

**School Board Spotlight** *From Page 1*

**Mizu Burruss:**

Although poverty, unemployment and the lack of affordable, quality housing aren't things that the school has control over, the school is responsible for educating students who are confronting these difficulties. In the face of these challenges, Mapleton School District's focus on each individual student has been really successful — we have the highest graduation rate in Lane County over the last five years — a real testament to the dedication of our staff.

**What are some of the successes you've seen since becoming involved with the board?**

Obviously, the biggest recent success is the passing of the school bond and the renovation this allows. The construction process is moving along smoothly; the elementary school is finished and beautiful. (There will be a February open house.) Construction has moved to the high school and should be finished by the opening of the 2018-19 school year. Also, the Beyond Me program, a community service program for all students, has greatly increased community involvement.

**What changes would you make to the education process, at any point, to improve the education received by students?**

More opportunities. As a small, remote district we don't have access to the number and variety of options for different activities and electives that a large, urban school would have. In the past couple of years, we've added an elementary Talented and Gifted program and extracurricular activities for elementary kids. We are working on bringing a pre-school program for the 2018-19 school year. We'd always like to add more, so that all kids can have a meaningful school experience.

**How can the public best support the board's effort to adequately educate the area's young people?**

Volunteer. There are a number of different opportunities to get involved: Rolling Readers, coaching, mentoring junior-senior

projects, etc. Call the Elementary Office at 541-268-4471 or the High School Office at 541-268-4332. Even if you have no experience working with kids, every little bit helps.

**Marilyn Fox:**

The Beyond Me program is amazing as it challenges our students to become involved in community service projects.

The School Board and administrative team work well together and put the needs of our district and our children first.

**What changes would you make to the education process, at any point, to improve the education received by students?**

As a state, we need to provide more opportunities for our students to take classes that will prepare them for college, if that's what they choose. We also need to continue to provide training for trade schools and careers for those who have different plans after graduation. Something that will give them a leg up.

**How can the public best support your board's effort to adequately educate the area's young people?**

I'd like to thank the community for believing in our kids. They are very supportive of our school district, as demonstrated by passing the bond.

It's refreshing to be on a board that is there to support our kids. We truly believe in and stand by our mission statement: "To provide a supportive and safe learning environment where students are encouraged and empowered to reach their educational and personal potential. We base all of our decisions on what's best for kids."

**Michelle Holman:**

Regardless, the board and administration keep Mapleton Schools solvent.

**What are some of the successes you've seen since becoming involved with the board?**

Due to small class sizes and compassionate, skilled staff, Mapleton students enjoy support and guidance that they are unlikely to receive in larger schools with higher stu-

dent teacher ratios. It can't be understated how this positively affects a student's school experience.

Bringing back art and foreign language classes has been very uplifting. The passing of the school bond to make much needed improvements to our facilities has ignited a fire in our school community. The overwhelming support the voters encourages and inspires us all.

**What changes would you make to the education process, at any point, to improve the education received by students?**

I would love to see standardized testing go the way of the dinosaurs. Let teachers teach subject matter for its' own sake, not for government-imposed test results.

**How can the public best support your board's effort to adequately educate the area's young people?**

Get involved. Visit your child's classroom and maintain a relationship with your children's teacher/s. It's no secret that this is so helpful in achieving the educational successes of your child.

Volunteer at our schools, if you can squeeze in the time, whether or not you have kids attending Mapleton.

Contact your school board members with concerns, questions or suggestions. Our schools are the heart of Mapleton. Take your rightful place in our collective future.

**John Simington:**

With the funds supplied by a community supported bond, Mapleton Schools are being moved into the new age with a clean façade, new facilities, infrastructure and, most importantly, the updated teaching spaces with all the new technologies.

**What changes would you make to the education process, at any point, to improve the education received by students?**

It has become common for teachers to find themselves wearing multiple hats. Although every standard is met, additional funding for additional staffing would allow teachers to become more specialized with their topics and groups.

**How can the public best support your board's effort to adequately educate the area's young people?**

It takes a village. Whether you have kids in school or not, the little things will add up. Spend that extra minute, visit a sporting event or volunteer your time.

**Carl West:**

**What do you feel are the biggest challenges facing your district?**

- Maintaining a consistent student population has been a real challenge at Mapleton. The lack of adequate affordable housing and jobs within the community is a real problem. Many families have to work out of district.

- The budget is always a concern and I do not feel Oregon is putting a high enough priority on assuring adequate funding levels are maintained.

- PERS continues to impact the education system within the state as rates continue to increase.

- Standardized Testing has become a significant time impact to the district and has led to many students having grief over mandatory participation. It really does take away from the instruction time in the classroom.

- Lack of a pre-school to prepare the upcoming kids for kindergarten. We are working on it.

- Good parental support at home to assist in the success of their kid's educational development.

**What are some of the successes you've seen since becoming involved with the board?**

- Mapleton has always had a great graduation rate and puts a priority on assuring our kids come out of high school prepared for the next chapter in their education.

- Our staff has always taught at a high level of instruction at all levels of the district.

- We were very successful in passing our school renovation bond measure. Work is progressing well within the district. We ap-

preciate the level of involvement and support from the community in making this possible.

- Mapleton has received many grants over the years due to the hard work and extra effort from staff putting together professional high quality applications.

- Sports teams have participated at a high level with many sportsmanship awards and league championships over the years.

- Construction of the first 300 meter all-weather track in the state.

**What changes would you make to the education process, at any point, to improve the education received by students?**

- I would restructure the Standardized Testing process to better evaluate students on individual improvement and growth versus in front of a computer. All students do not advance at the same rate of learning.

- I think we need to assure all students are participative and not being left behind. We cannot be afraid to have a student take a grade over if they cannot demonstrate they are ready for the next level.

- Stay progressive with technical advances to assure students have access to the best tools available.

- Focus on higher education for students from the first day of school to graduating. Attending college needs to be an expectation for the majority of our students.

**How can the public best support your board's effort to adequately educate the area's young people?**

- The public needs to be involved in district activities and provide input where they see improvement needed. The district takes input well and welcomes all patrons to know what is going on within their district.

- Volunteer as available for programs when the call comes. We all have a unique quality that will benefit our students. Sometimes just giving your time is most valuable.

- Showing support to our kids is the most important thing we can do as parents.

I want to personally thank the patrons for the Mapleton School District for their continued support and trust.



**SES AT WINTER MUSIC FEST**

Several of Mrs. Kassy Keppol's Talented and Gifted (TAG) students attended and manned a booth at this year's Winter Music Festival. The booth showcased student weaving demonstrations, anthology book signings and sales by student writers, and an auction of "reading buddy dragons," which the students made out of paper mâché. Some highlights included a visit by Mayor Joe Henry (right) and pictures with music celebrities.



**2nd-Graders visit Siuslaw Valley Fire & Rescue**

The second-grade classes from Siuslaw Elementary School visited the Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue Station on Jan. 9 and 10.

Students learned a variety of safety measures to remember when there is a threat of fire. They were instructed on how it is important to know their phone number and address in case



found out that fire department personnel go out to homes to inspect and install smoke detectors for free.

Some firefighters demonstrated what they do and how they get ready to fight fires. Students were fascinated when an actual emergency call came in while they were there.

As they left, students were given cool pencils and rulers to take back to school.

At the end of January, the fire department visited the classes at school for a follow up.

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