

EAST OREGONIAN

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21, 2019

143rd Year, No. 219

WINNER OF THE 2019 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

\$1.50

Rule change causing worry

Immigrant Oregonians fear signing up for social service programs

By **CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE AND RACHEL ALEXANDER**
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — A move by the federal government to restrict most legal immigration to those who can afford health care, housing and food on their own is sowing worry among Oregon immigrants, even those who will not be impacted by the rule, advocates say.



Rosenblum

“We have definitely seen fear, and confusion from our clients about the public charge rule,” said Beth Englander, a public benefits attorney with the Oregon Law Center.

Last week, the Trump administration issued a rule saying that immigrants who use certain public benefits could have that counted against them if they are seeking legal status in the U.S. — a process that can take decades.

Oregon and four other states have sued the Trump administration to block the rule, which is expected to take effect Oct. 15.

“This cruel new rule punishes families for simply being immigrants,” said Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum in a statement. “The rule will hit children and families across our state who need food and medical assistance the most.”

There are many exceptions to the new rule, however. For example, the rule doesn’t apply to refugees or people seeking asylum.

But, Englander said, she keeps hearing one phrase over and over — “it will come back to haunt me.”

Even those immigrants who aren’t covered by the rule fear that it could jeopardize them in unexpected ways, Englander said.

“It’s very hard to allay people’s fears,” she said.

Currently, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security considers whether an applicant for a green card will become “primarily” dependent on the government for income.

Using programs such as cash assistance or long-term institutional care is taken into account, according to the Immigrant Legal Resource Center.

But under the new rule, an array of other benefits will be considered, such as public health care, nutrition programs and vouchers to help pay for housing.

A public charge is defined in the new rule as a person receiving public benefits for 12 months or more in a 3-year period.

In Oregon, the state’s health and human services agencies are publicizing

See Immigrants, Page A7

BACK TO SCHOOL

GETTING UP TO SPEED



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

Makenna Ramos reads through a portion of the Conscious Discipline training during a new teacher orientation on Tuesday. Ramos will be a kindergarten teacher at the Pendleton Early Learning Center this year.

New Pendleton School District teachers take part in teacher orientation

By **ALEX CASTLE**
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — For the second consecutive year, the Pendleton School District will welcome a significant number of new teachers to its classrooms for the first day of school on Tuesday.

After hiring a group of 17 new certified staff that included seven teachers a year ago, several retirements and other departures led to the district hiring 34 new certified staff for the 2019-20 school year, 21 of which are teachers.

In total, 27% of the district’s certified

See School, Page A7



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

Josh McGraw, a kindergarten teacher at Pendleton Early Learning Center, teaches a lesson to the district’s new teachers during a new teacher orientation on Tuesday.

The price of getting back to school

Teachers, parents, schools preparing for school year, and it comes at a cost

By **JESSICA POLLARD**
East Oregonian

UMATILLA COUNTY — From clothing to electronics, families with K-12 students are planning to spend

a record average of \$696.70 this year on back to school shopping according a survey recently conducted by the National Retail Federation. Just a part of that is school supplies requested by districts,

but the costs add up.

A price-check of the Hermiston School District supply list reveals that parents could spend upward of \$30 at Walmart sending a fifth-grader to school with everything on their school supplies list this year. Lists across the county tell a similar tale.

It’s not a price everyone

can pay, and an incoming kindergarten teacher at the Hermiston School District, Celie Faircloth, knows this well.

Faircloth previously taught in Ontario for the past seven years. When kids would show up without the supplies on their lists, she said, she’s found

See Cost, Page A7

New fire chief makes first foray into Northwest

Critchley spent three decades with Tucson Fire Department

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Jim Critchley has only been interim chief of the Pendleton Fire Department for about a week, but he’s already made a little bit of history.

Critchley is the first chief to start his term at the new fire station at 1455 S.E. Court Ave. after taking over from former interim Fire Chief Paul Berardi on Aug. 12.

Like Berardi, Critchley

spent his career in an entirely different region of the country before coming to Pendleton.

In Critchley’s case, it was deep in the Southwest in the Tucson, Arizona, area, where he spent all but six months of his life prior to coming to Pendleton.

Growing up in Arizona, his career ambitions weren’t aligned with being a firefighter, although his dream job still valued water.

“I wanted to be a marine biologist, in the middle of the desert,” he said.

His interests started to turn when he started attending college and he realized that he might not be suited for the tra-

ditional academic path.

A few friends were getting into firefighting, and he decided to give it a try with a private firefighting company.

Critchley was soon manning fire trucks by himself, and he was attracted to move over to the public sector when he saw the Tucson Fire Department responding to calls.

“They get to bring friends on their truck,” he said.

He joined the Tucson Fire Department in 1988, and by then, he already aspired to climb the ranks.

Critchley said he was



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

Interim Pendleton Fire Chief Jim Critchley is shown at the new Pendleton fire station Tuesday morning.

See Chief, Page A7



7 294671 10002 2