

# PLAY,

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Fox went to YouTube to research the teacher, Christa McAuliffe, watching interviews of her students.

"She's a really bubbly, happy character," Fox said. "Her students just seemed to love her so then I started looking at my teachers that I loved and their bubbly and interactive people. I'm a lot like that, I think, so it was easier for me to find my place. I definitely looked at my teachers and how they acted."

McNary senior Ryver Nakayoshi has been cast as Monet, who he says is nothing like him.

"He's a watcher, someone who is out of place, obviously, and leaves remarks on the characters when he's talked to but doesn't really take a step to talk to anybody but Elizabeth," Nakayoshi said. "That is different from me because I'm obviously a very interactive person and whenever I see somebody I talk to them so it's really hard to play a restrained character."

But Nakayoshi is enjoying the oddness of the show.

"This show enticed me because, for lack of a better term, it's just weird," he said. "And I mean that in the best way possible."

The rest of the cast includes Madelyn Hurst and Josiah Henifin, playing Betty and Ed, a retired couple who drive their Winnebago across the country to see the launch; Ashton Thomas, playing C.B., a NASA mechanic and Annie Purkey, who portrays a bartender named Donna.

*Defying Gravity* opens Wednesday, Nov. 2 at 7 p.m. in the Ken Collins Theater with additional shows through Saturday, Nov. 5. A matinee is Saturday at 2 p.m. All tickets are \$5



McNary junior Bella Fox is playing the teacher who died in the 1986 Challenger Space Shuttle explosion. The play, *Defying Gravity*, centers around the teacher and her daughter, Elizabeth.

and available online at [mcnarytheatre.weebly.com](http://mcnarytheatre.weebly.com) or at the door.

"We're looking to get a big crowd out," said Dallas Myers, McNary drama director. "The kids will always perform better with a bigger crowd and the straight shows are just as good as the musicals. I'm really happy with this one. We're doing some cool things movement wise with it, which I'm really excited about. I'm pumped to see them do it. I'm interested to see how they'll react when a crowd is here and a crowd reacts."

The show is rated PG-13 for strong language.

"It's not for lewd purposes," Myers said. "There's some language in it that we couldn't get permission to edit out. It's

"I think it will leave the audience feeling something special."

— Bella Fox  
McNary Junior

nothing that you wouldn't hear in a PG-13 movie. There's no sex or anything. It's a real tame PG-13. There's one time a character says something and he even apologizes for saying it."

Fox said there's something in the show for everyone.

"It's got everything, the love that I share with my daughter, the love of a couple, and worries and doubts, just an array of emotions and I think it will leave the audience feeling something special. That's what I hope they will take away from it."

grads & grades

The following students recently graduated from Eastern Oregon University in La Grande: Roger Comer, Ashlie Menzie and Kraig Moisan.

# STUDENTS,

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Street opened just over a year ago and serves youth ages 10 to 24 years old with dedicated spaces for males, females and a flex room for transgender and questioning youth.

"There's a lot being done, but it's still not enough. (Youth homeless services) continue to be very low funded and there is a much bigger need than there are beds," Phillips-Neal said.

Even operating at a below-optimal level, one HOME youth, Michael Jones, said the services have made a huge difference in his life.

"I was skeptical because, from my point of view, nobody cared," said Jones. "I started showing up day after day and they handed me resources. They helped me get back in school, I was thinking about doing drugs and I didn't do it because of HOME. They've done nothing but help."

The task force also heard from Buzz Brazeau, superintendent of Central School District in Independence, Ore.

Central School District is home a trauma-informed care pilot program with a health center offering everything from check-ups to dental care and even mental health services, each of the five schools has its own mental health workers. Trauma-informed care is a treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing and responding to all types of trauma.

Brazeau said the foundation of the approach was, in part, a response to the sometimes misguided emphasis on absenteeism.

"Sometimes we have what I call the 'Heisman approach'

of pushing students away who return to classes," said Brazeau referencing the stance portrayed in college's football's most widely known trophy.

"When a student comes back after too many absences, we lecture them or send them to a principal's office. We need to have a model with the proper supports so that when a staff member is ready to care, they are able to welcome back a student and provide medical, dental and counseling services. That means when the window opens up between when students are listening to us and wanting to learn that they are able to learn."

Jayne Downing, executive director of the Center for Hope and Safety (CHS), also spoke to board members about the need to keep victims of domestic violence in mind when they make their final plans and recommendations.

"Last year, our program alone had more than 20,000 contacts with victims of domestic abuse," Downing said. "They often are not going to be the people on the corner. If they are not with us, they are in other shelters or doubling-up with other individuals and we don't want to see resources taken away from the survivors of domestic violence."

Downing said the answer may be as simple as dedicating a few beds of any new shelter to victims of domestic violence.

CHS recently completed fundraising for a new confidential emergency shelter and purchased the old Greyhound building in downtown Salem. CHS's goal is to turn the Greyhound site into a mixed use building with resource services and job-training programs on the ground floor and two levels of transitional housing above it.

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