

# Vernonia School Board Report

## At the July 10, 2014 School Board Meeting:

**Board Elects Chair and Vice Chair-** The Board elected Bill Langmaid as Chair and Jim Krahn as Vice Chair for the 2014-15 school year.

**Board Approves New Hires-** The Board approved two new temporary hires for the 2014-15 school year.

Laura Blacker has been hired to teach 4<sup>th</sup> grade, replacing Robyn Richmond who is on maternity leave for the year. Blacker has been working and volunteering in the district for several years and just finished her student teaching assignment in Vernonia last year. A resident of the Vernonia community and active in the local PTA, Blacker served as the coach of the high school golf team this past year. Blacker received her Master's Degree in Education from PSU.

Margi Fry will be the fifth member of the K-2 combined teaching team. Fry has taught grades 1-8 over the last five years, has a Bachelor's Degree of Science from Warner Pacific College and is a graduate of Gresham High School.

**Board Approves Student Fee Schedule-**The Board approved the Student Fee Schedule for 2014-15 which includes a \$0.10 increase to full breakfast and lunches for elementary, middle and high school students. The Student Body Fee for high school students increased from \$20 to \$25. An Instrument Rental fee of

\$50 for elementary band students was added to the schedule, although Superintendent Miller stated that the fee was already being implemented, it just was not on the schedule.

**Project Updates-** Superintendent Miller updated the Board on five current projects. Construction at Spencer Park is moving forward and is scheduled to be complete and ready for use next summer. Board member Ernie Smith expressed concern and asked about the City's plan for maintaining the new field. The City will hold a Conditional Use Permit Hearing on July 17 concerning the construction of the new shop building. Following that process, the District can move forward with construction although it is questionable whether the shop will be completed in time for the start of the school year. The football practice field on the new campus is under construction. The District will move forward with construction of a new softball field on campus this summer and will hopefully be ready next spring. The District is hoping to complete the project with assistance from local contractors. The PTA has purchased the first of three phases of new playground equipment and will install that first phase with volunteers before the start of the school year.

**Board Liaisons Encouraged for District Committees-** Superintendent Miller encouraged Board members to be-

come a liaison to the numerous District Committees which include: Curriculum, Technology, Safety, Health & Wellness, Talented and Gifted, Achievement Compact, Career & Technical Education, Sustainability, and Positive Behavior & Intervention Support.

**Board Assignments-** The Board chose assignments for several Committees: Negotiations - Bill Langmaid, Ernie Smith, and Greg Kintz; Policy Review - Brett Costley and Cari Levenseller; Facilities (Long Range Planning) - Jim Krahn, Tim Bamburg, and Ernie Smith; Vernonia Education Foundation - Bill Langmaid and Cari Levenseller.

**Substitute Pay Increase-** The Board was informed that the State has set a rate of \$171.52 per day for licensed teachers for the 2014-15 school year. The Board voted to increase the District's substitute teacher pay from \$171 to \$172 per day.

**Board Approves Meeting Schedule-**The Board approved the 2014-15 School Board meeting schedule. Meetings will be held on the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 PM with the exception of November when it will be held on Wednesday, November 12 due to a scheduling conflict with the OSBA annual convention. Workshops were scheduled for October 30, January 29, and April 30. A Board retreat was scheduled for August 21.



*Aaron Miller has assumed the superintendent responsibilities for the Vernonia School District.*

**Board Assigns Designees-** The Board voted to designate Aaron Miller as Chief Administrative and Budget Officer, as Custodian of Funds, and as Representative of Federal/State Fund and Grant Applications. The Board also designated US Bank and Government Pool as Depository of Funds; Grove, Mueller & Swank, P.C. as District Auditors; Brown & Brown Northwest as Insurance Agents of Record, Garrett, Hermann, Robertson, Jennings, Comstock & Trethewey as Attorney of Record and *Vernonia's Voice* as Newspaper of Record. These were the same as last year, with the exceptions that Aaron Miller has now assumed Superintendent duties and the Insurance Agent of Record has changed their name from Beecher Carlson. The Board also voted to set a Borrowing Limit of \$150,000.

## PTA Purchases First Phase of Play Structure Installation Planned for August 22-23

The Vernonia PTA is pleased to announce that Phase I of a new playground play structure has been purchased for the school campus. The PTA plans to install the entire structure in three phases as funds become available.

Plans call for Phase I to be installed and ready for students on the first day of school this year.

The PTA has been hard at work during the last several years raising funds to purchase and install playground equipment. The purchase of Phase I will cost just over \$7,000.

An installation work party has been scheduled for Friday, August 23 and Saturday, August 24. Work party leaders and volunteers are needed.

"This is a huge deal!" says PTA President Melissa Zavales. "Our kids and school have been without a playground! We are so excited and this should be a huge and exciting event for our community and students!"

A Grand Opening celebration is being planned during the School Open House on October 9th.

## Schools Update: New Campus Softball Field

By Aaron Miller

The Vernonia School District (VSD) continues to move forward with facilities development on the new schools' campus and one of the next projects to be undertaken is the development of our sports fields. The Vernonia Education Foundation (VEF) is charged with raising funds to help with the overall debt retirement of our new facilities, but also with generating funds to help complete these facilities. A new, on-campus, varsity softball field is the initial focus of the VEF Sports Initiative.

The VEF Sports Initiative Committee has worked diligently to raise funds for our sports facili-

ties and their plan is to begin work this summer on the softball field at the new site. If all goes well the softball field will be completed in time for next year's season. While the majority of funding is in place for this project, it will take a concerted effort by VSD staff, the VEF and local volunteers to make this lofty goal a reality.

Athletic staff, administration, VEF board members and the field designers have been meeting regularly to determine a plan of action and are now looking for other volunteers who are ready, willing and able to help with the project. Volunteers and/or donations to help with these items would be greatly appreciated. Here is a list:

- Excavation
- Dirt transport
- Purchase and installation of drainage and irrigation systems
- Grass seed procurement
- Grass seed installation
- Fence and backstop construction
- Dugout construction

If you, or someone you know, is interested in helping out with this, or any other volunteer project at the schools, please contact Aaron Miller at 503-429-5891. Your help and support will be greatly appreciated as we continue to move forward to make our schools and facilities the best they can be.

## Boosters Buzz

Little Guy Football sign-ups will be held at Anderson Park, **6:00-7:30 PM** on the following Wednesdays: **August 6th & 13th** The season starts August 18th!

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