

School Board Report

At the May 10, 2018 School Board Meeting:

Budget Committee Approves Budget – After calling the regular meeting to order, Chair Brett Costley recessed to a Budget Committee Meeting. The Budget Committee is made up of five citizens plus the School Board. Budget Committee member Kelly Murray chaired the budget meeting. Other citizen members of the Committee were James Loope, Christina Loope, Steve Whiteman, and Tobie Finzel. After a brief discussion about several items, including a discussion about the need to add more student school days to the District calendar, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the budget as presented. The budget will now go the Board for final adoption in June.

PBL Students Present Grants – Students from the Project Based Learning (PBL) class presented grant awards to four local community organizations and two in-school programs. (See full story on page 12.)

Board Approves Fee Schedule – The Board approved a new recommended fee schedule that increases the cost of all meals by \$0.10 and all beverages by \$0.05.

Youth Transition Program – Beth Kintz updated the Board on the Youth Transition Program (YTP) which she coordinates. Kintz said the program, in its third year, assists up to 20 students each year through grant funding. The program helps students with documented disabilities that have barriers to employment, providing pre-employment transition services. Kintz coordinates activities for students up to age 21, helping them prepare resumes, search for jobs, visit job fairs, fill out job applications, and get hands-on work experience through on-the-job training, and at the school store and snack bar.

Board Discusses Facility Safety – Board Chair Brett Costley led the Board in an open discussion about gun violence and the safety of students and staff in the school facility. (See full story on front page.)

Superintendent Report – Superintendent Aaron Miller told the Board enrollment was at 544 at the end of April.

He said the District has opened the hiring process for six student summer internship positions, two at the school for Maintenance/Grounds, two with the Upper Nehalem Watershed Council for nursery and field work, and two at Stub Stewart State Park for Ranger Assistant.

Miller updated the Board on bond projects, telling them the Mist roof is finished and that a permit from DEQ will allow construction of the new football field and track to begin this

summer. He said the project to add four classrooms at the end of one wing will probably wait until next summer and the new metal shop building will either be built this summer or next.

Miller said the District has hired Teresa Gore to teach kindergarten next year. He said some current teachers will be changing classes, including current third grade teacher Justin Benassi, who will move to teaching high school shop; Linda Hobart who will move from fourth grade to first grade; and Andrea Anderson will move from first grade to teach the first/second grade blend. Miller said the District is still searching for a HS/MS language arts teacher, a HS/MS art teacher, and a fourth grade teacher.

Principal Reports – High School Principal Nate Underwood updated the Board on work he is doing to revise current graduation standards for Vernonia seniors, to bring them in line with state requirements. Currently Vernonia High School (VHS) requires 25.5 credits while the state only requires 24. Underwood said he is looking to combine some classes and curriculum in the current classes offered by VHS in an effort to streamline the graduation requirements. Underwood said he will bring back a formal proposal to a future meeting.

Elementary Principal Aaron Miller provided the Board with a written report that showed the grade/class configurations for the 2018-19 school year: two kindergarten classes, and one each of first grade, first/second grade blend, second grade, third grade, fourth grade, fourth/fifth grade blend, and fifth grade.

Miller said fifth grader Bowen Cottini, who attends the Mist School, won the Columbia County Spelling Bee and will represent the County at the State Fair.

Miller reported that the District has once again received a grant from the Northwest Regional Education Service District to support a two week Kindercamp in August prior to the start of school.

Miller told the Board that Hands On Art will be sponsoring a children's theater event on June 5. He also reminded the Board that Field Day will be held on June 6.

Board Meets in Executive Session – The Board met in Executive Session under ORS192.660 (2)(i) "To review and evaluate the performance of the chief executive officer or any other public officer, employee or staff member..." Upon returning to Open Session, the Board took no further action.

Columbia County Students Qualify for State Spelling Bee

Three students from the Scappoose, Clatskanie, and Vernonia school districts will represent Columbia County at the state competition after winning the Columbia County Spelling Contest held by the Northwest Regional Education Service District on May 10, 2018.

The County Spelling Bee, proctored by David Cook, posed 25 words to students in each of the three divisions, as well as five tie-breaker words. Division I had two tie-breakers to determine the winners on this occasion. Winners were determined by the amount of words they had spelled correctly.

Columbia County school districts sent their district spelling bee winners in three grade divisions: Division 1 for first through fifth grades; Division 2 for sixth through eighth grades; and Division 3 for ninth through 12th grades.

Competing in Division 1 were Kelby Evenson and Chloe May from Clatskanie, Elowyn Jefferson and Jodell Musgrove from Rainier, Momi Leininger and Bowen Cottini from Vernonia, Madelyn Hewey and Marissa Lemon from St. Helens, Ryleigh Layton from Scappoose. In Division 1 Bowen Cottini took first place, Kelby Evenson took second, and Elowyn Jefferson was third.

In Division 2 participants were Taylor Crawford and Reilly Norgren from Clatskanie, Lola Ramirez and Jackson Youngblood from Rainier, Kathryn Nelson from St. Helens, and Kaitlyn Leshley and Bailey Olsen from Scappoose. In Division 2, Kaitlyn Leshley took first place, Taylor Crawford took second, and Reilly Norgren was third.

Division 3 was a bit smaller with one competitor: AnneMarie Davis from Vernonia took first place.

All first place winners will go on to compete at the state competition at the Oregon State Fair on September 1, 2018.

The Oregon Spellers (www.oregonspellers.org) are presenters of the statewide spelling championship with a mission to "encourage, promote, and recognize spelling excellence for the youth of the State of Oregon and to provide, with our sponsors, an annual state-level spelling championship..."

Congratulations to our district and county-level winners!

Vernonia Students of the Month

April 2018

Elementary School



Front row: Henry Vance (1), Kyleigh Rau (k), Alexis Bernardi (2), Fisher Rumbolz (k)
Back Row: Orran Peters (4), Morgan Dennis (3), Kyanian Scott (4), Haley Schneckenburg (5), Arlo Hunter (3), Charlotte Schlegel (2)

Tyler Ridell Grade 7

Tyler is an imaginative student who has a passion for reading. His teachers say he's a mature student who tries hard in class and thinks about subjects intellectually. Tyler says his favorite subject is definitely science. He says he hopes to try out for basketball next year. In his free time Tyler says he likes to write fiction stories.



Lily Buchanan Grade 12



Lily is an active and involved student. She is the President of the National Honor Society and just finished helping to organize the S.K.I.D. reenactment. She was part of the Project Based Learning class and worked on the mural outside the gym entrance. She did stats for wrestling and also takes photos for sports activities. Lily says next year she plans to attend Oregon State University. In her free time she likes to draw, and go "Cruisin' with Susan."

Sponsored by Senator Betsy Johnson



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