

Schools Update: Measure 98 Expenditures

By Superintendent Aaron Miller

Last year voters approved Ballot Measure 98 which provided extra funding for school districts to support students in the areas of career and technical education (CTE), college-level opportunities, and dropout prevention. For the 2018-19 school year the Vernonia School District (VSD) received over \$99,000 from Measure 98 funding, and is spending these funds in each of the three areas listed above.

CTE funding has helped make improvements to the existing wood shop, and provided materials for use in this department. CTE in Vernonia has also been enhanced through a paid partnership with the Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce which enables our students to participate in job shadow, and em-

ployee development services that would otherwise be unavailable to our students.

In the area of college-level opportunities, our AVID (Achievement Via Individual Determination) program is now serving students in 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th grades. This program ramps up the overall college-going atmosphere within Vernonia High School and Vernonia Middle School, as well as provides an AVID elective where selected students are able to further develop college-going skills, attitudes and actions that help prepare them for attending college and furthering their post-secondary opportunities following graduation.

The final area that the VSD has utilized Measure 98 dollars is in helping prevent high school students from dropping out. We have hired a graduation coach who helps high school students

monitor their credits toward graduation, develop a college and career path for their future, attend job fairs, as well as to apply for scholarships and college entrance. All of these activities help ensure students are on track to graduate.

In addition to our graduation coach, we also have a team of educators who attend regular 9th Grade On Track meetings and workshops. Studies show that students who are on track to graduate after 9th grade (i.e. they have earned all the possible HS credits available to a freshman) are significantly more likely to graduate than those students who fail courses as freshman and are not on track to graduate. We believe this work is making a marked difference in the actions of our students and faculty, and will continue to lead to higher gradua-

tion rates.

Finally, to help older students who are struggling to meet graduation requirements, we have contracted for the services of Oregon Outreach, Incorporated (OOI). OOI is an alternative education program which provides several of our students with a modified school day so they can focus on credit recovery outside the normal setting of a 7-period high school work day. This program has been successful at providing an alternative setting where students are able to focus on the courses they need to graduate, pass them, and earn their high school diploma.

Measure 98 dollars were mandated by the people's vote and students in the Vernonia School District are reaping the benefits of these expenditures.

School Board Report

At the February 14, 2019 School Board Meeting:

Budget Calendar – The Board received the Budget Calendar for year 2019-20 which shows meetings to review the budget on May 2 and May 9 with a Public Hearing and the Adoption of the Budget on June 13. There are currently four open positions on the Budget Committee. Anyone interested in serving should contact Barb Carr at (503) 429-5891 or BCarr@Vernonia.K12.us.

School Board Elections – Four seats on the Vernonia School Board will be up for election on May 21. (See details on front page.)

Board Discusses Process for New Superintendent – Current Superintendent Aaron Miller has informed the Board that he is considering retirement in the next few years. The Board discussed starting a process to prepare for the transition.

Board Accepts Resignation – The Board voted to accept the resignation of Board Member Katie Cook, effective immediately. Cook's seat on the Board is up for election in May.

School Profile – Middle/High School Principal Nate Underwood provided a copy of the new Oregon school report card, called "At-A-Glance School Profile." The report showed numerous statistics for the schools including: regular attendance is slightly down; and students on-track to graduate is up 17% but still

below the Oregon average.

Board Approves NWRES D Service Plan – The Board voted to approve the 2019-20 Northwest Regional Education Service District (NWRES D) Local Service Plan and budget for the District. The NWRES D provides programs for school districts in Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook, and Washington counties, including programs for students with special needs, technology support, and administrative support services.

Board Sets Transfer Limits – As part of their annual duties the Board voted to set a limit of 15 students who live outside the District who can transfer to attend school here.

Board Votes to Approve Support for Education Funding – The Board voted to approve a Resolution from the Oregon School Board Association (OSBA) as part of their "Oregonians for Student Success" campaign that will ask Oregon Legislators to provide adequate funding for state-wide education.

Board Approves Agreement – The Board voted to approve an agreement with PACE through the Oregon School Board Association to provide Property and Casualty Insurance Coverage for Education.

Board Approves Education Hours Exemption – The Board voted to approve a recommendation from Superintendent Aaron Miller to request an exemption

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Vernonia Students of the Month

January 2019

Elementary School



Front Row: Clarissa McGuire (K), Kristina McGuire (K), Alana Watts (1), Gus Hunter (2), Maika Borst (2) Back Row: Eli Harkson (2), Silas Hunter (4), Jayden Josephson Hanner (5), Charlie Campo (5), Mathew Meglen (2), Noah Aguilar (2), Kylan Van Lom (3)

Paige Mendelsohn Grade 7

Paige is known as a hard working and creative student who goes above and beyond on her assignments. She is also known for being kind and compassionate to other students. Paige says she enjoys learning about U.S. history in school.

She does track, plays saxophone in the band, sings in the choir, and takes both art and shop classes. In her free time she likes to draw and take care of her ball python pet snake.



Hepner Forster Grade 12

Hepner is a three-sport athlete who plays football, is a captain and two-time qualifier for State in wrestling, and plays baseball. He says he enjoys his literature class the most in school. He plays trombone, baritone, and tuba in the band, and has participated in Robotics in the past. He says he plans to enlist in the U.S. Air Force after graduation.

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