

School Board Report

At the February 16, 2017 School Board Meeting:

Meeting Rescheduled Due to Weather Cancellation – The regular School Board meeting, scheduled for February 9, was rescheduled to February 16 after school closed early on the 9th due to concerns about flooding and road closures following heavy rains.

School Adds Two More Days to Calendar – The Board approved the recommendation from Superintendent Aaron Miller to add two more school days to the end of the calendar to make up for days lost to inclement weather. To make up for days lost on February 3 and 6, the school year will be extended and classes will now be held on Monday and Tuesday, June 12 and 13.

Board Extends Licensed Employee Contracts – The Board recessed into Executive Session under ORS 192.660 (2)(i) “to review and evaluate the performance of... employee or staff member...” Upon returning to Open Session, the Board approved Resolution 1617-06 and extended licensed employee contracts.

Board Passes Bond Resolution – The Board passed Resolution 1617-04 submitting the wording for the District’s School Bond for Campus Completion, Facilities and Refinancing. If passed the \$6.8 million bond would receive \$2.35 million in state matching funds. According to language in the Ordinance

the bond and grant funds would be used to refinance existing debt from the original construction of the school campus and is also expected to fund:

- a welding/metals shop building
- playground equipment
- four new classrooms, including one for art
- repair and improvements at Mist School including roof, gutters, siding, gym floor, classrooms and mechanical repairs
- security/surveillance systems
- solar panels
- improved technology
- enhanced lighting
- football field, track and irrigation
- cross country/fitness/nature trail
- other site improvements, furniture and equipment

The bond would mature in 30 years and carries an estimated tax rate of \$0.20 per \$1,000 of assessed property value, and restores the tax rate to the estimates for the campus bond approved in 2010.

Budget Calendar – Finance Officer Marie Knight introduced the Budget Calendar for 2017-18 to the Board. The Budget Committee is scheduled to meet on May 2 and May 11. There are currently five openings on the Budget Committee. Anyone interested in serving, or who has any questions, should contact Barb Carr at the District Office at (503) 429-5891 or bcarr@vernonia.k12.or.us.

Board Hears Audit Presentation – Larry Grant reviewed the 2015-16 Financial Audit for the year ending June 30, 2016. Grant told the Board that according to the audit report the District’s financial statements were presented accurately. In addition, the report noted that there were no disagreements which were not able to be resolved that would have been significant to the financial statements.

Board Approves NWRES D Service Plan – The Board was presented with the Northwest Regional Education Service District’s (NWRES D) annual Local Service Plan. The NWRES D provides services to local school districts that include programs for special needs students, technology support, school improvement services, and administrative support services. The NWRES D serves school districts in Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook and Washington Counties. Funds are allocated to School Districts based on enrollment. While the NWRES D’s budget for 2017-18 projects an overall increase of \$430,000 dollars to their Core Services Budget, the Vernonia School District will see their allocation reduced by \$12,658, due to a lack of growth in enrollment. The Board approved the plan by passing Resolution 1617-05.

Board Approves Out of State Travel – The Board approved Out of State Travel for the 8th grade Close Up Trip to Washington, D.C. for April 16-20, and for the High School Senior Trip to Disneyland on April 21-24. According to Principal Nate Underwood, both groups do their own fundraising and the only expense to the District is the cost for a substitute for one teacher during those trips.

Board Approves Transfer Limits – The Board approved Transfer Limits for the 2017-18 school year of 15 students, as recommended by Superintendent Aaron Miller.

Building Reports – Middle and High School Principal Nate Underwood told the Board that VHS’s first year partici-

pating in the AVID program has been positive. AVID works to prepare students for college through use of daily planners, note taking strategies, and academic planning. Underwood reported that the District will be able to continue the program next year after receiving a grant from Nike.

Underwood told the Board the leadership class and project based learning class are teaming up to host an anti-bullying program called Breaking Down the Walls.

Underwood told the Board VMS students are working on a new mandatory 8th Grade Project, similar to the VHS Senior Project. Students will be researching and presenting reports on U.S. Presidents.

Vernonia Elementary Principal Aaron Miller told the Board that VES, Mist and VMS teachers are participating in learning strategy development through the Oregon Formative Assessment for Students and Teachers (OFAST). Miller reported that implementation is going well in terms of progress and said he hopes grant funding will be available next year to continue the program.

Miller reported that VES received a \$250 grant through the Rural Network for Small Schools and will use the grant to shore up its non-fiction reading libraries to provide teachers with resources to integrate science, reading, art, and writing into a study unit on local forest biomes.

Superintendent’s Report – Superintendent Aaron Miller told the Board that enrollment is holding steady at 533 students as of January 27.

Miller reported that the District has posted a part-time position for an Instructional Assistant which is a cost cutting measure in relation to the retirement of a front office staff member.

Student Reports – Odessa Roberts, representing the High School leadership class updated the Board on VHS winter sports and sports awards, and told the Board about several upcoming events at the school, including a Blood Drive on March 7, Senior Class President Payton Wolf’s Presidential Challenge during the week of March 6 called “One Dollar for Life” which will ask the Vernonia community to each donate \$1 which will go towards building a school in Nicaragua, and Donkey Basketball which has not yet been scheduled.



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Vernonia’s Voice is published on the 1st and 3rd Thursday. Look for our next issue out March 16.

Marie Krahn
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