

Schools Update: Common Core Standards

By Aaron Miller

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC) to measure progress toward those standards are a hot topic for both educators and parents. While there are many opinions about whether or not students should have to take these assessments, and how well these new tests will measure student achievement, the fact is this is how our students' progress will be measured starting this spring.

Our schools are working hard to address these new standards in the classroom. There are also several things that parents and students can do at home to help with this preparation.

- Practice keyboarding skills: Students must write a great deal on the SBAC, and keyboarding skills are essential to them being able to complete these

tests thoroughly, and on time. Practice keyboarding free at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/z3c6tfr>

- Take practice SBAC tests: <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=3747>

- When working on reports or other school assignments, be sure to cite evidence directly from research texts, providing supporting details to help explain answers and reasoning.

- Practice re-reading difficult sections of texts to ensure understanding.

- Make as many connections as possible between learning at school, and real world occurrences related to that learning.

- Break down assignments and jobs into simplified tasks and steps.

- Represent math problems by using hands-on materials, or by drawing a picture.

- Provide many experiences in estimating/deciding if an answer is

reasonable.

- Provide many experiences in evaluating opinions, beliefs and decisions.

- Read critically.

- Read often.

The adjustment to these new assessments will be difficult. Student scores are predicted to drop drastically in terms of how many are expected to meet or exceed the standard score. By preparing our students for these new tests, both at school and at home, we can help smooth this transition and help them be as successful as possible.

While academics are our main concern, I want to take a moment to discuss two other critical areas of our education system: the budget, and extra-curricular activities.

First, I would like to share that we have several openings on the Vernonia School District Budget Committee. This group will look at the District's proposed budget and make recommendations for approval and potential areas for revision.

If you are interested in being a part of this process, please notify the

Vernonia School District Office at 503-429-5891.

As for extra-curricular activities, I want to thank each and every one of our supporters who has been able to make it to a game, performance, match or event of any sort this year! Our students appreciate the dedication it represents to them when they know the community is behind their efforts.

The great success our forestry, robotics, volleyball, wrestling, and boys and girls basketball teams have enjoyed this year is only enhanced when their parents and the community are behind them. Thank you!

While I have seen many of you in our gyms, at other schools' fields, at robotics events, forestry competitions, spelling bees and playoffs, the showing for our girls' basketball team at the OSAA 2A State Tournament in Pendleton was incredible. Congratulations to the Lady Loggers on a 4th place finish, and kudos to all who contributed to their trip, or who made the long drive to support our student athletes' success!

Public Hearing Notice

The Vernonia School District will hold a Public Hearing regarding the Vernonia Schools' Charter proposal in the Vernonia Schools' Commons on Monday, March 30 from 7-8pm, and in the Mist Grade School Gym on Tuesday, March 31 from 7-8pm.

The agenda will include an informational presentation from the Charter Steering Committee, time for questions and answers for the Steering Committee, and time for public input/testimony.

Information presented from the Steering Committee will be in regards to the main aspects of the two charter proposals being presented.

One of these proposals will be a Charter School model (leaves Mist open), while another proposal will be a Charter District model, which would absorb Mist into the Vernonia Schools' building.

Legal Notice

This is to notify you that the Columbia County Board of Commissioners has proposed a land use Moratorium that may affect the permissible uses of your land.

On April 8, 2015, at 10:00 a.m., the Columbia County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing regarding the adoption of Ordinance No. 2015-03. The hearing will be held in the Commissioners's meeting room, Room 308 on the Third Floor of the Columbia County Courthouse, 230 Strand Street, St. Helens, Oregon.

The Columbia County Board of Commissioners has determined that adoption of this Ordinance will affect the permissible uses of your property, on an interim basis, and may reduce the value of your property. The proposed Ordinance would adopt a temporary moratorium on the operation

of recreational and medical marijuana dispensaries and grow operations, pursuant to ORS 197.520, for a period 120 days to allow the County time to develop Zoning Ordinance provisions compatible with changing Oregon State rule and statute.

The proposed ordinance will be available for inspection at the Columbia County Courthouse located in St. Helens, Oregon in the Land Development Services Department, 230 Strand Street, St. Helens, Oregon, on March 26, 2015. A copy of the proposed ordinance will be available for purchase at a reasonable cost.

For additional information concerning Ordinance No. 2015-03, you may call Todd Dugdale or Glen Higgins, at the Columbia County Department of Land Development Services, at (503) 397-1501.

Natural Path: New Reiki Practice Opens in Vernonia

By Jeff Dolan

Spring is here and it brings a time of new beginnings. I am pleased to announce that my practice, Healing Energy Reiki, is now open at Natural Path Health Services, Dr. Carol McIntyre's office, here in Vernonia. I am a Reiki Master, who has been practicing for thirteen years, and am a member of the Northwest Reiki Association, where I volunteer working in many of the cancer clinics at area hospitals. Bringing another natural healing modality to our community is very exciting for me. I am a Portland native and moved to Vernonia four years ago.

Reiki means "universal life force energy." It is the art of restoring this energy flow in the body. Reiki positively affects the whole person including body, mind and spirit. It is a gentle, non-invasive touch therapy that is easy and safe to use. Reiki creates many beneficial effects including relaxation and feelings of peace, security and well-being.

It is a tool that can help with stress reduction, healing, preventing disorders and maintaining positive

wellness. It is also a technique for activating, restoring and balancing the natural energy that flows through the body. It is a self-help method for personal growth, transformation and enlightenment.

Reiki practitioners do not diagnose conditions, nor do they prescribe or perform medical treatments or interfere with the treatment of a licensed medical professional. They can, however, enhance the healing properties of these therapies. For example, I have worked on cancer patients as adjunct therapy to their chemo/radiation treatments, and have also had success with motor vehicle accidents, PTSD, and tumor reduction and eradication.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact me at (971) 275-6228 or e-mail 14jdrm@gmail.com. I am offering an introductory special through April 30, 2015 at a reduced rate of \$25.00 for a 30-minute treatment. Also available are home visits (\$55.00/30 minutes) and group therapy (please call for information). I look forward to working with the Vernonia community.



Drive Thru Espresso & More

Route 26 Diner

\$1.00 off

Sunday Brunch

503- 324-0985

47700 NW Sunset Hwy, Banks

IT'S TAX TIME

Call your LOCAL tax preparer

PAYROLL PLUS LLC

Edi Sheldon 503-429-1819
edisheldon@gmail.com

Licensed tax consultant • Full service payroll
Personal & small business bookkeeping • QuickBooks assistance
CORPS, S-CORPS, LLC, Partnerships • Personal one-on-one service

LTC #29629 - Oregon licensed tax consultant
RTRP #P00448199 - designated as a registered tax return preparer by the Internal Revenue Service

The IRS does not endorse any particular individual tax return preparer. For more information on tax return preparers, go to www.IRS.gov.

Randstad is now hiring in Forest Grove!

Randstad is now onsite at a leading printed circuit board manufacturer! We need team players who thrive in a fast-paced manufacturing environment!

Immediate openings available for candidates who:

- have six months production manufacturing experience
- have a HS diploma/GED

\$12.00-\$12.75/hour
Lots of overtime available!

Call 503-992-4584 to apply today!