

Exclusion day from school set

Vaccinations must be current Feb. 18

Itemizer-Observer staff report
POLK COUNTY — Children whose records on file show missing immunizations will not be able to attend school or child care starting Feb. 18, the state's school exclusion day.

State law requires that all children in public and private schools, preschools, Head Start and certified child care facilities have up-to-date documentation on their immunizations or have an exemption, according to the Oregon Immunization Program.

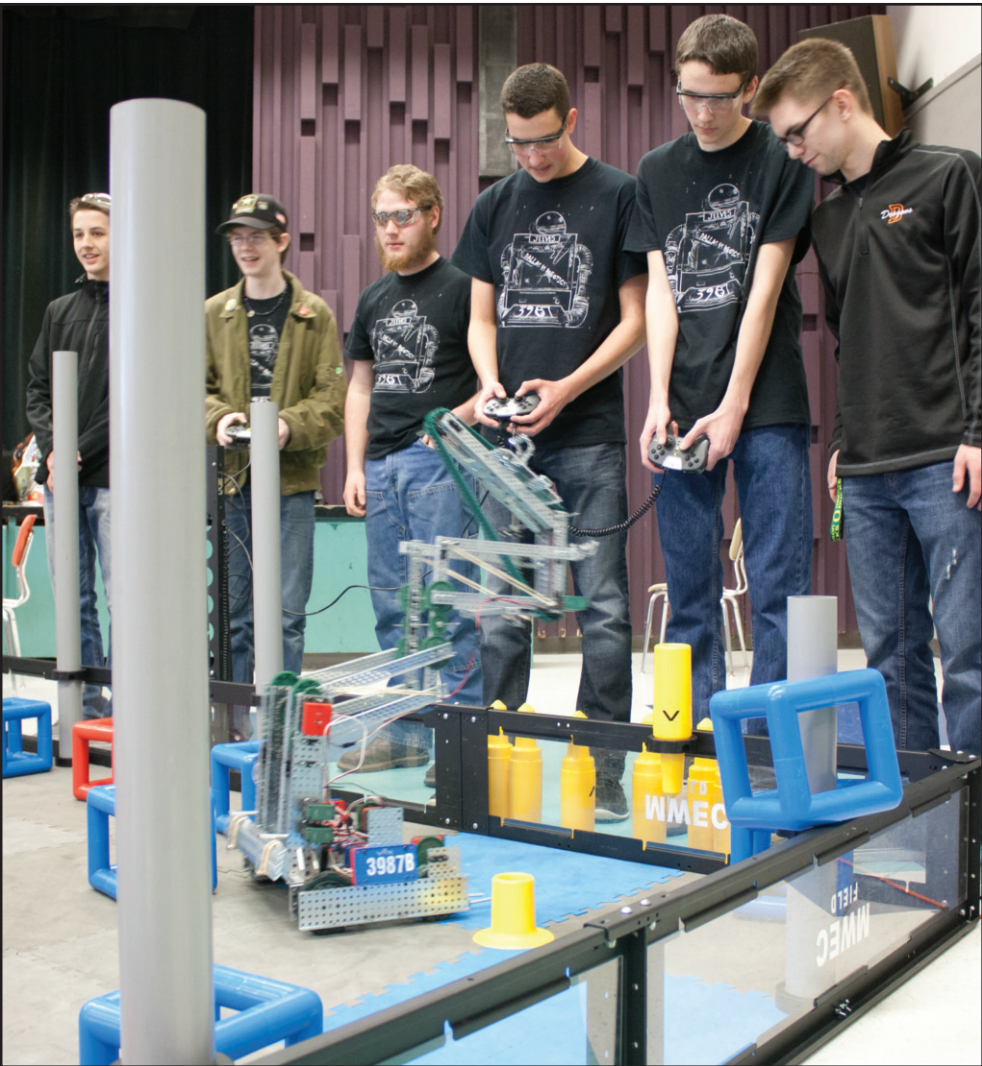
"Immunization is an effective way to keep schools and the entire community healthy," said Stacy de Assis Matthews, school law coordinator in the Oregon Health Authority Public Health Division. "We want to make sure children are fully protected against vaccine-preventable diseases such as whooping cough and measles."

Parents should also know about an updated vaccine requirement: The hepatitis A vaccine, which protects against a communicable viral infection, is a two-dose series required for children 18 months and older in child care, preschool and kindergarten through sixth grade.

If school and child care vaccination records are not up to date, the child will be sent home. In 2014, local health departments sent 32,345 letters to parents and guardians statewide informing them that their children needed immunizations to stay in school or child care. A total of 5,227 children were kept out of school or child care until the necessary immunization information was turned in to the schools or child care facilities. Letters to parents this year were scheduled to be mailed by Feb. 4.

