

Schools Update - Back to School

By Aaron Miller

With the end of Jamboree Weekend, school is just around the corner. Teachers have begun showing up at school to prepare for their students, kids are starting to say they are bored, and parents are just ready to have their kids back in class.

School will begin on a staggered start with the following groups of students beginning classes on the following days:

- New Middle School and High School students, students entering 6th or 9th grade, and all foreign exchange students will begin with a half day (8:00 am – Noon) orientation on Tuesday, September 6.

- All students in grades 1-12 will report for their first full day of school on Wednesday, September 7.

- All kindergarten students will begin school on Thursday, September 8. All incoming kindergarten students are required to take a State of Oregon Readiness Exam, and these will be held by appointment on Tuesday and Wednesday, September 6 and 7. If you have not yet signed up for an appointment, please do so by calling the school office at (503) 429-1333.

If you have an elementary student that is new to the Vernonia School District (VSD) please pick up registration paperwork from the Vernonia Schools office located at 1000 Missouri Avenue. For High School and Middle

School students (new or returning) registration days are:

Vernonia High School registration will be on Wednesday, August 17:

- Seniors will register from 9-10 am
- Juniors from 10:30-11:30 am
- Sophomores from 12:30-1:30 pm
- Freshmen from 2-3 pm.

Vernonia Middle School registration will be on Friday, August 19:

- 8th graders will register from 9-10 am
- 7th graders from 10:30-11:30 am
- 6th graders from 12:30-1:30 pm

School supply lists and the school year calendar are available on the district website at www.vernonia.k12.or.us. If finances are tight in your household and your child is in need of school supplies, a backpack, or free/reduced

lunch pricing, the school can help provide these items. If this is a need, call the school office at (503) 429-1333.

Once school starts, I can't encourage you enough to remain in contact with your child's teachers. Success in school is a team effort between you, your child and the school. Please communicate with teachers early and often to help ensure your students' success.

For any transportation needs, please call Shelley Hennessy at Curl School Bus Services, (503) 429-0507.

If you have any questions or comments regarding any District business, please call Superintendent Miller at the District Office, (503) 429-5891.

School Board Report

At the August 11, 2016 School Board Meeting:

Bond and OSCIM Grant Moving Forward – Superintendent Miller told the Board that all required paperwork has been turned in to the Oregon Department of Education and the District has received confirmation that everything is complete for the District's Bond proposal and the opportunity to receive matching state funds if citizens approve the Bond Measure in November.

Board Approves New Hire – Based on a recommendation from Superintendent Aaron Miller the Board approved the hire of Andrea Anderson as a new 1st/2nd grade teacher. The District is still looking for a high school science teacher.

District to Implement Standard Response Protocol – Superintendent Miller told the

Board the District is implementing a Standard Response Protocol for dealing with emergencies on campus. (See full story of front page.)

Finance Officer Retirement – Superintendent Miller told the Board that Finance Officer Dawn Plewes will be retiring on August 24.

Board Approves Athletic Cop with Banks H.S. – The Board approved a request to allow one VHS student to participate in soccer at Banks High School through a cooperative agreement. The Board approved the same request last year for the same student.

Board Approves Budget Amendment Resolution – The Board approved Budget Amendment Resolution 1516-07, that included the Advanced Refund on the current General Obligation Bond.

Board Receives Student and Staff Handbooks – The Board received revised versions of both the Student Handbook and Staff Handbooks for 2016-17.

School Ready for Kindercamp – Elementary School Principal Aaron Miller told the Board that a grant through the ESD is paying for eight half days of school for all incoming kindergarten students from August 15-25. Kindercamp is designed to allow new school students to become acquainted with their new teacher and school routines to aid in their transition. Students will receive a snack and lunch through the Summer Meals Program.

Focus School Professional Development – Elementary School Principal Aaron Miller told the Board the District has received a Formative Assessment Grant for \$56,000 which will allow VES and VMS teach-

ers to participate in teacher planning training to implement more effective Formative Assessment procedures. Teacher leaders from each school will attend two days of training in Salem and will then lead all teachers to implement the systems into their daily routines. The program provides additional planning time for teachers and keys on strong feedback strategies that inform students where they are in relation to meeting a particular learning standard and what they need to do in order to meet it.

District Considers Waiving Fee – Superintendent Miller said he discussed with Athletic Director Gordon Jarman the idea of waiving sports pay-to-play fees for the children of volunteer coaches. Miller said Jarman agreed the idea had merit and Miller said he would bring back a formal proposal to

the Board.

Student Interns Help Prepare Building – Superintendent Miller praised the custodial crew for the great work they have done getting the campus ready for fall, thanking Mark Brown, Debbie Johnston and Randy Phipps. Miller also noted the contribution of student interns under the supervision of Brown and Beth Kintz who worked this summer: Corbin Nelson, Jazmine Knighton, Amanda Rose Sicard, Ben Fleck, Grace Coleman, and Casandra McFalls.

Public Comment – Lonnie Perry addressed the Board about his concern that there is a national movement by the Temple of Satan to infiltrate schools by forming clubs and are entitled to the same considerations as the Christian based Good News club.

Where Are They Now? Dillon Dethlefs *continued from page 12*

go to Canada or Mexico or even Europe. It's definitely a growing industry and a growing occupation."

Today, Dethlefs is working for a different company, Airway Services, that offers travel opportunities for their technicians as well as local work. Dethlefs is currently based in Goldendale, Washington, working on Siemens 2.3-93 variable speed wind turbines in and around the Columbia Gorge area, which allows him to travel back to Vernonia on weekends. "I'm getting to experience the beautiful scenery in the Gorge and I've taken a ton of photos," says Dethlefs. "It's also nice to

be able to come home and see friends and family and help out."

In addition to work, Dethlefs has been racing motocross motorcycles, a hobby he picked up while in high school. Last year he won the Oregon Motorcycle Riders Association (OMRA) Off-Road Amateur Point Series Championship after appearing in races around the northwest, including Goldendale, Roseburg, Eugene and Washougal. He has also been competing in regional logging shows and was just at the Vernonia Jamboree Logging Show in early August.

"If someone wants to go to a good school that isn't too expensive and won't leave you in debt for half your life, and have a chance to travel, this is a good option," says Dethlefs. "I hope my experience can help open someone's eyes and let them see that they could go do something like this, and maybe not be stuck in Vernonia for the rest of their life. Vernonia is a good place, a nice, small, rural town and it's nice to be able to come back and visit. But, there are good opportunities out there."

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