

# Schools Update: Community Chats

Maintaining open lines of communication is a critical element of a school system aiming to meet the needs of its community as it moves forward with developing and completing a variety of bond projects.

In an effort to increase opportunities for discussing issues, having questions answered, providing input, and developing a better overall understanding of what is happening in the Vernonia School District, Superintendent Aaron Miller will begin holding monthly "Community Chats" at local restaurants.

The first chat is set for Noon-1:00 pm on Wednesday, October 25 at the Blue House Café. The second is scheduled on Wednesday, November 15 from 6:30-7:30 am at Mariolino's. Come on in to talk with Superintendent Miller, and share any questions or concerns.

These informal chats with the Superintendent

are one way that the District will share information with the public about progress toward completion of bond construction projects, but are also meant to be another way to share and address the successes, questions and concerns about anything school related that is of interest to the community.

The District will also continue to use its usual ways of communicating through notes sent home to parents, postings on our webpage and Facebook page, answering questions over the phone, written articles in *Vernonia's Voice*, monthly Board meetings held in the library every second Thursday of the month, community meetings and the use of the Blackboard Connect telephone messaging system.

In addition to this wide variety of methods used to try and communicate school district happenings to the community, Superintendent Miller is always

willing to set an appointment (in person or by phone) and talk whenever a question or issue arises. Just call (503) 429-5891 to set up a time.

All "Community Chats" are scheduled for Wednesdays (except April) and include...

- January 24 from Noon-1 pm at Subway
- February 28 from 6:30-7:30 am at the Black Iron Grill
- April 24 from Noon-1:00 pm at La Cabana
- May 23 from 6:30-7:30 am at the Black Iron Grill
- June 27 from Noon-1 pm at the Blue House Café

We hope you can join us at one of our scheduled "Community Chats" so we can continue to partner and make the Vernonia School District, and the community of Vernonia, the best that it can be. Together we can truly make a difference.

# School Board Report

## At the October 12, 2017 Vernonia School Board Meeting:

**School Board Meets at Mist School** – The School Board held their regularly scheduled monthly meeting at the Mist School.

**Board Ratifies OSEA Contract** – The Board voted to ratify the 2017-2020 OSEA Contract, the Collective Bargaining Agreement with Classified Employees from Oregon School Employees Association, Chapter 67. Superintendent Aaron Miller noted that after a long negotiation, changes included the addition of "Sick Time" to care for a family member, and a 2% Cost of Living increase for all employees instead of a step increase.

**Class Size and Enrollment Report** – Superintendent Aaron Miller provided a report on current class sizes and enrollment. Miller's report showed that as of October 1 grade sizes at Mist and Vernonia schools totaled the following: K- 41, 1-34, 2-26, 3-44, 4-43, 5-47, 6-30, 7-39, 8-43, 9-40, 10-52, 11-32, 12-50, Foreign Exchange-13. Miller reported that the total number of students in the report was 534, of which 87, or 16%, were special education students. He also noted that since the report was created four additional students had enrolled in the District, bringing the total to 538.

**Board Approves New Hires** – The Board approved Superintendent Aaron Miller's recommendation for the hiring of Teresa Williams and Sah-

rina Wood as Instructional Assistants.

**Board Hears Discipline Report from Vice Principals** – The Board heard a report from Vice Principals Rachel Wilcoxen and Michelle Eagleson concerning Academics and Behavior which focused on how discipline is handled and how the number of discipline referrals are being tracked.

**Superintendent's Report** – Superintendent Aaron Miller reported on progress on projects funded by the Bond, and focused on projects at the Mist School, including repair of the roof, gutters, and siding, and the installation of playground and security equipment.

Miller told the Board about the "Play Smart Heart Screenings" which

tested 126 students, and found two students with elevated blood pressures and identified one student with a cardiac condition.

**Building Reports** – Elementary School Principal Aaron Miller reported on successful Open House and Meet the Teacher Nights, on the Salmon Watch program that involved Kindergarten and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students, and the new Wednesday Morning Assembly program.

High School Principal Nate Underwood reported on a workshop series he attended, Critical Issues Based Leadership Program - which featured evidence-based practices which show that 9<sup>th</sup> grade students who are on track are four-times more likely to graduate from

High School.

Underwood also reported the school is being proactive with student attendance, with tardiness and absences being tracked, letters sent to parents, and follow-ups by teachers and administrators.

**Board Receives Updated Student and Staff Handbooks** – The Board received updated copies of the Student Handbook and Staff Handbook. The Student Handbook contains a revised policy on Electronic Devices and Cell Phone use, which restricts use to before and after school, between classes and at lunch; the Handbook also contains an updated Discipline Consequences Guidelines matrix.



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## Vernonia Students of the Month

### September 2017



#### Elementary School

Back Row: Nathan Curry 4th grade, Elijah Ferguson 3rd, Raeleigh Merger 5th, Hayden Rau 4th  
Front Row: Olivia Bunke 3rd, Kamryn Means 2nd, Morgan Lee K, Adelene Stewart 1st, Avah McAdams K

#### Cody Hathcoat Grade 8

Cody's teachers say he has a positive attitude, tries his best, goes above and beyond in his school work, and is very kind to other students. Cody is currently taking geometry, a math class for sophomore students. He plays the trumpet in the band and says he enjoys playing video games.



#### Storm Henson Grade 12

Storm is a District champion and team captain for wrestling, plays trombone in the band, and has been nominated for National Honor Society. He is one of the class leaders in the Project Based Learning Class and has been a counselor at Outdoor School. He says he plans to attend college next year and study in the health care or fitness field.



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