

# Lunches: 70 percent of Seaside elementary kids receive free, reduced meals

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Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program. The provision is meant to simplify the district's paperwork, decrease food service costs, streamline meal service and increase the number of students eating school meals, according to Justine Hill, the district's business manager.

During the first year of the provision's four-year cycle, the district will offer free breakfasts and lunches to all elementary students.

At least 70 percent of Seaside Heights Elementary students and 50 percent of Gearhart Elementary students were receiving free and reduced-cost meals.

However, the district must make up the difference between the federal reimbursement and the meal costs. The increases in the prices at the middle and high school could offset that difference, Hill said.

In other business at the June 21 meeting:

- The school board renewed the district's contract with Chartwell's food service company. Hill said that since the district contracted with Chartwell's five years ago, the district has made "great strides" in reducing its deficit in financing school lunches. The company also is making changes to increase efficiencies, she said.

- Superintendent Doug Dougherty told the board that the district, if it pursues a bond measure to move its schools out of the tsunami zone, they could be eligible to participate in a drawing for state funding toward seismic upgrading. About \$4 million, which became available after the last legislative session, will be spread among districts selected from the drawing, Dougherty said. So far, he added, federal funding isn't available.

- Dougherty also told the board that a new proposal will be submitted from the Cannon Beach Academy board to start a charter school in Cannon Beach.

After hearing an appeal from the academy's board, the state Department of Education asked the school district and the academy board to discuss the issue again. Dougherty said the state department questioned whether it could act as a sponsor of the charter school since the Seaside School District receives no state funding; the district is financed by property taxes and timber revenues.

The Seaside School Board several months ago turned down the academy's proposal, citing concerns about the charter school's budget and curriculum. Dougherty said the district will assist the charter school in applying for state funds that recently became available for charter schools, and the academy board will work with the state education department to align its curriculum with state education standards. The charter school must show it complies with state and district requirements by next March if it plans to open in September 2017.

The board approved a request by Dougherty, who is retiring as district superintendent July 1, to work full time until Dec. 31 to oversee a bond measure to be submitted to voters in the Nov. 8 general election. The bond would finance the relocation of Seaside's schools to a hillside east of Seaside Heights Elementary School. The amount of the bond measure has not yet been announced.



Submitted Photo

Students at Seaside Heights Elementary School will receive free breakfast and lunches next year through a federal program.



Doug Dougherty



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