

Parents Pack 5J School Board Meeting

Story / photos by Gina Perkins

"Silence is consent and if I have to use this meeting to get publicity, then I will," said parent Julie Gentry, in opposition to the controversial Engage New York math curriculum at Tuesday night's packed 5J School Board meeting.

"Here is the approved curriculum list for the contract year 2009-2015.



Julie Gentry

Neither Engage New York nor Eureka Math are on the approved list [established by the State Board of Education]," said Gentry.

Gentry also expressed extreme frustration about the district's shredding of the K-12 math text books last spring saying, "...doesn't the elimination of books wreak of other historical events we all find to be quite unsavory?"

Every seat was filled and citizens stood all around the border of the meeting room, in the doorway, and out in the hall, patiently waiting for the public comment portion of the meeting agenda.

Third grade teacher, Amanda Wilde, addressed the audience just prior to the public comment portion, thanking parents for coming out and supporting their children.

Board Chairman, Kevin Cassidy, also thanked the audience and stated a letter had come forward which had been given to Superintendent Mark Witty. A response from Witty would be sent "next week" to the address provided, which appeared to be that of concerned parent, Andi Jaca.

Cassidy explained the time limit given for comments and the fact each person in attendance would not be allowed to speak "or we would be here until midnight."

Gentry was one of four parents and one student who was given time to speak regarding the implementation of the conceptual math program. Three of the parents and the one student who spoke, were adamantly opposed to the new curriculum citing several reasons.

Marcy Osborn, who said she has a bachelor's degree in math and a master's degree in teaching, stated the need for a balance between procedural fluency (the ability to solve problems by knowing how to add, subtract, multiply, divide, compute percentages, etc.) and conceptual math.

"Engage New York is poorly written and poorly sequenced," said

Osborn. She stated there are no textbooks in which to refer when students don't understand and objected to having to search the internet for YouTube videos in order to find assistance.

Osborn concluded her statement by asking, "Does the program instill a love for math or [result in] frustrated and defeated students?"

"Engage New York is not creating a love of mathematics. Instead it's causing fear and dread"

- Coby Mastrude, parent

Parent Coby Mastrude shared comments from multiple parents and students, all who of whom expressed extreme frustration, with many students to the point of tears. In addition to this, she stated that parents have been taken out of the process and one sixth grade student who was included in her comments stated, "Even the smartest students are struggling."

Mastrude says her family is considering several options, including moving to another district.

"Engage New York is not creating a love of mathematics. Instead it's causing fear and dread," added Mastrude. She also stated teachers should be shown respect.

Dylan Mastrude, a freshman, said, "Our teachers are not allowed to teach in ways they know work."

He also said that one of the problems he had been given had four errors within it and stated it is a common occurrence. Dylan shared that many of his peers who were able, had transferred out of the Engage New York classes and said that kids who had never experi-

enced problems in math, were having a great deal of difficulty.

At the conclusion of the Dylan's statement, Loran Joseph, who had been among the parents standing out in the hallway, came forward and said there were also parents present in favor of Engage New York and asked for permission to speak.

"I'm excited about the concepts my second grade child is learning," Joseph stated. He also contended test scores mentioned earlier were a misrepresentation saying, "I can't look at the scores as an indictment of Engage New York."

The audience exploded in applause following each of the three parents and student who spoke in opposition, and while Joseph did receive applause at the conclusion of his comments in support, it did appear to be from a smaller number of people and with somewhat less enthusiasm.

Cassidy thanked the audience for attending and for coming forward with their concerns. He asked for copies of each of the speakers' notes stating he wanted to study the information provided.

