

SCHOOL

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up positions this year, with three new kindergarten teachers brought on to teach a full day making up many of the new hires. Nice said Harrison is "overflowing" and has been forced to turn away students recently. Harrison also hopes to cultivate the idea of "parents as partners," Nice said. Dorena Principal Kim Scrima explained that the rural school has lost 50 percent of its teachers, and new hires will make for a new environment there. She said the school hopes to branch out into the nearby community more. Dorena is the only school that can offer free breakfast, lunch and a snack, Scrima said.

Lincoln Middle School likes to focus on achievement and relationships, Principal Jeremy Smith said. Relationships can be fostered by greater communication with parents, he said, including social media outreach. The school has also recently gone to a "hybrid block" schedule which doubles the minutes of math instruction time for each of its students.

At Kennedy High School,

Principal Mike Ingman said he's excited about a push toward increased engagement with the broader community and outreach in the form of guest speakers and other presentations. The school also plans to interact with and update parents more frequently on their kids' progress. Plans for more visits to college campuses are also in the works.

Principal Anne Fisk is in her second year at Latham, which boasts strong traditions such as a Grandparents Day, lapathon and apple press. The school works to create S.O.A.R.-ing Eagles that can Show respect, take Ownership of their actions, Act responsibly and Reach for their personal best, Fisk said. She said she's proud that Latham has a very active parent club.

In contrast to many other schools, London Principal Bill Bechen said his school is not expecting any new hires this fall. The school hopes to hear soon if it was awarded a grant for a half-time P.E. teacher. A school-wide reading project involving two books that all students read within a month is also in the

works.

Cottage Grove High School has experienced a lot of recent successes, said Principal Iton Udosenata, and the school is undergoing a lot of transitions. He said CGHS is working to ease the transition by picturing the school year as a road map that has its milestones but also its pit stops and flat tires. The high school is adding more advanced placement classes this year and is continuing efforts to combat its chronic absentee rate.

New Bohemia Elementary Principal Heather Bridgens talked about the school's complete lack of space, in addition to its nine new hires. Its computer lab has been disassembled and will go mobile to allow space for an all-day kindergarten classroom, and A Primary Connection, the program which assists parents with various needs, is moving to the nearby Lane Community College campus in Cottage Grove. Bohemia hopes to foster regular attendance and consistency in discipline, Bridgens said.



photo by Jon Stinnett

Dorena Principal Kim Scrima talks about the upcoming school year with South Lane School District Board President Tammy Hodgkinson.

BOND

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the equipment it needs to keep people safe."

South Lane Fire's bond committee is exploring the option of seeking a bond for five, six or 10 years, with a total of about \$2.5 million to purchase the equipment. The longer the potential

bond's duration, the lower the rate residents will pay to fund the bond. (For a five-year bond, for example, the rate would be about \$.30 per \$1000 of assessed property value; a 10-year bond would cost taxpayers \$.15 per \$1000).

The committee is exploring the idea of using the bond to

purchase the equipment all at once, Wooten said, reasoning that the cost of the equipment goes up each year. Wooten said the District could end up paying about 25 percent more by spacing out the purchase of each piece of apparatus.

That is, of course, if local voters approve the bond, and the

time is short to decide whether to pursue the bond in 2015 or wait until next year. A Sept. 3 deadline must be met for the bond to be written, for public comment on the bond to be taken and paperwork filed, and Wooten said he's not sure if that is enough time to inform voters on the need for the new equip-

ment.

Voters recently approved a local option levy to fund fire and life safety operations, a levy that will be up for a renewal in 2016. This would seem to complicate the potential pursuit of a bond to purchase equipment, and a May, 2016 bond measure may be hampered by low voter turnout.

"I believe the public should decide whether it's important enough to have a modernized fleet," Wooten said.

The bond committee is scheduled to meet again on Aug. 20 to continue discussing a potential bond.

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TRAIL

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"It's a question of what is most effective and efficient," Aleman said. "To have two entities doing the same thing, with the City's track record for maintenance, doesn't make a lot of sense. So we start to think about 'how can this operation become more efficient?'"

The current maintenance agreement spans five years, and it is facilitated by the BLM's ability to transfer federal funding to the City to cover the maintenance costs, which amount to about \$20,000 annually.

A new agreement must be developed if the partnership is to continue, and Meyers said via an entry in the Friday Update publication that the City does hope "to obtain a longer-term agreement with the BLM for the maintenance of the entire trail."

"City Staff discussed the possibility of having a five to 10-year cooperative management agreement tied to an assistance agreement that would allocate funding for the period encompassed by the management agreement," he wrote. "Having a long-term cooperative management agreement may enable the City to apply for certain grant funds to improve and repave the upper ten miles of the trail."

These repairs, Meyers said, are sorely needed, as the trail's surface has begun to crack and



Sentinel file photo

The Row River Trail is a 15.6-mile haven for local cyclists and visitors.

show evidence of disturbance by tree roots in many places. Portions of the sides of the trail's surface have also begun to slough off.

"This trail needs work," Meyers said. "We've already done most of the resurfacing on our portion because of the Dorena hydroelectric project."

The City can't afford to resurface the entire trail, and by all accounts, the BLM can't either. To complicate matters, the BLM can't apply directly for grant funding to finance the repairs.

"Resurfacing the trail is no little ticket item," Aleman said. "We'll need to be creative together to see how we can accomplish that goal. Perhaps it can be done in phases. It's a matter of looking for funding and working with our partners on a deliberate front."

Regardless of how the resurfacing is paid for, Meyers said making it happen is a must.

"The trail is really, really important for us," he said. "We're constantly seeing people use it, and it's a huge economic engine for us. It's part of the designated Scenic Bikeway. It needs to be nice, because if it isn't, the word will get out. If the trail is great for three miles, then goes to crap, it still reflects poorly on us."

Regardless of how the trail gets resurfaced, Aleman said the BLM is pleased with the work the City has done thus far.

"I'd like to laud the efforts of the City of Cottage Grove," she said. "They've been responsive and wonderful to work with. It's been a good partnership for all involved."

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