

School: After technical difficulties, new school is set to open

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second year at the school after transferring from a school in Washington, said she'd already been into the building before to help some of the teachers move into their classrooms.

She said she was most excited by the expanded space compared to the cramped confines at the old Nixyaawii.

Shawn Joseph helped his daughter Shelby and his niece Susie Patrick, both students at Nixyaawii, with their lockers.

Joseph said he was a member of one of the first graduating classes at Hopi High School on the Hopi Reservation in Arizona, so he knows how important the new school is to the tribes and the students themselves.

Susie said she's looking forward to the improved wi-fi at the new Nixyaawii. She said last year, the internet would go out during class and students wouldn't even be able to access Google to research things for class.

The previously spotty internet



Crews work to finish the floors at the new Nixyaawii Community School during an open house on Thursday afternoon.

Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

was a source of frustration for teachers as well.

Nixyaawii social studies

teacher Zack Brandsen said he'd have to scrap whole lesson plans when the internet went out.

Chelsea Hallam, a math and language arts teacher, said some students mentally checked out

in class when the technology required for the lesson wasn't working.

She thinks the tribes' investment in a new school could inspire students to do better in class.

"They like to play it cool like it's not a big deal, but you can tell they're excited," she said.

One of the reasons Nixyaawii needed a bigger school was because of its surging enrollment.

The old Nixyaawii was bursting at the seams with its prior 85-student enrollment cap, and the new facility has allowed the school to set a new 105-student ceiling.

Heinrich said 93 students have enrolled at Nixyaawii for the 2019-20 school year, and although he doesn't expect Nixyaawii to reach the new cap this year, he anticipates it will happen eventually.

Heinrich doesn't foresee raising the cap past 105 students, and Brandsen said the future of Nixyaawii will be trying to balance community demand with Nixyaawii's small-school appeal.

Kicker: Taxpayers to see nearly \$1.6B refund next year

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The unprecedented revenues have roots in a number of factors, including federal tax changes that led businesses to put off paying taxes until this year, ratcheting up corporate tax receipts by around 50%. Economists say those impacts are likely short term.

"Even without a recession, we're expecting that it's going to be hard to match the revenue we saw in the last biennium," state economist Mark McMullen told lawmakers on the House and Senate revenue committees.

Another factor that could dampen the size of future kickers: a new corporate activities tax that lawmakers passed this year. That tax is expected to raise roughly \$1 billion a year to pay for schools. But because it also could raise prices for consumers, lawmakers reduced personal income tax rates.

McMullen explained this shift will reduce income tax money flowing into the

general fund, even though overall revenues won't be impacted. And that means fewer possible dollars flowing back in the form of kicker payments.

"Thank you for that facet of the law," McMullen told legislators.

State economists have missed the mark on state revenue projections in each of the last three bienniums, triggering a kicker. In the 2011-13 budget cycle, they hit the "sweet spot" where revenues came in above projections but not by enough to trigger a refund.

Lawmakers, who appeared in good spirits when hearing of the record revenues, alluded to that fact on Wednesday.

"My takeaway, in spite of the future and the possible headwinds, is that Oregon's economy is really strong," state Sen. Mark Hass, D-Beaverton, told economists. "You missed the sweet spot by about a billion and a half, but you had some obstacles out there."



A truck sits blocking I-84 eastbound near milepost 212 following a fatal single-vehicle accident Thursday afternoon.

Crash: Cause still unknown

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"I just went running," she said. "I just feel awful for his family."

Those closest to the scene said ambulances and police showed up within 5 minutes. A Life Flight helicopter landed shortly after.

Marcos Prado was traveling to Boise, Idaho, when he saw dust spray into the air and other vehicles began to pull off the road. As he tried to help, Prado noticed cars beginning to drive around the scene. He decided to stand in the road to help stop traffic.

"I just figured there shouldn't be a lot of people coming through this," he said.

Clare James was driving behind Prado when

the crash occurred, though she didn't report seeing anything. James is an ICU nurse at PeaceHealth Southwest Medical Center in Vancouver, Washington, and tried to help the injured driver. But she said she quickly realized there wasn't anything she could do.

Traffic was soon stopped in both lanes as the Oregon Department of Transportation arrived and asked Pendleton Police Department to close Exit 209. Exit 210 was jammed from traffic before ODOT could have it officially closed.

Within an hour, a tow truck arrived to remove the damaged vehicle from the interstate while ODOT directed traffic into the right lanes.

Movement: Sights set on Gov. Kate Brown

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two booths offering recall petitions. They named business taxes, environmental policies, and legislation allowing undocumented immigrants to obtain driver's licenses.

The state GOP's petition outlines its issues on the back, saying Brown overturned the will of the voters by allowing undocumented immigrants to get drivers licenses and approving new taxes. She attempted to violate peoples' medical freedom and impose environmental regulations, it says. She failed to fix an underfunded pension system or a troubled foster care system, and supported use of the emergency clause on bills to keep policy from being referred to the voters, it says.

Brown, they say, is the person responsible for turning Oregon into a tax-happy, gun-hating, business-killing liberal haven.

At the state GOP's booth, the traffic to sign the petitions ebbed and flowed. Salesmen hawking beef jerky and massage chairs competed for the attention of fairgoers streaming through the pop-up mall.

To the south of the GOP booth, a woman demonstrated dirt-repelling welcome mats. To the north a team of men pitched people on the benefits of Dish satellite TV. The massage chair salesmen aggressively defended their territory.

But when people saw the large cardboard cut-out of Trump or the "recall Kate Brown" banner, many seemed giddy.

"They can't sign it fast enough," said Sam Sapp, who was working the booth on a recent morning.

