

Find out how a change in the parking system could help you next year.

— page 4



See what the future holds for seniors after graduation.

— page 8



Although there's plenty of action in "Iron Man 2," does it make up for a plot that's lacking depth?

— page 17

Amplifier

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Budget cutbacks lead to losses; teachers at risk

MARY WOOD & PATRICK DOUGLAS

Next year, five to seven teachers could be cut from the current staff. Will it be your favorite science teacher? The English teacher that introduced you to "Grapes of Wrath?" With the money from the district's Local Option coming in at \$3 million less than expected, this could be a reality. Additionally, Governor Ted Kulongoski announced last week that \$563 million must be cut from Oregon schools and programs due to a revenue shortfall.

"At this time, all we really know is that the state revenue shortfall translates into a reduced fund to the West Linn-Wilsonville School District in the amount of \$3,217,000 for next year," Roger Woehl, superintendent, said. Further bad news of a \$14.5 million cigarette tax revenue shortfall will potentially reduce these funds even more, leaving some teachers in a vulnerable but familiar position.

"I've been through this process last year when I got laid off at Reynolds," Michael Glane, science teacher, said. "I'm well aware of how much it hurts people."

The district relies partly on something called the Local Option, which allows it to

bring in extra money from the community. This alone allows the district to hire 60 more

teachers and 60 more staff than it could otherwise.

"We have built up staffing levels based on the money coming in from the local option," Arden Eby, head of the Teacher's Union, said.

The Budget Committee was originally expecting to bring in \$15 million over the next two years dedicated to schools. Instead, there will be a little less than \$12 million coming in along with further cutbacks at the state level. That gap has created some major setbacks, according to Woehl. To reduce costs, the district will have to cut teachers, programs, school days or some combination of the three.

The Teacher's Union negotiates for gradual pay raises from year to year. Since the budget can't sustain an increase this next year, the contract will either have to be renegotiated, or some

teachers might lose their jobs. The money teachers receive is a cost of living adjustment. The negotiated increase for teachers was supposed to be four percent of their salary, which would come out to about \$1.2 million.

"We would give up everything if we saw recovery on the horizon, but it would probably be ten years before the district could make it up," Eby said. Giving up pay raises would only delay the inevitable, according to Eby.

If days are to be eliminated, paid teacher work days will be the first thing to go according to Woehl, but that isn't going to be enough to balance the budget. The district's custodial staff has already faced major cuts, so staff reductions may also come from secretarial