Among the notes belonging to Gentry was reference to OAR 581-022-1622 in which she stated, "...at the time our district decided to shred all the math textbooks...and mandate or adopt a curriculum not on the current approved math list, the district would have been required to prove that Engage New York met the criteria and guidelines established by the State Board of Education. Such district adoptions are known as independent adoptions. In order to give proper notification that a district is intending on using any other instructional material not on the approved list and enacting their rights to an independent adoption, the administrative head of the district must provide the school board with a statement that a completed criteria checklist showing the degree to



BHS Senior Morgan Scilacci was honored as the Promise of Baker Student of the Month. Marquesa Peterson was chosen as the Student of the Month.

which the instructional material meets the criteria established by the State Board of Education is on file at the district office." (Information on this particular OAR maybe located at: http://www.ode.state.or.us/wma/teachlearn/commoncore/draft_maydocket_districtguidanceindependentadoptioninstructionalmaterials_4-30-12_1.pdf)

"Since our district chose to mandate the use of Engage New York we are assuming the completed criteria checklist is on file....we want a copy of the criteria checklist and want to know who completed the extensive review...." stated Gentry.

Gentry was not alone in demanding the exclusive use of Engage New York and Eureka Math end immediately.

Looking for a Unique Gift? Stop by Oregon Trails West RV!

Photo by Gina Perkins

Oregon Trails West RV Park is another great lodging establishment serving many visitors over the years. I love the way their office is always cleverly decorated for the holidays. Many locals prefer to purchase their fuel there. Did you know they also have some really clever and reasonably priced gifts? I bought a little stuffed squirrel there for my granddaughter and it's one of her favorites. Their purses are pretty neat and much less than I've seen elsewhere.

Thanks, Mardell and Darcy McCauley for the great job you do! And...as you begin your holiday shopping, you'll want to take some time to stop there and look. You'll be surprised at what you might find!



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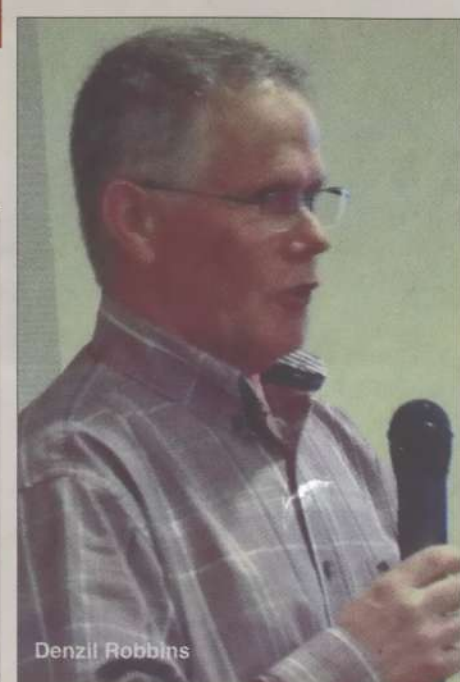
BHS Homecoming

Above, the Pep Band sounds great under the direction of Hope Watts. At right, Alex Ritter, age 11 is the awesome water boy for the Bulldogs.

Photos by Gina Perkins

DRONES

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Denzil Robbins

The Solo AGCO Edition which is the specific robotic discussed during the presentation, has up to a 55 mph flight speed and can fly in up to 35 mph winds. It also can carry up to 30 pounds. The technology is as simple as drawing a circle around the area in which you want it to fly with your finger or utilizing a "joy stick."

Current regulations regarding recreational use of UAVs rules include that the UAV remain under 400 feet in elevation and within a line of sight. Special licensing is required to fly higher and farther.

The future holds many potential uses for drones, including the possibility in the future of Robbins delivering parts to farmers right in the field saving "down time."

Colton hinted at the potential for a rapid return on investment by saying, "If it saves just one calf...."

"We're excited to be a dealer," stated Robbins. "Everything you do, you're successful with. I'm sure you'll be successful with this," said rancher Clair Pickard.

For more information on this technology and how it may benefit your operation, call Robbins Equipment at 541-523-6377.

The Federal Aviation Administration governs the use of UAVs. Visit their website at www.faa.gov or knowbeforeyoufly.org.

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