They rushed over, eagerly asking where they could sign, often following up with "I hate her" or "She's terrible."

Disliking politicians is an American tradition, but the recall process is generally reserved as a response to corruption or scandal, not a rejection of policy. In fact, no recall of a state official has ever made it to the Oregon ballot.

The Oregon Republican party claims it is on pace to get more than 300,000 signatures by the Oct. 14 deadline.

According to volunteers, the party has reported averaging a signature per minute, though the party has not released how many signatures it's actually gotten.

To many seasoned political observers, the prospect of recalling Brown is as likely as Santa Claus and eight tiny reindeer flying around the world every Christmas Eve.

Thomas Wheatley, Brown's campaign adviser, believes Republicans are juicing the stats.



Santa, who declined to give his full name, signs a petition at the Oregon State Fair to recall Gov. Kate Brown.

Photo contributed by Mark Buzzard

"I'm extraordinarily dubious about this claim, though they do operate in the world of alternative facts," he said.

The majority of those interviewed at the fair about signing the petitions struggled to specify why they wanted to recall Brown, and seemed to be doing so based on a gut feeling.

Most commonly, people brought up cap and trade — a failed effort by the Legislature that Brown backed to curb greenhouse gas emissions.

"My understanding is that a lot of people just don't think Salem cares about them right now," said Linn County GOP Chair Adam Keaton, pointing to that county's agriculture, timber and trucking industries.

There was also a hefty degree of conspiracy mongering. Some affiliated with the effort say they fear retaliation. They shared rumors that people signing the petitions or volunteering with the campaigns have been targeted for arson, beat up or had their cars vandalized.

Opponents sometimes cite Brown's unconventional path to the governorship: as secretary of state, Brown moved into the job as directed by the state constitution with John Kitzhaber's resignation in February 2015.

The next year, 985,000 people voted for Brown, giving her 139,418 more votes than Bud Pierce, the Republican nominee.

Last year, about 934,000 people voted for Brown. She beat GOP opponent Knute Buehler by 119,510 votes, according to the state Elections Division.

While the petition signers often said Brown isn't following the will of the voters, she won re-election campaigning heavily for the policies they oppose, such as greenhouse gas capping and an education funding package.

"We are proud of the accomplishments from this year's legislative session," Wheatley said. "Historic investments in our schools, stable health care funding, bold steps to make housing more affordable, tackling dirty diesel, campaign

finance reform, and much more."

Though some doubted Brown really did campaign on such policies.

"You know, I don't believe that," said Lincoln City resident Dee Right. "I don't believe it was in full detail. I think she lied."

Right stopped by the fair booth, but had already signed the petition.

"She's only benefiting the metropolitan areas and not the rural cities that make up Oregon," Right said.

Right was especially bothered by the cap and trade proposal, which she said would kill the logging and trucking industries.

Right said she's been a registered Democrat her whole life, yet when she saw a recall booth in Lincoln City, she pulled an illegal U-turn to sign it. She's never been political, she said, but spoke with passion when disparaging Brown.

"She's making a mess, and she doesn't listen to the people," Right said.

Two months ago, Right switched her affiliation.

"Sometimes you gotta do what you gotta do," she said, adding she took several sheets to get friends and family to sign as well.

At the state fair, it took three Marion County GOP volunteers at a time to work the booth. They each had sets of two recall petitions and one to refer a highway tolling proposal for the Portland area to voters. They're working the booths from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. every day of the fair. It's a total of 132 four-hour shifts.

One woman, who declined to be named, asked for a voter registration card so she could change from a Democrat to a Republican. She happily obliged when asked to sign the toll petition in addition to the recall ones.

"What is wrong with her?" she said of Brown.

"Cause Kate Brown's crazy," said Jill, a Salem woman, when asked why she signed. "She's destroying the state."

Jill was one of many who declined to give their full names, citing fear of retribution from liberals.

Some also talked about

Brown as a boogeyman. One woman organizing volunteers at the "Flush Down Kate Brown" fair booth declined to give her name because she was scared, though she couldn't say what of. Brown might take her business away or jail her for her activism, she said.

"People say Kate Brown has her party — they will retaliate against you," the Stayton woman said. "It's just what people are saying."

The woman said she's getting her information from Brown's critics, and hasn't talked much to the other side. She said it's possible some might be using rhetoric to stoke the sort of fear she feels. She was one of the few who said they believe there will be a recall vote.

"The passion of the people — I think this will be successful," she said.

Michael Anna, visiting the state fair from Beaverton, said he didn't like Brown's politics and didn't think she was good for the state.

He particularly dislikes cap and trade.

"It's a big scam, and it's not necessary," said Anna. "And I read somewhere the only reason they want to do it is to say, 'We're the first state to do this.' There is no man-made global warming."

In fact, Oregon's cap and trade proposal was modeled after one that passed in California years ago.

Sometimes, critics focused on what Brown hadn't done.

"She hasn't done anything that she promised," said Kaleb Jones, of Monmouth, who at 19 was one of the younger signers of the petition that the Oregon Capital Bureau spoke to.

"When she got elected the first time, she got elected because she promised to help the homelessness problem, and then obviously that didn't change at all. She didn't do anything, and she got reelected — I don't know how — so I guarantee you that she's just going to do nothing again."

Keaton, the Linn County GOP chair, said Brown has a cavalier attitude, but admitted she as governor is only so responsible for policies the state's 90 legislators pass.

But, he said, "Brown does get the final say on a lot of this stuff."

"On the whole, I think it's a lot easier to focus on Kate Brown ... making a single focus point of the recall effort is a lot easier than focusing out into different 15 different representative, Senate races," Keaton said. "So I think that helps simplify the effort while at the same time focusing on someone who has been rather egregious in the operation."