



STORMS BATTER NORTHWEST
WEATHER/2A



WEEKEND EDITION
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OREGON VOTERS' GUIDE
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EAST OREGONIAN

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140th Year, No. 261 WINNER OF THE 2016 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD \$1.50



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Lifeways skills trainer Norman Valdez helps students deal with crisis in his position as a counselor in the Hermiston and Umatilla school districts.

Head start on support

Treating trauma on the front end improves lives, saves money

By **KATHY ANEY**
East Oregonian

What if you could improve mental health in our nation while saving millions of dollars? This seemingly improbable scenario might be entirely possible. The key, say believers, is starting early with children — diagnosing and treating mental illness before it gets a significant foothold. Strategies include embedding



counselors in schools, catching young people with schizophrenia just before or after they experience their first psychotic break and

dealing with childhood trauma before it grows into a monster that leads to hospitalization, prison or homelessness.

It's a bit like braking a roller coaster car before it barrels down the track's steepest pitch or plucking a floating stick from a lazy creek before it heads downstream to increasingly turbulent waters. Not only does early intervention prevent future human suffering, but the savings

could be significant.

"Investing in keeping people physically and emotional healthy is always more cost effective than treating chronic health conditions," said Kevin Campbell, the CEO of both the Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization and Greater Oregon Behavioral Health, Inc.

Two programs in Umatilla

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"The question is not what's wrong with you, but what happened to you."

— **Norman Valdez**, counselor in Hermiston and Umatilla school districts

STATE REPORT CARDS

Local districts see best growth in math

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

Oregon's latest round of school report cards is offering parents the opportunity to compare their child's school with others around the state.

The reports for the 2015-2016 school year show the second round of testing since the state adopted the Smarter Balanced tests — offering the first opportunity to do an apples-to-apples comparison of growth on the new test.

One of the most significant improvements to test scores came at Hermiston High School. Their language arts scores jumped from 43 percent of students meeting the benchmark in 2014-2015 to 68 percent passing the test last year.

That was still slightly below the 70 percent of high school students who performed to standard across the state, but better than the 64 percent of students passing at "like schools" of similar size and demographics.

Overall, the Hermiston School District improved in every grade level at almost every subject, with many grade levels beating the state and "like-district" averages.

A particular highlight was the high school level's 91.6 percent proficiency in the OAKS science assessment, a 30 percent advantage over the state.

The one exception was 11th grade Smarter Balanced math scores, the 19.3 percent who received a Level 3 or 4 a slight backslide from the year before and well below the comparative averages.

Hermiston Assistant Superintendent Bryn Browning said the district has already implemented some measures to improve math scores, including buying

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Sheriff's candidates face criticism for mistakes

Rowan, Lehnert speak at forum in Milton-Freewater

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

Umatilla County Sheriff Terry Rowan apologized Friday for ignoring a Helix man's calls for help more than a year ago.

Yet moments before, Rowan told that man and 30 other audience members: "I'm your sheriff 24/7, 365."

Rowan and challenger Ryan Lehnert spoke at the Milton-Freewater Republican Women's Club candidates forum at the Milton-Freewater Community Center. Club president Suni Danforth was the host and read questions from the audience, which included undersheriff Jim Littlefield, sheriff's Capt. Kathy Lieuallen, two sheriff's detectives and Athena Mayor Jon Shafer, who also works for the sheriff's office.

Other local and state candidate also participated, but Lehnert and Rowan drew the most heat.

The first shot landed on Lehnert, a corporal with the Pendleton Police Department and a former Oregon National Guard platoon sergeant who served in 2004 in Iraq. He was



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Umatilla County Sheriff's candidate Ryan Lehnert answers a question during a forum sponsored by the Milton-Freewater Republican Women's Club on Friday as current sheriff Terry Rowan looks on.

asked why Pendleton police demoted him seven years ago from sergeant to officer.

Lehnert explained he worked night shift and spent too much time hanging

out at the county's dispatch center. He said he was not doing anything different from other Pendleton cops. However, he admitted, he also sent another officer to answer a call for

service that he should have taken. That led Pendleton Police Chief Stuart Roberts to strip Lehnert of his rank

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