

# OPINION

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## OUR VIEW

# Jewell schools ramp up creativity

As buzz words go, the expression “thinking outside the box” must be one of the most over-used clichés in modern America. Nevertheless, it can be properly applied to the latest suggestion being circulated among patrons of the Jewell School District.

Superintendent Alice Hunsaker and school board members are considering rescheduling the regular curriculum from five days a week into four.

Leaders concede it would not necessarily save any substantial money. But it would avoid coaches and students repeatedly losing class time Fridays for sports, music and other activities involving travel.

One important component is that it would allow time for more organized and less disruptive professional development. Administrators would be able to bring workshops and other training to Jewell so teaching staff would benefit and grow.

Another element is quality of life for staff. Many make significant sacrifices to teach or work in other positions at Jewell, including a one-way commute of 50 minutes or more. These staff have to use up a valuable day off just to accommodate a weekday dental or medical



Don Anderson/For The Daily Astorian

Superintendent Alice Hunsaker, left, tells the nine 2016 graduates of Jewell School to move their tassels from right to left during their graduation ceremony.

appointment.

However, a four-day workweek for Jewell’s 150 students prompts many important questions that must be addressed head-on. What do the students who are not traveling for sports or music do on their fifth day? The availability of day care and other options need to be carefully examined, especially for working parents unable to change their schedules to stay home on

one weekday.

Also, administrators will need to review the number of students eligible for reduced-price or free meals, then factor in how to keep those youngsters properly nourished on days when there is no regular school.

Of the five school districts in Clatsop County, Jewell has always been a little different. It’s smaller and much more remote, of course, but its K-12 program

has a sense of community unlike any other. Anyone who has ever attended a Blue Jays’ athletic contest — in any season — knows students wearing a Jewell uniform fight for points as fiercely as any in their division.

Timber funding during prior years has supported the district, which has offered opportunities for field trips that most students would envy. It has achieved considerable successes in music, journalism and academics.

Jewell leaders are taking the right course on this possible change. They have floated the idea, offered explanations for why they proposed it, and then begun detailed surveys of parents and staff to measure support. They have distributed a suggested schedule to help parents and students better visualize how exactly it could work.

Armed with a better feeling of the level of support, administrators will be better able to make a decision.

America’s public schools are one of the nation’s greatest assets. Jewell leaders want to run theirs efficiently, minimize lost class time and properly develop staff. They are to be commended for looking at creative ways to achieve all three of those goals.

## LETTERS WELCOME

Letters should be exclusive to The Daily Astorian.

Letters should be fewer than 250 words and must include the writer’s name, address and phone number. You will be contacted to confirm authorship.

All letters are subject to editing for space, grammar, and, on occasion, factual accuracy. Only two letters per writer are allowed each month.

Letters written in response to other letter writers should address the issue at hand and, rather than mentioning the writer by name, should refer to the headline and date the letter was published. Discourse should be civil and people should be referred to in a respectful manner. Letters in poor taste will not be printed.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### You still have time to save your town

My heart is breaking — yet not surprised — reading of the new chain hotel proposed for the Astoria waterfront (“New hotel pitched for Astoria,” The Daily Astorian, March 2).

I am not an Astoria resident at this time; I’m from Canada. I visited and fell in love with your town last year and met many beautiful people who welcomed me, and I was contemplating a move.

The reason I am leaving my home town in Canada is that it’s been “developed” and “touristed” into the ground. My home town has become a profit-driven, barely recognizable ghost of the lovely community it was while I was growing up.

It started when a local hotel on the water was taken over by a huge chain. Twenty years later, a unique town once full of working-class charm is a tourist-neurotic advertisement of itself: Concrete boxes, chain stores, so-called “developers” blocking out lake views with concrete eyesores that get taller and uglier and pricier each year, snatching up land and paving everything in sight, while remaining rental stock turns to Airbnbs.

Our young people leave because they can’t find housing. The town panders to everyone but the locals.

It starts with a chain hotel on the water and “jobs.” But I’ve also seen places hold out and thrive. Hold on to what’s yours — its rare.

You still have time to save your town.

CHERISE CLARKE  
Penticton, B.C., Canada

### Russia dividing us politically and economically

According to numerous reports, including one in The Wall Street Journal on March 1, “Russian Meddling on Social Media Targeted U.S. Energy Industry, Report Says,” the Russians, the No. 1 supplier of oil in the world, posted over 9,000 times on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter under page names like “Born Liberal,” encouraging pipeline and fracking protests. Dating back to 2015, the propaganda was aimed at shutting down the drilling and shipping of oil. One post on Instagram got 1,500 likes.

The article also says the Internet Research Agency “... opened its opinion-influencing unit in 2014 with the goal of spreading distrust in the U.S., according to a federal indictment secured by special counsel Robert Mueller in mid-February.”

Like the bombshell Mueller uncovered that Russian operatives under the name “Black-MattersUS” organized the New York City “Trump is NOT my President” Nov. 12, 2016 protest attended by 10,000, the size and media attention given to protests at the KeystoneXL, Dakota Access, and the Colonial pipelines went national, as well.

Social media has opened inexpensive and largely unaccountable access for organized Russian agents intent to confuse and divide us, not just politically, but economically, as well.

WAYNE MAYO  
Scappoose

### SB 1528 an act of war against small business

Whether she signs or vetoes Senate Bill 1528, Gov. Kate Brown will send a loud and lasting message about how she views the importance of small business to our state’s economy.

Oregon small businesses account for 99 percent of all businesses in the state, and employ 56 percent of Oregonians in the private sector, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Right now, across the nation, the small-business economy is humming nicely as a result of the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which gave small business a 20 percent reduction in their federal taxes.

In Oregon, federal tax reform had the dual impact of lowering small business taxes, while actually raising overall tax revenues for the state. For Oregon to disconnect from this one provision that would save small businesses some money on their future tax bills would be a historical act of callousness against Oregon’s Main Street, mom-and-pop enterprises. I hope she does the right thing by vetoing this bad bill.

Passage of SB 1528 is like an act of war against small business directed by Gov. Brown, and supported by the Democratic majority in the Legislature.

ROBIN OLSON  
St. Helens

### Carbon plan may be better than free

Regarding the article “Climate change group searches Clatsop County for help in Washington, D.C.” (The Daily Astorian, March 7): Citizens Climate Lobby now has a chapter in just about every county in the U.S. because they’ve got a simple, proven plan to combat climate change that doesn’t cost consumers or taxpayers anything.

In fact, CCL’s Carbon Fee and Dividend plan may be even better than free. Last year, solar and wind become cheaper than any fossil fuel in many parts of the world (World Economic Forum, Forbes, Lazard, Bloomberg New Energy Finance), and as they scale up, clean energy prices will drop even faster, creating a virtuous cycle (Scientific American).

So, as the carbon fee increases each year, people will make more money annually by using their increasing monthly “carbon dividend” checks to buy cheaper clean energy. It’s projected to create millions of jobs and increase the gross domestic product (GDP) \$75-80 billion annually with no government regulations, expansion, subsidies or expansion, just market forces.

British Columbia has used Carbon Fee and Dividend for a decade, and they have zero carbon emissions, lower taxes, lower energy bills and the best economy in Canada (The Economist).

Carbon Fee and Dividend can also make other nations cut their carbon emissions as much as we do. See how at citizensclimatelobby.org

PETE KUNTZ  
Northglenn, Colorado