



Volunteer shopping buddies await the arrival of the kids at Shopko. Volunteers helped kids find clothes to buy.

LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Shopping: Kids get new school clothes

Continued from 16A
Chemeketa Community College student Jack Dollarhide was Steven's shopping buddy.

"I guess the only part that was kind of surprising was how we started," Dollarhide said. "Right from the get-go, I didn't know where to start, whether to look for shoes or pants or whatnot."

Luckily, Steven had ideas of where to start, and the pair was off and running.

"We clicked really quickly," Dollarhide said. "We had fun finding stuff that Steven likes to wear. I saw what he wanted to look for first and moved on from there. We had no problem spending \$150."

Each kid had a sheet with their clothing and shoe sizes, along with any special requests for specific clothing needs from parents, but otherwise, the kids ran the

show, choosing what clothes to look at and purchase.

The shopping excursion was limited to clothes and shoes — an unfortunate limitation for Steven.

"He wanted one of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle toys," Dollarhide said smiling. "I think it was the katana sword."

That did little to dampen Steven's mood, whose favorite purchase of the day was a hat with the American flag in the shape of the Batman symbol.

"I had fun," Steven said.

Helping the kids have fun was, above all, the afternoon's biggest goal, and allowed both volunteers and kids alike to walk away from the event feeling changed.

"I like this," Dollarhide said. "It feels good to volunteer, to ask questions and find out what this is all about."



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Kids arrive at Shopko and prepare to meet their shopping buddy. Each child had \$150 to spend on clothes for the new school year.

Geddes takes reins at Whitworth school

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Whitworth Elementary School will have a new principal when students return to class this fall.

Darlene Geddes, formerly an assistant principal at Dallas High School for one year, has been named the new principal. She replaces Steve Martinelli, who has become the district's director of instructional services, in charge of reviewing curriculum, in addition to other duties.

Dallas Superintendent Michelle Johnstone said Geddes brings experience in instructional coaching, coordinating talented and gifted programs and providing for the needs of students with disabilities and those learning English as a second language.

"I'm excited for her to move into the elementary level because I know we are going to see results coming up through the high school," Johnstone said Monday during Dallas School Board's meeting.

The board also continued to discuss implementing a construction excise tax, similar to system development charges (SDCs) imposed by cities on new construction to expand infrastructure systems. The district could charge up to \$1.20 per square foot on residential construction and 60 cents per square foot on commercial construction in the upcoming school year.

The issue raised concerns about deterring construction and economic development at earlier meetings. One critic of the idea said those government entities that charge SDCs ignore the benefit of development adding to the tax base.

School officials, to the contrary, said the school district would not be a direct recipient of additional tax dollars to due to development.

Oregon uses a school funding formula which includes property tax revenue in the calculation to provide districts with the same amount of money per student. Thus, the district may benefit from adding more students because of growth, but won't receive additional funding based solely on its tax base growing, said Tami Montague, Dallas' business manager.

"We would get the same amount per kid as every other district in the state no matter what our tax base was," she said.

The board appears to be divided on the concept, with board members Mike Blanchard and Matt Posey saying they wouldn't support the tax.

"Right now I don't think the benefit is worth the potential tradeoffs," Blanchard said.

He's said he is worried imposing the tax would give voters pause when the district asks for a future bond. Also, he said while the tax base increase wouldn't have an immediate positive impact on schools, it would if the district tried to pass another bond after the development is complete.

Board member Jon Woods said he didn't think implementing the tax would be a significant factor in an election.

"I've never heard anyone say that they are not going to vote with the city because they have systems development charges at 'x' level," Woods said. "I'm not foreseeing that as a reason."

Both Board Chairwoman Lu Ann Meyer and board member Mike Bollman said the tax would provide an avenue for the district to pay for projects without using the general fund.

"I have to think at the end of the day, we have this opportunity to do more for our kids," Meyer said. "I have a hard time not saying it's time."



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