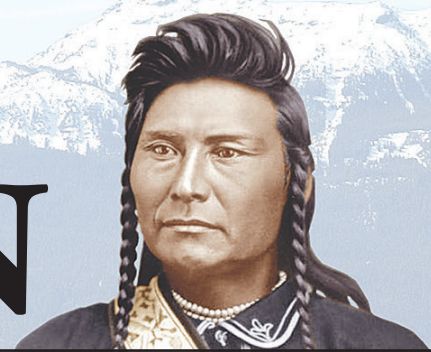




WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN



137th Year, No. 55

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WALLOWA SCHOOL DISTRICT REACCREDITATION

Wallowa County Voices



Valerie Elliott
Enterprise

Long-timer says fuel price restricts travel

ENTERPRISE — Valerie Elliott is a long-time Wallowa County resident who has lived in Enterprise since 2012 after moving from Wallowa.

"But our family is fifth-generation" in the county, she said.

Her husband, Nathan, works at Wallowa Memorial Hospital and she is a stay-at-home mom who works for the county Emergency Medical Services part time and manages storage units in Enterprise.

She recently shared her thoughts about living in Wallowa County.

What's your favorite thing about Wallowa County?

I love the people. I know a lot of people. I love our mountains and nature and I like being able to just drive away for a few minutes and be able to get out and enjoy nature.

What are you looking forward to once the weather warms?

Get out in the mountains. Also, I homeschool the kids so when the weather's nicer, we'll get out to the parks more.

What do you think of Russia's invasion of Ukraine?

It's heartbreaking. I don't like to see people going through that and their loss of innocence over that.

What do you attribute the increasing cost of fuel to?

I believe a lot of it is who we elected president and not being able to use our local pipelines. I think we could be more independent of other countries if we just used our local resources.

How is the high price of fuel affecting you directly?

I don't go out of town as much. I used to go to La Grande about once a month and I'm starting to re-look at my books and consider not doing that as much. I don't travel around the county as much.

What's your advice for people who are thinking about moving here?

Get involved in the community right away, whether that's through a job or a church. Just be involved. That's what I would recommend.

— Bill Bradshaw,
Wallowa County Chieftain



Wallowa High School history teacher Cody Lathrop talks to his class Monday, April 25, 2022. The Wallowa School District's score was 362 on a scale of 100-400 in a recent accreditation by Cognia. Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Wallowa scores high

District scores more than 75 points above five-year average

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA — The Wallowa School District is earning close to straight As.

The district's reaccreditation review was done in March, and the evaluation from Cognia rated the district at the top level — "impacting" — in 25 of the 30 categories the group reviewed. The other five categories were scored at "improving," the second-highest level possible.

Overall, Wallowa's "Index of Education Quality" was 362 on a scale of 100-400. In its report to the school, Cognia said the five-year average of schools in the Cognia Improvement Network ranges from 278.34-283.33, putting

Wallowa between 75-80 points above average.

Cognia, an organization that accredits schools across the nation, looked overall at three main sections, and within that, 30 subsections in its evaluation of the district. In the first section, Leadership Capacity Standards, Wallowa was rated as "impacting" in nine of 10 scored subsections. In Learning Capacity Standards, the school was "impacting" in 10 of 12 subsections. And in Resource Capacity Standards, the school was "impacting" in six of eight subsections. The school, in fact, had more subsections (eight) with a perfect score — 4 on a scale of 1-4 — than it did subsections with an "improving" rating.

"Wallowa High School is committed to providing a quality educational experience for its students," the report from Cognia stated. "Evi-

dent through the review was the commitment of school leaders, teachers, students and parents to participate in a learning community where all students engage in a rigorous, supportive and well-rounded education that prepares them for their futures."

The evaluator praised school leaders and staff for their "commitment to continuous improvement processes relative to effective instructional practices and student learning goals" and said the school "promote(s) a culture to ensure students develop positive relationships with adults who support their educational experiences."

Conversely, the school needs to form a process to collect and analyze feedback for decision-making and needs to monitor the policies

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Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Megan Hunter, the new principal at the Enterprise Junior/Senior High School, walks out from the entrance to the school Friday, April 22, 2022. Hunter begins her new job July 1.

New EHS principal has varied experience

Megan Hunter takes over for Carlsen July 1

By BILL BRADSHAW
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Enterprise Junior/Senior High School is getting a new principal with widely varied experience as Megan Hunter prepares to take up the reins July 1.

Hunter, who will replace long-time Principal Blake Carlsen, is coming here most recently from Burns, where she's worked for the Harney County School District.

Northwest native

Having grown up in Western Washington, her contacts with Northeast Oregon came early.

She attended a basketball camp at Eastern Oregon University in La Grande, which introduced her parents to the area. When she went off to college, they moved to Union County between Elgin and Minam.

"My mom and dad came back and fell in love with the area," she said during an interview Friday, April 22. "They settled on 300-and-something acres and they run cows."

Her parents living so close was one thing that attracted Hunter to the area.

"My family is about 45 minutes away from here," she said. "They live about halfway between Elgin and Minam, up in the woods."

Hunter said her work as an educator started while she lived in

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Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Wallowa Junior/Senior High School's new Principal Sara Hayes sits in her office Monday, April 25, 2022.

Hoping to tell the stories of the Wallowa students

Wallowa School Board selects Sara Hayes as principal

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA — Sara Hayes was interviewed by Wallowa students during the process of being ultimately named Wallowa junior high and high school principal.

That experience, she said, helped shape her view of the role she will be officially stepping into July 1.

"In that, I really took away or walked away feeling like we need to tell their stories, to show their greatness," Hayes said. "I think Wallowa doesn't get as much limelight or attention as the other two (county high schools, Joseph and Enterprise).

What I walked away with is how great these kids are, but (they need) help (and) support to show their greatness."

The Wallowa School Board named Hayes as their selection as the next principal April 14. She has been operating in tandem with Rollie Marshall as the interim principal, spending a day a week in the role.

It's a homecoming of sorts for Hayes, who began in education with Wallowa Head Start, and said she had "been in the early-childhood field I think eight (to) 10 years." She said in that time she saw importance in the intersection of family, community and education.

Hayes went on to earn her master's degree in elementary education, according to a press release from the school

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