EATERIES from page 1A

families sheltered. It has also been a challenging period for business owners who point to a lack of coherency in the statewide mandates, which make running a successful business very difficult during the current pan-

Scott Waiss, owner of the Beachcomber Pub, has managed to remain operational for much of the pandemic, shifting between indoor dining, takeout-only and now expanded outdoor seating — with no indoor seating.

"It's been very hard; we have had to continue to make adjustments at every level of our business," Waiss said. "Every time we have to close our interior seating, it creates issues with our food and beverage suppliers. They are having a difficult time getting product from their suppliers and they are constantly having to change what they have available. So, this has limited what we can substitute, which leads to us having to keep our menus

Last week, he decided to avail himself of the barrier seating sections provided by the City of Florence for restaurants to use to expand outdoor seating capacity.

restaurants Nosh Eatery, Kitchen, Lovejoy's Tearoom, 1285 Restobar, Bridgewater Fish House & Zebra Bar, Homegrown Public House and

Waterfront Depot in using City-installed high-visibility barricades along the street that allow for additional outdoor seating space. Additionally, Off Bay Street Bistro is using one of the barricades to designate a parking space for vehicles to pick up takeout.

Waiss also decided to purchase new tables and chairs for the seating

weather was not cooperating at all," he said. "With this better weather, we decided to give it a try. This last weekend business was great and, surprisingly, the month of April was Beachcomber joins Old Town phenomenal business-wise."

"Hopefully, the good weather will continue, and we will be

able to keep serving people outside and eventually we will reopen our inside seating. We will do whatever it takes to keep our business open for our customers and our employees."

— Scott Waiss, owner of the Beachcomber Pub

Like other area restaurants over ees." the course of the pandemic, Beachcomber has tried to keep staffing levels steady, but has had to cut some positions and reduce the hours for most employees.

Across town, Fresh Harvest Café also made changes. Proprietor Gilmar Ortiz and his staff paved an entire patio in time for the "extreme "The last time the city offered us risk" designation. The restaurant the barriers, I was hesitant to add now has 1,500 square feet of outdoor the street seating, mostly because the seating — "which will be bigger than

decision on the further future

of standardized testing until

more information becomes

As for this year, the board moved to update the wording

"But I do want to make sure

of the resolution to an opt-in

that we are conscientious about

contacting all the families and

letting them know that they

have the option to opt in," Bur-

O'Mara said the district

could send out letters to the

families of students in the

grades required to take the

board were present throughout

the meeting, Director Andrea

Milbrett had a poor connection

to the virtual meeting and did

not vote on the resolution.

While all members of the

available.

When Brown made the announcement of the state's county risk levels, she called attention to the most recent surge in COVID-19 cases across

our inside dining," the restaurant

It shows how local businesses have

As Waiss said, "Hopefully, the good

able to keep serv-

ing people outside

and eventually we

will reopen our

inside seating. We

will do whatever

it takes to keep

our business open

for our customers

and our employ-

continued to adapt to the pandemic.

weather will continue, and we will be

posted to social media.

"As we are facing widespread cases, driven by new, more contagious variants, I was presented with data showing two paths Oregon could take: one in which we took no additional action and stood by while more people die from this disease. The other

required a temporary tightening of restrictions for certain counties but could save hundreds of lives and prevent as many as 450 hospitalizations over the next three weeks. As gover-

nor, I chose to save lives," said Brown. On Monday, the Oregon Health Authority showed a statewide COVID-19 case count of 186,877 since the start of the pandemic, with 351 currently hospitalized. In addition, 2,502 people have died from the

The state also has climbing vaccination rates, with 30 percent of the state's residents fully vaccinated and another 12.9 percent with vaccinations in progress. In Lane County, 34.3 percent of the population is fully vaccinated.

Data regarding Lane County testing, patient status, case ZIP codes and more is available at www.Lane-CountyOR.gov/localdata. Additional COVID-19 data, including how to get vaccinated in Lane County, can be found at lanecounty.org/coronavirus. Statewide information can be found at coronavirus.oregon.gov.

MAPLETON from page 1A

For many of the children, it is their first time attending school in person.

Students are in two separate

cohorts and attend school for four hours on two days a week. Half of the students require school transportation, so those students come on Mondays and Tuesdays. Students whose families can drop them off attend Wednesdays and Thurs-

"It seems to be going really well with the kiddos," O'Mara said. "It's so great to have all the kids back on campus."

Additionally, the district is working on improvements to the preschool wing of the school. This will include asbestos abatement, new flooring and updated plumbing. The projects are still in the planning phase.

The next big item on the board's agenda was standardized testing, which directors had previously discussed at past meetings. These are the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium tests (SBAC), which test students for Common Core standards in grades three to eight and 11 in math and language arts. School districts must reach 95 percent participation and can be penalized by their state if they do not reach this level.

The tests are held via computer and require both time to take the test and to learn how to take the test — for both students and staff members.

Director Michelle Holman led the discussion.

"At our last board meeting, we passed the resolution to encourage parents to opt out," she said. "Since then, we did kind of start something in our state. Mapleton was the first to react. Since that time, Ashland, Sandy, Eagle Point, Portland Public Schools and Salem Keizer ... instead of encouraging parents to opt out, they will require parents to opt in. They are not having standardized testing unless the parent wants standardized testing. ... I would like us to do the same."

At the March board meeting, the directors had hoped that the federal government would not require states to conduct the testing. However, the U.S.

Department of Education determined that states should hold the tests this spring.

Also in March, Mapleton School Board passed a resolution allowing families to opt out of the testing. O'Mara sent letters to the district's families earlier in April, telling them about the option to opt out of the tests. Several families have since filed to opt out.

quested that the board update the resolution to instead be During the discussion, Di-

Now, however, Holman re-

rector Mizu Burruss clarified that there are students for whom the testing is beneficial.

"I think it's important that if we do opt in, just like if we do opt out, we would need to make a real effort to make sure that every family has the opportunity to take advantage of either way we go about it," she said. "The more communication the better with individual

Through the board discussion, directors made it clear that the option for students to take the tests was always avail-

O'Mara also advised the board on the penalties the school district could face for not complying with Division 22 regarding standardized test-

'What that means for the district is in November, when I report to the board on Division 22 standards, my report will say we are noncompliant in this area, and this is the corrective action that we're turning into ODE to say, 'Here's how we will correct this deficiency for the 2021-22 school year," O'Mara

She added that ODE is still looking into standardized testing, and what it might mean for districts in noncompliance.

Board Chair Mary Ellen Mansfield said, "If we do go this route, I don't have a problem with being out of compliance this year, because it doesn't sound like there's a penalty for being out of compliance for this year. But my understanding is, if we don't have a corrective action that says we will test next year, then there is some potential loss of funding that could come."

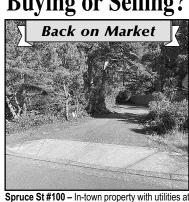
The board agreed to delay a

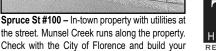
People can read the full text of the resolution, as well as the procedure to opt in to standardized testing, under the "Standardized Testing" tab at the top of www.mapleton.k12.

Moving forward, Holman said she would continue to meet with other interested parties to consider the future of standardized testing in Oregon, as would O'Mara as she attended an Oregon Small Schools Association confer-

"I would love to know where small schools are around standardized testing," Holman said. "For small schools, when we lose funding is a different thing than when big schools lose funding. We'd really like to hear the pulse of administrators on that topic."







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