.com

541-473-3136

— LOG PRICE REPORT —

Prices are based on the majority of saw mills in Northeastern Oregon and Central Idaho. The prices listed below are a composite prices of various sawmills willing to visit with me about this topic.

Ponderosa Pine—small diameter class 8-11 inches diameter class \$250 per mbf. Only one sawmill was willing to buy small diameter pine at this time.

Ponderosa Pine—medium diameter class 12-17 inches diameter class \$300 to \$350 per mbf

Ponderosa Pine-large diameter class 18 plus inches diameter class \$380 to \$410 per mbf

The Pine prices are still approximately \$40 per mbf below average lumber/log market due to 2017 fire salvage

Doug Fir & Western Larch—\$380 to \$420 per mbf. Normal prices typically ranged between \$425 to \$475 per mbf.

White Fir—\$300 per mbf. Normal prices typically ranged between \$340 to \$360 per mbf.

Engelmann Spruce—\$350 at one Idaho sawmill, other sawmills including with White fir prices.

In general, the log prices still impacted from 2015 fire season and fire salvage that resulted. Sawmills are starting to get log yard inventory in line with sawmill production needs. With a new Administration as of 1/20/2017, a more normal economic environment should result and hopefully a more healthy housing situation will result in a better climate for Northeast Oregon Sawmill and private forest landowners.

Courtesy of Arvid Andersen, Andersen Forestry Consulting

— PRECIOUS METALS REPORT —

Price per ounce, USD

Gold: \$1,266.00

Silver: \$17.50

Platinum: \$948.05

Palladium: \$809.78

Bloomberg.com

— AG COMMODITIES —

Corn: \$373.50/bu/USD

Wheat: \$431.75/bu/USD

Soybeans: \$962.50/bu/USD

Oats: \$221.05 bu/USD

Rough Rice: \$9.46/cwt/USD

Canola: \$523.00 CAD/mwt

Live Cattle: \$117.48/lb./USD

Feeder Cattle: \$144.30/lb./USD

Lean Hogs: \$71.70/lb./USD

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