



For Falls City Elementary School students, the covered area on the playground serves as gym for physical education classes. The Falls City School Board would like to change that and is weighing support for a bond to build gym.

JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

New gym for Falls City Elementary?

District may decide to place a bond on the ballot for a new school facility

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

FALLS CITY — Try holding a physical education class in a room with an 8-foot ceiling — or having to load kids onto a bus for PE classes off site.

That is the case at Falls City Elementary School. Now district officials have proposed a solution: building a gym at the school.

It would take a bond measure to pay for it, but Superintendent Jack Thompson said after introducing the idea to citizens last week, the response has been encouraging.

"It was really positive," Thompson said. "People believe there is a need."

Thompson said students in kindergarten through fourth-grade use the playground, the covered play area and "multiple purpose room," with an 8-foot high

Learn more

What: Falls City Elementary School gym bond informational meeting.

When: Nov. 2 at 6 p.m.
Where: Falls City Community Center, 320 N. Main St., Falls City.

For more information: 503-787-3521.

ceiling for physical education. Students in grades fifth through eighth are bused down to the high school gym for PE class.

Also, the district may be able to take advantage of Senate Bill 447, a law passed in the last legislative session that would double the amount collected through a bond, if it were to pass.

"That would maximize our dollars," Thompson said. "We wanted to make

sure that was in place."

Thompson said at the initial meeting that members of the public suggested a full-size gym suitable for hosting high school games, possibly with a kitchen facility.

The extra space also could house FACES after-school program classes and allow the district to host jam-boree-like sporting events with multiple venues.

"It opens up opportunities that way," Thompson said.

The new building also could meet another need.

With an enrollment increase of 20 students so far this year, Thompson said the kitchen at the elementary school, where all the meals served in the district are prepared, could soon be too small.

He said the Falls City School Board is looking for input at this point and hasn't settled on a design or

amount the district would seek in a bond. The board will hold another informational meeting in November to sort out some of those details and will find an architect to draw plans and provide a cost estimate.

While the gym will be at the elementary school property, the exact location has not been identified.

Thompson said the most logical place in his opinion is the property the district owns just east of the school.

"That way the kids wouldn't have to cross the street like they do now to get to the playground," Thompson said. "Right now it (the property) has a few trees growing on it and that is it."

He added while still very much in the planning stages, Thompson believes building a gym is feasible.

"After looking at the costs, it's definitely doable," he said.

SCHOOL NOTES

CSD schools tests safer crosswalks

INDEPENDENCE — Central School District's Transportation Department is working with the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Oregon Department of Education on a "Safe Routes to School" pilot project.

This program is to promote safe walking and biking routes for students to get to and from school. Additional signage informs motorists that it is the law to stop for all pedestrians, not just school children, at all crosswalks.

In Oregon, any intersection, unless otherwise marked, is considered a crosswalk — not just the ones that are marked with crosswalk lines.

This new signage will be located on Monmouth Avenue at intersections with Fourth, Fifth and mid-block at Central High School and Heffley and Main streets.

The signs will be displayed from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. each school day. For more information: Patti Green, 503-606-2309.

Peace Corps will be at WOU Tuesday

MONMOUTH — A Peace Corps information session is scheduled for Tuesday 4 p.m. in the Columbia Room at Western Oregon University's Werner University Center.

In addition, the Peace Corps will have an information table set up the same day at the Werner University Center's east entrance, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Peace Corps recruiter Scot Roskelley says volunteer assignments are 27 months in length and are entirely paid for. A full list of volunteer openings is posted on the federal agency's website at www.peacecorps.gov.

Ninety percent of volunteers have degrees, but the Peace Corps also accepts volunteers without degrees who have work experience that aligns with some of the openings. For more information: Scot Roskelley, 503-290-4024.

Students needed for blood drives

PORTLAND — Hosting a blood drive this winter could help save lives and earn high school and college students a \$2,500 scholarship.

Students can register to host a drive through the "Leaders Save Lives" program between now and Nov. 15. Drives would be held between Dec. 15 and Jan. 15, 2016.

The Leaders Save Lives program encourages high school and college students to host blood drives to help maintain the blood supply around holidays. Six scholarship are available to host a blood drive collecting 25 blood donations or more.

For more information and to register to host a Leaders Save Lives blood drive: redcrossblood.org/leaderssave.

DSD Supt. hosts coffee meetings

DALLAS — Have a question, suggestion or concern you would like Dallas School District's Superintendent Michelle Johnstone to hear?

You have three opportunities starting this week to share those thoughts with Johnstone in person during "coffee chat-like" meetings in the community.

The first will be at Dallas Retirement Village Thursday at 9:30 a.m., 377 NW Jasper St., and Friday at McDonald's, 227 E. Elledale Ave. at 8 a.m. The last will be Nov. 3 at Pressed Coffee & Wine, 778 Main St. at 7:30 a.m.

For more information: 503-623-5594.

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