

School Board Report

At the March 8, 2018 School Board Meeting:

Board Extends Licensed Employees and Administrative Employee Contracts – After meeting in Executive Session under ORS 192.660 (2) (I) “To review and evaluate the performance of the chief executive officer or any other public officer, employee or staff member...,” the Board returned to Open Session and approved Resolutions 1718-01 and 1718-03 and extended contracts for licensed employees and administrative employees as recommended by the Superintendent.

Board Approves Donated Sick Leave – The Board approved a Memorandum of Understanding that allows classified employees to create a “sick-leave bank” so members can donate unused sick leave to other members in case of an emergency.

Board Appraised of Calendar Adjustment for Snow Days – The previously approved District Calendar included snow make-up days which will now be added into the schedule on Friday, March 16 and May 18 to make-up for missed days on February 21-22.

Board Appoints Whiteman to Budget Committee – The Board approved the appointment of former teacher and coach Steve Whiteman to the District Budget Committee.

Board Approves Budget Calendar – The Board approved the Budget Calendar presented by Finance Director Marie Knight. The calendar calls for the Budget Committee to meet on May 3 and May 10, and for the Board to adopt the Budget at their June 14 meeting.

Board Approves Out-of-State Travel for Close Up – The Board approved a request for out-of-state travel for 8th graders to take part in the Close Up trip to Washington D.C. from April 14-19.

Board Receives Info About Clay Target Team – The Board received information about a proposed Clay Target team that would compete against other schools in Oregon. Sam Clapshaw would be the coach and was at the meeting to answer questions. Clapshaw said Clay Target shooting is a growing sport in Oregon, and said two years ago there were just two schools competing, now there are 30. Student/athletes would compete in Hillsboro and enter scores virtually to compete in the league. The school would need to adjust current poli-

cies which do not allow anyone to carry a firearm at any school sanctioned function. The team would not begin competing until next year.

Student Reports – Brook Naron, Public Relations representative for the Student Council, updated the School Board on the conclusion of the winter sports season and the start of the spring season. She told the Board about student Valentine’s Day activities. Naron told the Board about Student Body President Kaillia Jackson’s Presidential Challenge, “Penny’s for Power” which is raising funds for the Matt Barbee family. She updated the Board on the Robotics Team competitions. She also told the Board that the National Honor Society is working to present the SKID program this spring, which enacts a fatal drunk driving accident involving students as a way to promote safety during prom season.

Principal Reports – High School/Middle School Principal Nate Underwood provided the Board with a report on the winter sports season. He told the Board that instructors Ashley Ward and Matt Blair will take 16 students on the Close Up Trip to Washington D.C. April 14-19. Underwood provided updates on College and Career Readiness programs, including 9th Grade On-track, AVID, and Smarter Balanced Testing. He also provided statistics for the 2016-17 Graduation Rate, which was the highest in four years at 84.8% - above Oregon’s statewide average of 74.8% and comparatively sized schools of 80.7%.

Elementary Principal Aaron Miller told the Board that March 5-9 was Classified Employees Appreciation Week. They were recognized with flowers, breakfasts, and other goodies. Miller expressed his thanks to all the Classified Employees. Miller said a new mural in the Hall of Champions was the work of Artist in Residence Sarah Ferguson and K-5 students. Miller said K-5 teachers visited the Gaston School to observe teachers implementing Enhanced Core Reading Instruction (ECRI) techniques. Miller told the Board that Vice Principals Mrs. Eagleson and Mrs. Wilcoxon attended New Principal’s Academy for a day of training.

Superintendent Report – Superintendent Aaron Miller answered a question he had received from the Board about what is needed for the District to meet the needs of students that have not been provided because of budget constraints in past years. Miller provided an exten-

sive list of priorities and said he does not believe the State is funding schools adequately, and funds small rural Districts even less than larger Districts. Miller’s list included the need for additional administrative personnel, additional teachers at all levels, and additional positions or resources for custodial, counseling, Resource Officers, field trips, supplies, text book upgrades, summer school, salary increases, staff professional development, elementary music, and college preparation.

Miller updated the Board on progress to create a At Home Public School Charter Program that would allow home school students to enroll in the Vernonia School District (VSD) and then access resources, including curriculum and a teacher. VSD would receive full funding from the State for each student that enrolls, which would fund the program. Currently many homeschool families are enrolled in the Yahill-Carlton School District for these services. Miller said he has been meeting with parents of homeschool students and presented the Board with basic assumptions that would allow the program to be successful. Miller said he is already receiving commitments from families that say they will enroll if the program is implemented.

Miller told the Board the District has received a grant to fund the AVID program for the next three years.

Miller provided an update on Bond projects and said the Mist roof contract has been awarded to Dan Titus, a contract is in place with Three Rivers Audio Visual to install a high powered digital projector in the Commons, and said a contract has been signed for architectural work and that community meet-

ings will be set up in March and April.

Miller informed the Board that kindergarten teacher Lisa Edwardsen has tendered her resignation, effective June 30, 2018; the Board later voted to accept that resignation.

Miller said work continues on the new softball and baseball fields and said he hopes the first games will be played there on April 13.

Public Comment – Dale Webb expressed concerns about the safety of the school building and students in the wake of recent school shootings and suggested the Board consider forming a community committee to discuss potential ways to protect students. He said there are many different models that are being used and that the Vernonia School District is currently a Gun Free Zone. He said St. Helens School District allows teachers to carry guns.

Amy Ceiloha express dissatisfaction with the Superintendent’s decision to not allow students from other schools to participate on sports teams in the Vernonia School District if their school doesn’t offer that sport. Ceiloha said her daughter attends Faith Bible Christian School, which does not offer girls softball. Miller later told the Board during his Superintendent’s Report that he made an exception for one student this season who is a senior at Faith Bible, but would not allow any other students to play at Vernonia in the future, stating that students enrolled in other schools could take away opportunities for students from the Vernonia School District to fully participate. The Board later discussed the issue briefly, as it had been added to the agenda, and expressed agreement with Miller’s decision.

Vernonia School Board Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month. The next School Board Meeting is scheduled for April 12 at 6:00 pm at the Mist School.

Columbia Humane Society Featured Pet



Shep is a young German shepherd mix who is looking for his forever home. He tolerates other dogs okay but at times can be inappropriate with them. He will not be a dog that tolerates a lot from other dogs. He is friendly and fun loving, however he does need to have some training. He

will make a great companion to a family that understands his breed and understands what he is going to need to make him a great dog. We think he is about 4 years old, and he weighs around 75 lbs.

CHS is committed to the highest level of care for all the pets that we house in the shelter. Out of respect for our dogs and this being their home, our kennels are not open for public walk through. If you are interested in meeting one of our kids we would be more than happy to talk to you about our adoption process. Please call 503-397-4353 or email animalwelfare@columbiahumane.org. We want to be sure that we are making the best matches possible, not only for you the adopter but also for our pets.

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