

K-8 school progress noted at district, community meetings

The design plans for the Warm Springs k-8 school are being finalized, as the tribes prepare a loan request to USDA. The tribes are requesting a \$10.73 million USDA facilities loan to cover the tribal portion of the k-8 construction cost.

The school district is issuing bonds for its portion, repaid through property tax. When the funding is in place, the project will be put out to bid. A general contractor will then come on board, and construction will start during the first part of this year.

At the school district meeting last week, the board voted to advertise the position of planning principal for the Warm Springs k-8 school. "We want to make sure we're ready to roll when the doors open in 2014," said district superintendent Rick Molitor.

The board also voted to extend for one year the employment contract of Warm Springs Elementary School Principal Dawn Smith. The board action was to "retire/rehire" principal Smith.

At the school district meeting, Warm Springs elementary school teachers and parents spoke on behalf of principal Smith.

Renee Rodin, Warm Springs kindergarten teacher, said, "When making decisions regarding Warm Springs Elementary, I ask that you contact the school and community members to hear their points of view. We are a unique school with unique needs."

School district board chairwoman Laurie Danzuka

commented, "The decision on the principal is a very important one, and is causing some controversy." The planning principal hiring decision, she said, is not about principal Smith, and "we are not trying to take away any successes she has had" at the elementary school.

Molitor also announced that the school district is bringing in Richard DeLorenzo, an expert in education organization restructuring, to look at the way 509-J is operating, and to offer any suggestions for improvement.

DeLorenzo will assess and review the district transition plan for the new Warm Springs school.

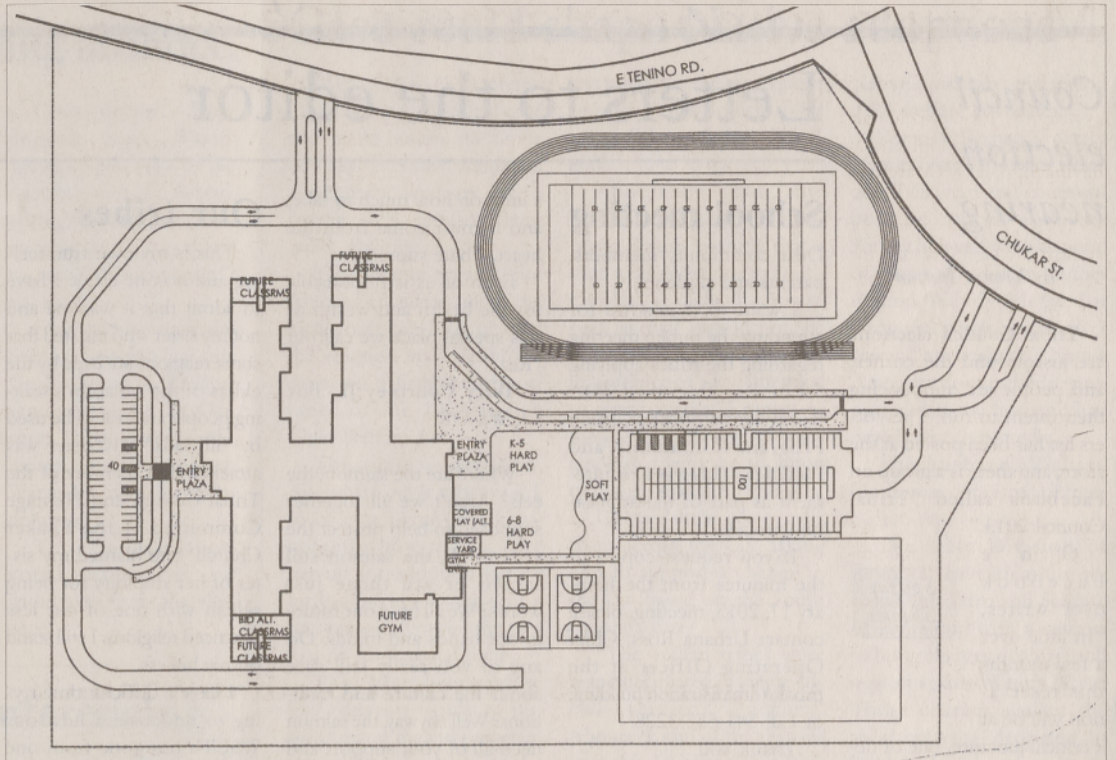
DeLorenzo has had success at improving the Chugach School District in Alaska, and his reform approach was adopted in many other schools in Alaska. He is the co-author of "Delivering on the Promise: The Education Revolution."

His work for the school district is being funded through a grant. DeLorenzo should have some good insights especially regarding the Warm Springs k-8 project, said Molitor. In other news from the school board meeting:

School safety

Molitor briefed the district board on school safety policies. District officials reviewed school safety plans in December, and made some changes to strengthen school security.

The review was prompted by the school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut. "At



Above and at right are the latest schematic architectural renderings of the Warm Springs k-8 school.