Parents seeking immunizations for their children should contact their health care provider or local health department, or call 211Info — just dial 211. No one can be turned away from a local health department because of the inability to pay for required vaccines. Pharmacists can immunize children 11 and older.

For more information: www.healthoregon.org/imm.



JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer
Jacob Reimer, second from right, and Jake Shryer, third from right, maneuver their team's robot during a scrimmage Saturday. The team won despite technical difficulties.

Robotics: Dallas High teams qualify for state competition

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Along the way, he's found out engineering really is a field he will enjoy — and another valuable lesson he will likely fall back on in his career: test and retest your designs.

"Your first designs aren't going to work," he said. "You have to see what

works, what doesn't, and make it better."

And they did. At the end of the day, Team ramRod, partnering with another Dallas robotics squad, Jones' #1 Fans, took home tournament championship honors — and set a school record for points scored in one match at 71.

The award earned the two teams a trip to the Oregon VEX Robotics Competition state championship in March and high school U.S. Open Robotics Championship in April.

A third Dallas team, Your Mom Goes to College, won the tournament sportsmanship award.

District audit receives praise

Itemizer-Observer staff report

DALLAS — The Dallas School District accepted its 2013-14 fiscal year audit report, which contained no major issues.

Auditor Pauly Rogers and Co. gave the district a "clean opinion" on the audit, found the district met the state's minimum accounting standards, and that the district used federal resources properly.

Business Manager Tami Montague gave credit to district staff for helping make

the audit process run smoothly, especially when it came to accounting on "student activity funds," which include, for example, clubs funds and student government funds, at each school.

"We have outstanding staff out in the buildings doing hard work," she said. "We heard more than once during our audit that it is pretty unusual for student activity funds to be that clean."

In other business, the board:

- Re-appointed David Morris to the Dallas School District Budget Committee and appointed Greg Locke to complete the term of Sam Collins on the committee. Collins' term expires in February 2016.

Testing opt-outs concern district

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

INDEPENDENCE — When a parent decides their student does not need to or should not take a state-mandated test, it is considered an automatic "does not meet" standards.

Central School District Superintendent Buzz Brazeau addressed the school board at its Feb. 2 meeting about the topic, including informing board members that the district will be adopting policy on how to handle parents who opt-out of tests.

"There is potential for a parent to opt out based on one of two reasons: religious purposes or disability," Brazeau said.

No movement to opt out of testing is afoot, Brazeau noted, but two parents have chosen the option. Brazeau said he had to inform the board of the situation so it would be prepared to adopt a policy regarding opting out.

Ben Gorman, a Central High School teacher, Central Education Association president and parent of a district student, wrote extensively on his personal blog, the-sumofourgods.com, about opting out of state testing.

In the blog, Gorman said he is not encouraging parents to opt out of testing, but he includes a fill-in-the-blank style form letter parents could use to opt students out and provides argument for opting out.

Gorman is one of the parents who opted his son out of testing, according to his

blog. The second parent-teacher who opted out used the form letter provided by Gorman.

"The tests are not designed to give information about an individual student to a teacher in a way that will improve that individual child's education," Gorman said in an email. "They are designed to grade teachers and grade schools."

If less than 94.5 percent of students take state tests, it can cause the district's scores to drop, Brazeau said,

regardless of how schools perform elsewhere. "If you are performing at a 5, and miss the percent-

age (of participation), you automatically come down to a 4," he said. "If you are a 5 the next year, and miss participation again, they keep doubling it to bring you down. There's some real negative aspects to the school and to the school district as a whole."

While laws are changing constantly, Brazeau said testing is, for the moment, how to tell if students are learning what teachers are teaching.

"Certainly, I'm not a fan of testing," he noted. "But I have to be real honest, when I played football I wasn't a fan of lifting weights and getting in shape, but I did it because I had to."



Brazeau

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	2		1	5			8	3
1	4							9
		8	4					7
			9	6				
		9	3	4	8	2		
				1	7			
6					9	3		
8							4	6
5	7			8	4		1	

Sudoku
Difficulty: ★★☆☆☆

Row →

Three-by-three square →

4	3	2	8	1	6	7	5	9
5	6	9	7	4	3	1	2	8
1	7	8	9	5	2	4	6	3
3	4	7	2	8	5	6	9	1
2	1	6	7	4	9	3	8	5
9	8	5	1	6	3	2	7	4
7	9	1	4	3	8	5	2	6
8	5	3	6	2	1	9	4	7
6	2	4	5	9	7	1	3	8

Column ↓

How to do Sudoku
Fill in the grid so the numbers 1 through 9 appear just once in every column, row, and three-by-three square. See example above.

The Christian Science Monitor