

# CONCERNS: 'Only 12% of fifth graders were listed as being on track in math.'

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Board Chair Osvaldo Avila said the board would meet again in person when it is safe to do so and "a couple members of the board meet with district leadership to determine how to have in-person board meetings in the safest way possible."

Salem-Keizer, which had to cancel a meeting in August due to safety concerns as well, isn't the only Oregon school board where meetings have turned into political battlegrounds. The Newberg school board unexpectedly voted Tuesday night to fire their superintendent after members of the conservative majority felt he wasn't enforcing a ban on political symbols in classrooms that they had passed, as reported by *The Oregonian/OregonLive*.

Public comments were limited to 45 minutes at Tuesday's meeting, with each speaker being given three minutes to speak. In addition to discussing areas they would like to see school funds go in the future, multiple speakers expressed upset that several board members voted against the resolution outlining the board's commitment to equity and anti-racism at last month's meeting.

"When you talk about diversity and inclusion, I really think we should also welcome diverse perspective. Otherwise if all of us have to work the same way,

that's not truly diversity in my opinion," Board member Satya Chandragiri, who voted against the resolution last month, said later in the meeting. "We shouldn't misunderstand each other, we shouldn't blame each other or shame each other but listen to the argument or discussion that we have. Because only then can we have the good policy come out."

Board member Marty Heyen turned her camera off for the entirety of public comment.

Following public comment, the board began discussions on the upcoming school board zone redistricting. The redistricting aims to ensure the number of people in each school zone are close to equal. The board currently has two redistricting proposals and is seeking public feedback on the maps, which will be available on their website. The board plans to review the maps and public feedback at a Dec. 7 meeting.

Assistant Superintendent Olga Cobb then presented key performance indicators that show how students are doing this year in comparison to years past. Two of those indicators, second grade reading and fifth grade math, showed a much higher percentage of students in the "high risk" category compared to years past. Only 12% of fifth graders were

listed as being on track in math. Cobb emphasized how much the pandemic affected the normal learning process for these students.

Another category on which Cobb presented was student's sense of belonging in schools in the year 2019. While the sense of belonging in Salem-Keizer elementary schools was in the 70th percentile compared to schools throughout the country with similar demographics, the sense of belonging in middle and high school in the district was in the 20th percentile.

The second half of the meeting was dominated by presentations on budgets and upcoming funding. The Student Investment Account, which aims to improve equity for students that have historically experienced academic disparities, had its funding in the district cut last year from \$36 million to \$11 million. The district said it hopes to receive the normal amount of funding this year and outlined areas the money will go towards, such as the hiring and retention of a diverse staff.

Finally, the board outlined a timeline

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**SATYA CHANDRAGIRI**  
Board Member, SALEM-KEIZER SCHOOL DISTRICT

of spending for the nearly \$150 million they received in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER). Suzanne West, the district's director of strategic initiatives, said that almost \$45 million has already been allocated to address the unfinished learning, or learning loss, that occurred during the pandemic.

Questions or concerns? Contact the reporter via email: [editor@keizertimes.com](mailto:editor@keizertimes.com)

## obituary

### Harry James Tlusty

Dec. 29, 1940 – Oct. 23, 2021

Harry was born to John and Anna Tlusty in Molalla, Ore.

He is survived by his sons Terry Tlusty and Michael Tlusty; daughters Anna Ownby, Kelly Tlusty, Michelle Gibbons and Becky Begley. He also leaves behind 10 grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

He is preceded in death by his wife Cheryl Tlusty.



HARRY JAMES TLUSTY

The full obituary can be found at [keizerchapel.com](http://keizerchapel.com)

## death notice

### Margaret McDaniel

May 23, 1920 – Oct. 26, 2021

Margaret McDaniel of Dallas, Ore. passed on Oct. 26, 2021 at the age of 101.

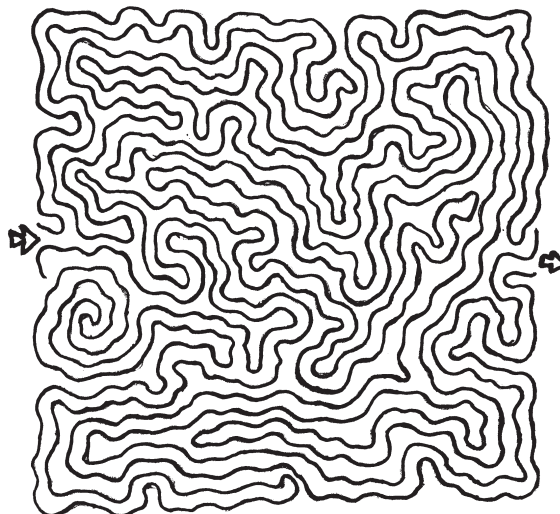
## brain food

### sudoku

1				7		9	3
	9			3		5	
5		4	9		8		6
7				2		9	4
	6		3		1		2
9		5		6			8
6			5		9	8	2
		9		8			4
8	7		1				9

Enter digits 1-9 into blank spaces. Every row must contain one of each digit. So must every column, & every 3x3 square.

sudoku answers pg A8



maze by Jonathan Graf of Keizer

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