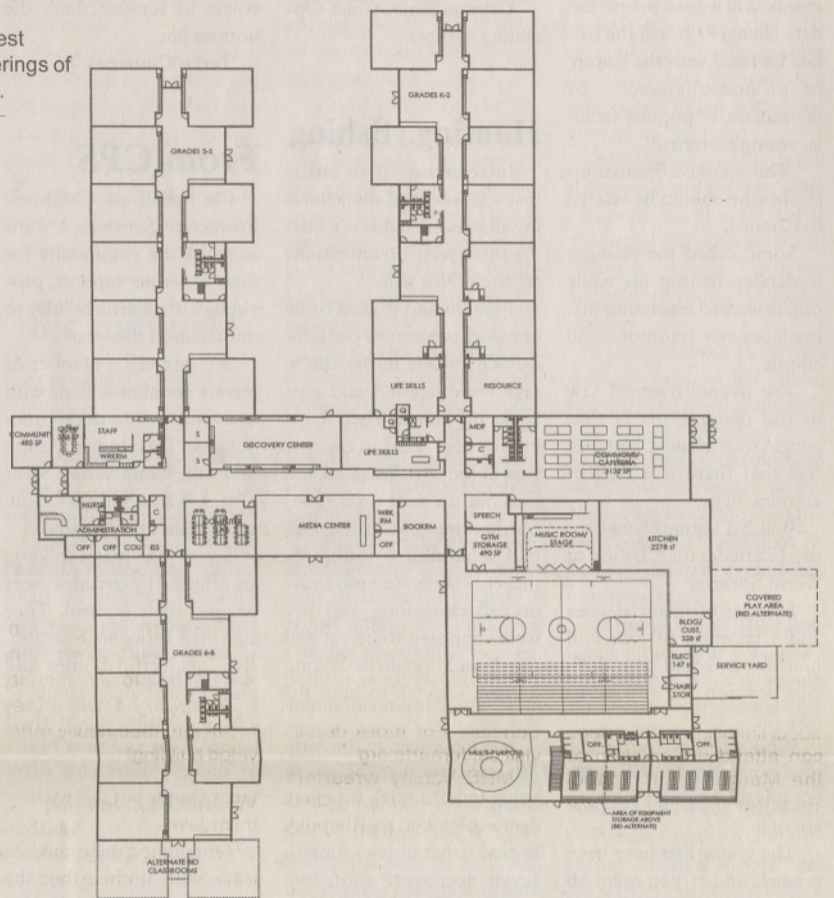
no point did we feel our schools were in jeopardy," Molitor said. "We feel students are safest when they are in our schools."

Molitor also addressed the idea of having teachers carry weapons in school. This would be possible, Molitor said. One consequence of this would be an increase in district insurance rates, he said.

The school district employs a Madras police officer, Dan Farrester, whose main office is at the high school. He visits the other schools regularly.

Warm Springs Elementary works with the Warm Springs Police, as non-tribal officers would not have jurisdiction on the reservation.

— Dave McMechan



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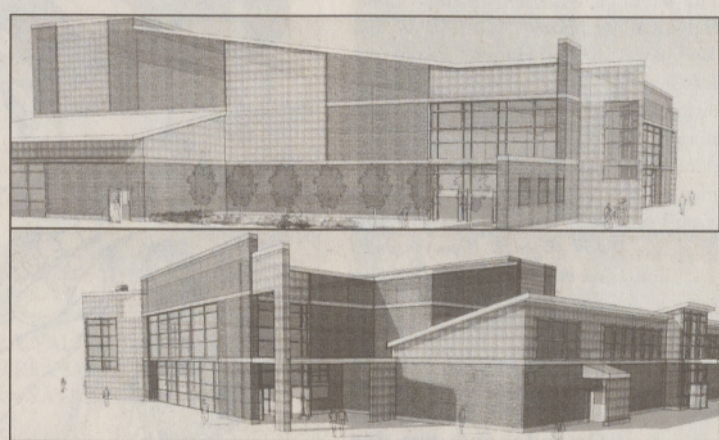
Madras High School's Jordan Gemelas has earned the proud honor of High Desert Hero. His active leadership throughout the community and ambitious academic achievements have also made him a National Merit Semi-finalist. Particularly impressive was the National Honor Society induction ceremony he organized as Chapter President.

Gemelas is a top notch student and inspirational young man.

Teachers Help Students Get Ready for Careers

As the final rotation for the semester comes to an end, Success 111 teachers send their students off with a head-start in preparation for the future. Leo Tsou, Juanita Payton, Sue Young, Colleen Fletcher, Nichole Scholz, and Pat Mulcahy have created a curriculum that highlights career readiness and introduces freshmen to Career and Technical Education areas.

Performing Arts, Athletic Facility Design Complete



A design guidance team including teachers, administrators and community members has reached an important milestone in completing the initial design phase for the performing arts center and athletic facility at Madras High School. Designs for the Warm Springs K-8 building will be completed this month. Stay tuned for an update!

“ This has been one of the best experiences in my career. We've been working with a really collaborative, productive group. ”

— Dave Fishel, project manager

Students Reach Out to Newtown Community After Sandy Hook Shooting

Many students at Madras High School are looking for ways to lend their thoughts and sympathy to the families who suffered losses at Sandy Hook Elementary. In an effort to reach out, Tatiana Reynoso and Gianna Pineda have created a series of posters signed by local students for the Newtown community.

Improved security measures increase safety

The JCSD team has been reviewing and updating security plans for each of our school buildings. One new safety improvement features a card lock system to replace keys. The system will be installed in all of the buildings over the summer. This will allow only certain people access to the buildings; parents and visitors will only have access through main entrances, and will be required to check in at the office of each school prior to entering.

Calendar

January is School Board Appreciation Month!

1/21 Martin Luther King Day
NO SCHOOL

Need assistance with filling out the FAFSA?
Please come to the Madras High School Parent Center 4:30-5:30 p.m. on Wednesday January 23 to receive assistance from a financial aid expert. Coffee and snacks will be provided. See you there!