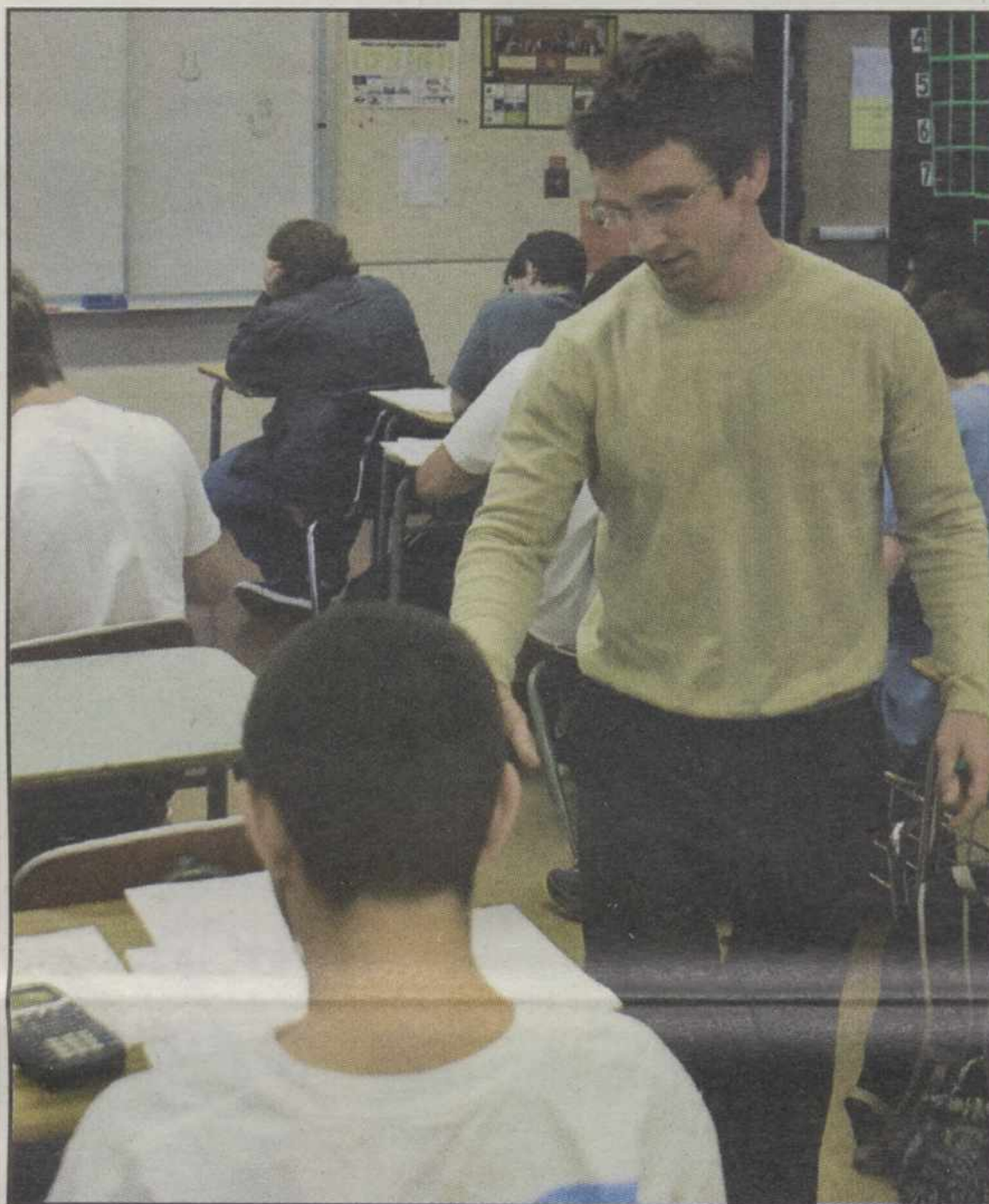


Photo by Mark Poppert

Michael Glane, science teacher, lectures his third period chemistry class. Newer teachers such as Glane are facing potential layoffs due to a budget shortfall. Further budget estimates at the state level may lead to more cuts.

Budget

continued on page 2

Family's belongings ruined in house fire

EMILY REED

The grey one story house that once was home to seven, sits deserted. Charred remains of the house—pink insulation strewn across the ground, boarded up doors and windows greeted Justin Cunningham, freshman, and his family when they returned home April 3, from Seattle. Shortly after arriving, they received a phone call, in which they learned that their home had burned down.

The family of seven, including Cunningham, his parents, two brothers,

a sister and her boyfriend all lived in the house at the time. "We were all shocked when we found out," Cunningham said.

Almost nothing was able to be recovered from their home. Everything was either completely gone or severely smoke damaged. As a result, all of their linens, furniture and clothing were destroyed.

"We have no furniture," Cunningham said. "All of it was gone before we got home." Though this was a terrible blow to the family,

House fire

continued on page 17

Amplifier earns state, regional awards

The *Amplifier* was named the third best print edition among student newspapers from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Alaska. The publication was recognized in Washington State University's Edward R. Murrow High School Journalism Awards Competition.

"It's a huge honor that we've won," Mary Wood, editor-in-chief, said. "I've been involved with the *Amplifier* since my freshman year, so this is a great way to end my time on the paper."

The competition is held by WSU's Edward R. Murrow College of Communication, named for Murrow, who was chief radio correspondent for CBS in Europe during World War II. The college is nationally recognized for its journalistic programs.

The *Amplifier* also earned honors in state competition. In the Oregon State University and Northwest Scholastic Press's Publication Olympics, *Amplifier* was recognized as the Best Of Category for the

May 2009, senior edition.

According to the judge, it is "an excellent example of a student newspaper operating at the top of its game," and that it featured the best writing in the state and best leads for stories in this year's competition.

"That you produce something of this quality every four weeks is astonishing. Congratulations," the judge said.

Other awards won by the *Amplifier* staff in the Publication Olympics, include:

Best of Category

- Alison Fieldhouse for Human Interest
- Libby Kara for Photo Essay
- Shoshana Koon for In-Depth News

Superior

- January 2010 *Amplifier* for Single Issue
- Alex Houston for Feature Photo
- Mary Wood for Review Writing

Excellent

- December 2009 *Amplifier* for Single Issue

- Elise Brown for Editorial
- Alison Fieldhouse for Feature Photo
- Calley Lathrop for Editorial
- Benjamin Mann for Editorial
- Ashley Sheron for Sports Photo
- Jennifer Sitton for Sports News
- Grace Wall for Human Interest
- Lexi Welp for Personality Profile
- Lexi Welp for Straight News
- Jennifer Sitton for Editorial
- Nicole Campbell for Review Writing
- Marshall Miller for Review Writing
- Sean Pebler for Sports News
- Mark Poppert for Sports Photos
- Eta Santoro for Editorial Cartoon
- Jennifer Sitton for Editorial
- Riley Swanson for News Feature
- Lexi Welp for Personality Profile
- Mary Wood for Straight News



Photo by Libby Kara

Justin Cunningham, freshman, and his family returned home from Seattle on April 3 to find their house burned and uninhabitable. The family moved to Canby while searching for a new home in West Linn. They are accepting donations to help replace their lost belongings.