

# HERMISTON: 134 students transferred into the district

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iston saw an increase of 712 children ages 5 to 17. In 2000 there were 2,880, and by 2010 it had jumped to 3,592.

Mooney said the growth of the youth population is reflective of changes in the surrounding area.

"When the community grows, the school grows," she said.

Mooney said the increase in enrollment has had some benefits, including the potential to add new programs.

"The really good aspect is that there are more opportunities for kids," she said. "The ability to offer different programs is good. I know we're looking at adding some health occupation programs. We've been able to offer a greater range of elective classes."

The district has several programs aimed at career preparation, including agriculture, food and natural resource systems; arts, information and communications; business and management; family consumer sciences and human resources; health sciences; and industrial and engineering systems. One such class is the Columbia Basin Student Home Building Program, which allows students to construct

**"People follow the jobs. It's really just general economic growth in the region."**

— **Mark Morgan**, Hermiston Assistant City manager

a home that will then be sold. She said that those additional classes are the areas in which a larger student population allows the district to expand.

"Math requirements, language arts requirements — other schools will have those same offerings," she said. "What sets us apart is the ability to offer outside of that."

The programs can offer some incentives for students in smaller districts. Mooney said 134 students transferred into the district this year from other areas while 131 transferred out.

Mooney said there are some challenges that come with the growth, as well.

"With growth comes growing pains," she said. "In Pendleton, the pains are different, and the opportunities are different."

The biggest challenge for the district will be space. After a failed bond in May that proposed to build a new elementary school and rebuild two others with increased capacity, the district is going to have to take another look

at how to handle the still-growing student population. Right now, the solution to the growth has been to use modular classrooms, but district employees have said that will be difficult to maintain as a long-term solution.

The city of Hermiston presented data collected by Portland State University that looks at projections for the area's urban growth boundary. Although Hermiston and Pendleton were found to have similar populations within their city limits at the time of the forecast, Hermiston's urban growth boundary was projected to grow much faster. In 2000, the population within Hermiston's urban growth boundary was 15,635. In 2010 it was 19,234. The projected population for 2016 was 21,488, and for 2035, it was 28,667.

By contrast, the population within Pendleton's urban growth boundary was 17,161 in 2000, but dropped a bit by 2010, and is projected to increase just slightly, to 18,395 people, by 2035.

Hermiston Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan said

the reason for overall growth in the area is fairly straightforward.

"People follow the jobs," he said. "Unless it's a resort destination, people don't typically say, 'I'm going to move to Hermiston and then find a job.' It's really just general economic growth in the region."

He cited the expansion of several food processing plants and new data centers in the area in the last few years, all of which have created scores of jobs and, as a result, growth in other parts of the community.

Morgan said another reason Hermiston might be seeing more people moving in is its proximity to the Tri-Cities.

"We are absolutely different housing markets," he said. "But with the correlation in commuting patterns, there's ways I believe we're tied to them."

He added that because most people seeking a place to live based on work are more likely to be at the age where they have school-going children, it's safe to assume that with this population increase, school enrollment will continue to climb.

"I don't see it going anywhere in the near future," he said.

# Brown voices her opposition to Trump policies

By **PARIS ACHEN**  
Capital Bureau

PORTLAND — Oregon Gov. Kate Brown castigated the Trump administration's policies Friday, while reiterating her commitment to curbing climate change, protecting immigrants and improving health care and education.

O b a m a ' s Affordable Care Act enabled nearly 1 million Oregonians to access health insurance. About 98 percent of children and 95 percent of adults in the state now have health insurance.

"When I saw the Trump proposed health care ... I call it the anti-health care bill," Brown said, referring to the American Health Care Act.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates the federal bill would reduce the number of Americans who are insured by 23 million.

Despite a \$1.4 billion revenue shortfall in the state budget, Brown repeated her goal of increasing the number of people enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan without decreasing coverage.

Brown made the comments during an appearance at the Portland City Club's Friday Forum at the Sentinel Hotel. The theme of the event was "Governing under the Trump Administration."

Brown also pledged to continue Oregon's goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions despite Trump's controversial decision to pull the country out of the Paris climate agreement. His announcement Thursday has upset several of America's allies,

according to news reports.

The governor also expressed disapproval of federal Education Secretary Betsy DeVos' comment that likened education to car insurance.

"I don't think that is my approach. I think it is critically important that we all have really good access to a good public education because I see education as an elevator. It enables us all to rise," Brown said.

When pressed by interviewer Nicole Maher, president of the Northwest Health Foundation, about shortcomings in Oregon's education funding formula, the governor said now is not the time to fix it.

"It's really hard to change a funding formula when we don't have enough resources coming in," Brown said. "...I think our first priority as a state must be to get more resources into our education system as a whole. Then I think we can have that conversation about the funding formula."

The Ways and Means subcommittee on education approved a \$8.2 billion biennial budget for kindergarten through high school on Thursday. Oregon education officials have said that amount will require reductions in staff, programs and school days.

Democrats in the Legislature are pushing for a commercial activity tax on corporations that could help boost education funding for the state's next budget for 2017-2019.

*The Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group and Pamplin Media Group.*



**Brown**

# AYALA: One of four men facing charges for the killing

Continued from 1A

and Steve Nelson, live out of state, but he has met with them in person and spoke several times with them on the phone.

"In all the conversations I've had with the Nelson family, they continue to express the magnitude of the loss," Primus said. "There is no way that hole could ever be filled."

Ayala is one of four men facing charges for the killing. The other three have their cases pending in federal court. Ayala's attorney, Sohayee Lee of Portland, said her client is the "first one to step up and take responsibility for his actions."

Temple also asked Ayala if he had anything to say.

"I just want to apologize to Mr. Nelson's family," he said.

Three members of Nelson's family were in the courtroom. Jaclyn Jenkins, Primus' chief deputy prosecutor, during a break in the proceedings brought them a box of tissue.

Ayala now goes back to the federal prison in Sheridan, Oregon. Court records show his sentencing for the federal crimes is Aug. 9 in U.S. District Court, Portland.

Primus also plans to bring charges against the other defendants: Joseph Aaron McIver, Armando Ruben Vargas and Nicholas Benjamin Jones.

Contact Phil Wright at [pwright@eastoregonian.com](mailto:pwright@eastoregonian.com) or 541-966-0833.



Staff photo by Kathy Aney  
**Edward Duarte Ayala reads a copy of the final judgment with his attorney, Sohayee Lee, of Portland, after being sentenced for manslaughter and conspiracy to commit burglary in connection with the homicide of Thadd Nelson of Meacham. Ayala received a 16 year sentence for the crimes.**

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