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HEPPNER 50¢
Gazette Times

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Ione now a charter school

The Ione School Board, at their regular meeting Monday night, adopted a resolution authorizing a charter school, to be named the Ione Community Charter School. The resolution authorizes the operation of the charter school by the district and incorporates the provisions for operation of the charter school.

The mission of the charter school is to "create an exceptional education program based upon the strong ties between the school and the community, which are already natural in Ione." According to the charter, the school will "create a true community school" and will "provide Ione students with an exceptional education both academically and socially."

The charter school will be operated by the district and will "meet or exceed any content standards adopted by the State of Oregon" and will be in compliance with all state standards.

All students will be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities of the school, subject to district and Oregon School Activities Association policies.

The charter will become effective on Jan. 18 and will expire on June 30, 2009. The charter may be terminated prior to that date with at least 180 days notice, but the board will not close the school mid-year. The charter may be amended and may be extended by resolution.

Enrollment in the school is open to any child eligible to attend grades kindergarten through 12th grade. According to the charter, "The district will not charge tuition for programs, classes or courses of study that are part of the regular school program for students admitted to the charter school." However, "The district may charge, reduce or waive tuition for non-resident students for whom the charter school does not receive state school fund payment. The district may charge reasonable fees for textbooks, instructional materials, after-school programs and student activities, in accordance with state law."

In other business at the meeting, the board discussed the Ione School state report card results. The school received an overall satisfactory rating, with a satisfactory rating in academic achievement/ student performance and an exceptional rating in attendance/dropout/student behavior. In terms of the improvement category, the school remained about the same. The school received an "exceptional" rating in school characteristics.

In reading knowledge and skills: 71 percent of Ione students met or exceeded state standards in grade three, compared to 86 percent statewide; 83 percent of grade five students met or exceeded, compared to 80 percent statewide; 50 percent in grade eight met or exceeded, compared to 61 percent statewide; and 69 percent in grade 10 met or exceeded, compared to 52 percent statewide.

In math knowledge and skills: 83 percent of Ione students in grade three met or exceeded, equal to state results; 83 percent of students in grade five met or exceeded, besting the state results of 81 percent; 71 percent of students in grade eight met or exceeded, also besting state results of 61 percent; likewise 58 percent of students in grade 10 met or exceeded, compared to 44 percent.

In writing: 50 percent of students in grade five met or exceeded, below state results of 67 percent; 71 percent met or exceeded, compared to 69 percent statewide; 77 percent of students in grade 10 met or exceeded, equaling state results.

In math problem solving: 58 percent of students in grade five met or exceeded, compared to 49 percent statewide; 64 percent of students in grade eight met or exceeded, compared to 41 percent statewide.

One hundred percent of the district students participated, compared to 99.7 statewide. The district had 99.3 percent attendance for the 2003-04 school year, compared to 91.4 percent statewide.

Because the Ione Schools split from Morrow County, Ione's report was initially inaccurate, however ISD superintendent Bryn Browning worked with the state department of education to resolve those problems. Another issue that ISD encountered was that the state report card bases schools' "grades" on improvement. So, if a school receives a high rating in an area for several years, it would not receive as high a rating as if it had improved from a lesser rating.

The board also received Browning's administrative report as follows:

-students raised over $300 toward the "Principal's checkbook" fund to help disadvantaged students in the district. The money will be used to buy items such as socks, coats and shoes.

-the school robotics team competed at LaGrande and is currently working on a community service project to assess the town's handicap access. The students will then create plans to improve and modify local homes and businesses for handicapped patrons and residents.

-the "Read Naturally" program is approaching its end. While many students are showing improvement, the majority will be retained for another six-week period.

-Browning and Tara Proudfoot have applied for a grant to provide training for three staff members in child development and parenthood education.

-beginning second semester students will be held accountable for a daily assignment book. This is to be used by teachers as a tool to communicate with parents. The books will be purchased through Title I funds.

-also beginning second semester, work experience students and teacher assistants will receive a letter grade rather than a pass/fail. The program will also now include scheduled checkups with Browning and the supervisor throughout the term, including mid-term.

-the Ione Education Foundation has awarded the library $3,000 to upgrade the Accelerated Reader program. The grant will enable the school to also purchase STAR, which is a diagnostic reading test to help teachers measure individual and class growth, determine placement and forecast results on tests. AR will not be used as a reading curriculum, but rather as a way to motivate students to read.

In other business, the board:

-discussed advantages and disadvantages of seeking school accreditation and will discuss the issue further.

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Santa visits Heppner Day Care

Santa Clause came to visit the children of Heppner Day Care on Tuesday, Dec. 21. (Back Row L-R): Nichole Gibbs holding Bridget Wizner and Mikel Jaca, RJ Skaggs; (Middle Row L-R): Tasha Hollis holding Tiffany Hollis, Faith Jones, Santa, Mekayla Kindle, Jordan Jones, Alyssa Wizner; (Front Row L-R): Tommy Bredfield, Cody Wizner, Zach Bredfield, Tim Jaca, Jacob Hines, Kevin Murray and Rian Wizner.

Horseback carolers entertain the town

The Equine Elegance 4-H Horse Club rode around Heppner singing Christmas carols Sunday. Club leader is Liz Pettybone.

Support Group to create more care packages

The Support Our Troops support group is meeting again, Sunday, Jan. 9 at 3 p.m. in the Methodist Church basement in Heppner to prepare more care packages for soldiers serving in Iraq.

Donations received so far have been greatly appreciated. Donations are still being accepted at Bank of Eastern Oregon and St. Patrick's Senior Center. Money donations should be taken to BEO.

ALL NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE:
MONDAYS AT 5:00 P.M.

Merry Christmas from
Morrow County Grain Growers!
We will be closed on December 24th - 25th
Morrow County Grain Growers
Lexington 989-8221 • 1-800-452-7396 For farm equipment, visit our web site at www.mcgg.net