

EDITORIALS

Test results don't show true progress

The results are in for the most recent round of Smarter Balanced assessments, and it's a mixed bag. While some scores are higher, others are lower. But what's in a score, anyway? As long as students can show they know the material through skills assessments, the results of the test do not affect their future. The real question is how many of these students will graduate and continue on to further their education, traditionally at a college or university, or nontraditionally. Also, with parents able to opt out of having their children participate in Smarter Balanced tests, it seems like the scores are becoming less and less relevant. What is important is creating "lifelong learners." That is one of those jargon phrases often used by education professionals, but it is filled with truth. If our youths graduate from high school, they can check that off their list of things to do. When they graduate with a sense of creativeness, curiosity, a skill of critical thinking, engaged in the world around them, a desire to effect change in this nation — increasingly divided — and a sense of adventure, that's when we'll know we have succeeded in building a better generation than we were.

PUBLIC AGENDA

Public Agenda is a listing of upcoming meetings for governmental and nongovernmental agencies in Polk County. To submit a meeting, send it at least two weeks before the actual meeting date to the *Itemizer-Observer* via email (ionews@polkio.com).

- WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 14**
- **Independence Heritage Museum Commission** — 4 p.m., Independence Heritage Museum, 112 S. Third St., Independence. 503-838-1212.
 - **Monmouth Library Advisory Board** — 7 a.m., Monmouth Public Library, 168 Ecols St. S., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.
 - **Polk County Board of Commissioners** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, first floor conference room, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.
- THURSDAY, SEPT. 15**
- **Monmouth Arts and Culture Commission** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.
 - **Independence Parks and Recreation Board** — 6 p.m., Independence Civic Center, third floor, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.
 - **Polk County Fair Board** — 8 a.m., Polk County Fairgrounds and Event Center, Main Building, Meeting Room No. 2, 520 S. Pacific Highway (99W), Rickreall. 503-623-3048.
- MONDAY, SEPT. 19**
- **Independence Tourism and Events Commission** — 6:30 p.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.
 - **Dallas City Council** — 7 p.m., Dallas City Hall, 187 SE Court St., Dallas. 503-831-3502.
- TUESDAY, SEPT. 20**
- **Monmouth City Council** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.
 - **Dallas Parks Advisory Board** — 5:30 p.m., Dallas City Hall, 187 SE Court St., Dallas. 503-831-3502.
 - **Falls City School Board** — 6:30 p.m., Falls City High School, 111 N. Main St., Falls City. 503-787-3521.
 - **Polk County Board of Commission work session** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, BOC office, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Morett voice echoes freedom

Liberty has found her voice with candidate Laura Morett. Our own voice in state politics is carried by the representative we elect. With decades of piled-up regulation and tax burden, we need a voice which rings of freedom: teachers free to teach, entrepreneurs free to create jobs, and citizens free to see the actions of its government. Well-meaning rules have inadvertently created ghost towns and political corruption. Let's abandon the dysfunctional top-down approach to positive change and unshackle those trying to make better lives for their families and a better Oregon. Let's start by voting for Laura for HD20.

Jason Haury
West Salem

Evans leadership proven for Polk

Paul Evans deserves reelection. He is a proven leader who works hard for women, minorities, the environment, students, and veterans. He has a record he can be proud of. Conversely, there really isn't much known about his opponent. She has not explained what she would do about problems facing Oregon. She goes on the radio and talks in vague generalities, like, "we need good schools." Great. How will she accomplish this? Paul works to lower class sizes and compensate teachers in a fair manner. Paul has a record to stand on; his opponent does not. The choice is clear.

Wanda Davis
Dallas

Thank you, Trinity Lutheran

The Dallas Food Bank would like to extend a special "thank you" to Trinity Lutheran Church for a highly successful "Fill the Pantry-Pay the Rent" fundraiser. Their fundraising committee, congregation, and youth group spearhead this annual fundraiser. The amount of time and energy put into this event makes it one of the largest fundraisers for the food bank. With such tremendous community support, the food bank will be able to fulfill our mission statement in reducing hunger in our community. The food bank is truly



blessed to have strong support in Dallas.

Leonard Hlavinka
Coordinator, Dallas
Emergency Food Corp.

Thompson right choice for Dems

As a registered Democrat I will vote for Jim Thompson, Independent candidate, House District 23. There are two candidates in this race. This election presents us with a clear choice. Jim in the House of Representatives would represent all constituents in our District not a narrow minority. He would work with all members of the House to help pass legislation good for Oregon. I have known Jim for years, and served with him on a local fine arts board. I support his decent values

and interests. I urge all Democrats to vote for Jim Thompson, Independent candidate, House District 23. Tremain Arkley
Independence

Why the wait on senior center

The seniors of Polk County have been working for over 12 years to have a senior center built. We are currently occupying a room at the rear of the city library. This is a room for which the library staff has plans for, but they are unable to utilize the space as long as the seniors occupy it. To make matters worse, the room is too small to serve as a useful senior center. We have worked with three city managers and several mayors, all of whom profess to be in favor of a new senior center.

A grant has been secured and the city has agreed to a site for a new center. Preliminary architectural drawings have been made and submitted. Must we wait another 12+ years? Surely the city planning commission can approve the construction of the building. It meets all the zoning laws. Apparently the planning commissioners are unduly influenced by a small group of people who are against change. Let's get off dead center and get a senior center built so the small room we are currently using can be returned to the library.

Jerry Wennstrom
Dallas

Elect Thompson for State Rep

One of the abilities I have admired about Jim Thompson is his knowledge and understanding of our health care system. He has dedicated his career researching better solutions for allergies; he has established a prescription monitoring program to slow down drug abuse and has worked to control ever increasing medical costs.

Our health care system is more important than ever. We need a Legislator that understands how the system works and how we can make it better. That choice is Jim Thompson.

Join me voting for Jim to put his experience and common sense solutions to work for us.

Cheryl Williams
Dallas

WANT TO WRITE A LETTER?

Letters to the editor are limited to 300 words. Longer letters will be edited. Election-related letters of all types are limited to 100 words. Writers are limited to one election-related letter per election season. Election letters from writers outside of Polk County are not accepted. Each writer is restricted to one letter per 30-day period. Letters that are libelous, obscene or in bad taste will not be printed. Attacks by name on businesses or individuals will not be printed. Letters to the editor that are obvious promotions for a business, products or services will

not be printed. The *Itemizer-Observer* does not guarantee the accuracy of facts presented by letter writers; dissenters are welcome to respond. Letter writers who disagree with other published letter writers should maintain a civil discourse and address the subject, not the author. Letters, like all editorial material submitted to the newspaper, are edited for length, grammar and content. Letters must include the author's name, address and telephone number. This includes letters submitted via the *I-O's* website. Names and cities of residence are published; street

addresses and telephone numbers are used for verification purposes only. Letters must be submitted from individuals, not organizations, and must be original submissions to the *I-O*, not copies of letters sent to other media. Letters of thanks to businesses, individuals and organizations are limited to 10 names. The deadline for letters to the editor is 10 a.m. Monday. Letters submitted may not be retractable after this deadline. Reach us at: 503-623-2373 ext. 117

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