

**Budget** from 1A

"I want to make sure I state this clearly — this budget is not enough and I'm committed to fighting for more," added Roblan, who voted to approve the K-12 education budget.

Angal said, "I can't argue with anything Sen. Roblan said. Where kids need health care, where families need counseling, it's all true. At the same time, those very issues are what cause us to need more support staff for students, more specialized instruction, smaller class sizes, so that whether or not they get all the support at home they need, when they come to school they have it.

"I have no doubt that Sen. Roblan cares about schools. He has a history as an educator. I hope he can make it happen because we are not going to have the kind of quality education that Oregonians expect from their schools, and used to have from their schools, when we are down at the bottom of the states in length of the school year and in funding for education. It's not going to happen."

During the Siuslaw School Board meeting April 8, Angal presented her 2015-2016 budget message.

She said, "I am saddened and deeply disappointed in our state legislature's actions of the past two months. Despite a growing state economy, schools have fared poorly in terms of a share of that growth."

Angal went on to report that the ending fund balance surplus that has helped the district maintain programs and bridge state funding shortfalls will be exhausted at the end of the 2015-2016 school year.

"This fund has been decreasing each year," she said. "It is estimated that the 2015-2016 school year will be the last year that this resource can be utilized while maintaining the fund balance established by the school board."

On the positive side, Angal said the district continues to receive community support from a local option levy that allows the district to maintain several programs. The district also continues to offer honors and advanced placement classes in core subjects.

"We have added Lego robotics, film and video production and technology opportunities in both the middle and high school," Angal said. "Our after-school programs, funded through the 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant, serve about 200 students Monday through Thursday providing tutoring, enrichment, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) activities and homework help. At the elementary level, we are excited to add a kindergarten annex to house full-day kindergarten."

Angal also reported that the district will begin its self-operated food service program this fall.

"We anticipate that it will not only provide better quality and healthier meals that will fit nicely into our wellness program for the district, but will afford us local control of our food services," Angal said.

The school board budget committee met for the first time Wednesday. Angal said they have not had time to evaluate the budget and make recommendations to the board.

"We presented them with a conservative budget that may result in an unfilled position or two, due to vacancies," she said. "We are trying very hard to hang onto the little steps we made to recoup some of our elective programs in middle and high school. We will see, as the process unfolds."

**CROW** from 1A

"It's both exciting and terrifying," Heard added.

CROW's assistant director Genevieve Meltzer said, "I am beyond excited."

The nonprofit community arts program will use the building for classes, rehearsals, camps, prop and set storage and making and storing costumes.

Cameron Utz, who plays Prince Dauntless, said, "It gives us a place to do our stuff and gives us more liberty. It makes it much easier for CROW. Trust me, it's very exciting."

CROW will officially break in the building when the crew strikes the set of "Once Upon a Mattress" after the last performance at 2 p.m. on Sunday and stores the castle there.

"The people that work on these productions have such good hearts. They're all volunteers and they all want the show to be the best it can be for the kids," Heard said.

Before opening night, CROW performed outreaches for clubs and community centers. On Thursday, they invited 1,000 students from area school districts to attend two



PHOTO BY CHANTELE MEYER/SIUSLAW NEWS

**CROW's new building at 3120 Highway 101 in Florence has the space the performing arts group needs to hold classes and rehearsals, have a small stage and store and build sets, props and costumes.**

performances.

These shows are some of Heard's favorite part of CROW.

"When the kids watch, they just absorb so much of the show," she said. "The energy an audience brings is really powerful. It's a relationship between the actors on the stage and the audience members. There's nothing like the power of live theater."

Tristin Reber, who plays Queen Aggravain, said, "CROW is like a family. It really is. If one of us messes up, someone else steps in to support them. There's nothing else like it."

This year's cast ranges from the youngest at 3 years old up to 19 years.

CROW fills a niche in the community for children and

youth who want to be involved in the arts — not just acting, but set design, stage management,

vocal training, life skills and dance.

"We want this program to be available to the kids because we feel like they really need it," Heard said.

"But we need help still," she added. "CROW will be reaching out to the community again to ask for folks who believe in the importance of the arts to step up and support this project. ... These kids are really wonderful human beings and very special people. We want to do this for them."

Catch CROW in "Once Upon a Mattress" today at 2 and 7 p.m. and tomorrow at 7 p.m. at the Florence Events Center, 715 Quince St.

Tickets are \$16 for adults and children under 12 are \$8. Purchase tickets at the FEC box office window before each show, or call 541-997-1994 or go online to [www.eventcenter.org](http://www.eventcenter.org).

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