

# School board gives Dirksen excellent review



**Morrow County School District Superintendent Dirk Dirksen.**

The Morrow County School Board gave Superintendent Dirk Dirksen an excellent review in all standards at the board's monthly meeting at Heppner Jr./Sr. High School Monday night.

"I have observed many examples of Mr. Dirksen's leadership within the school district. I appreciate his commitment to the students, the staff and the community and I think this shows in the culture that he has fostered in each school. I particularly like how he allows each school to maintain their independence, while at the same time providing consistent guidance within the district," said a board statement.

"Alongside all the other responsibilities that he has, Mr. Dirksen excels at staying up to date with changes to instructional techniques and curriculum adaptations. He has also done a good job at keeping MCSD a leader in the early adoption of programs such as the online program and Eastern Promises. I feel that he correctly places student education ahead of all of the other important things that he is responsible for, which I think can be seen in student improvement since his time as superintendent," continued the statement.

"I do not believe we could ask for a better person when it comes to ethics and values! A super good person that cares," they added.

Dirksen had been a teacher and coach for the district, then a principal before accepting the superintendent's position.

Also at the meeting, the board learned that the 2019 immunization rates in Morrow County Schools average around 97 percent for all schools combined.

Two schools, Irrigon Elementary and Morrow Education Center in Irrigon, had 100 percent compliance. At Irrigon Elementary, 214 of 215 students had all vaccinations required, with one non-medical exemption. At MEC all 65 students had all vaccines up to date with no non-medical exemptions.

Riverside Jr./Sr. High School came up next with 99 percent compliance; 400 out of 406 students had received all their vaccines, with one non-medical exemption. At Windy River Elementary, 244 out of 250 students had all vaccinations required, for a rate of 98 percent, with two non-medical exemptions.

Sam Boardman Elementary had the lowest percentage, with 94 percent of students having all vaccinations, with three non-medical exemptions. The adjusted enrollment at SBE was 356 with 335 students having all vaccinations and three having non-medical exemptions.

Heppner Jr./Sr. High and A.C. Houghton Elementary students had the next lowest percentage at 96 percent. At HJSHS, with an adjusted enrollment of 172, 165 students had all

vaccinations required and six students had non-medical exemptions. At ACH in Irrigon, with an adjusted enrollment of 284, 272 students had all vaccinations and one had a non-medical exemption.

At Heppner Elementary and Irrigon Jr./Sr. High School, 97 percent of students had all vaccinations required. HES, with 167 students, had 162 students with all vaccinations and one with a non-medical exemption. At IJSHS, with 356 students, 346 had all vaccines, with two having non-medical exemptions.

The board also learned that the district's auditors noted a material weakness during the financial statement audit concerning pre-paid expenses that were not reported as prepaid expenses. To remedy the situation, the auditors recommended paying insurance, such as liability, property and workers' compensation in July of each year, instead of June or record it as a prepaid expense if it is paid prior to the fiscal year of coverage.

Concerning school start days this fall, the board learned that almost 54 percent of district employees (112) with 208 voting, favored a pre-Labor Day start for school this fall, with school beginning on August 26 and ending on June 4. Around 46 percent (96) favored the post-Labor Day start with school beginning on September 3. The board generally adheres to the employee preference in determining the start day. Dirksen commented that the percentages between those preferring the earlier and later start date were becoming closer. Usually, he said, the ratio is around 75/25 preferring the early start date.

In other business, the board:

- congratulated the Heppner Jr./Sr. High School girls' basketball team, some of whom were able to be present, and their coach Rob Wilson for their state title win.

- approved a request from IJSHS students to name the IJSHS ball field after much-admired coach Randall Heinrichs, who contributed not only coaching, but support, work and financial contributions toward constructing and updating the field.

- heard a presentation from HHS ag teacher and FFA advisor Beth Dickenson on the 2018-19 FFA Backpack Project which provides take-home backpacks of food for kids in need for the weekends, when school food is not available. Dickenson said that the project has sent out 937 full weekend meal backpacks as of March 22, feeding an average of 40 children every weekend and plans to send out 1,249 full meal backpacks by the end of the school year. The project also included two food workshops to show "kids how to make a proper nutritional meal for themselves and possibly their families."

The project supporters include Willow Creek Economic Development, which donated over \$5,000, DPR Construction, National FFA, The Carlson Family, Breaking Bread, Van Schoiack Ranch, the Dickensons, Triangle Ranches, Heppner FFA Chapter, Morrow County Grain Growers and Land O'Lakes.



**Beth Dickenson, HHS ag teacher and FFA advisor.**

- also heard presentations from HJSHS teacher Jeanne Collins, Heppner FBLA advisor; travel requests from Dickenson for an FFA trip; RJSJS teacher Rhonda Fox-Brennan, for a Kidwind Challenge trip; RJSJS teacher Crystal Kirk, for the Presidential Academy for American History and Civics Summer Institute trip, and IJSHS teacher Lenn Greer, for an FFA trip.

- received the following enrollment report for April: A.C. Houghton Elementary, Irrigon-264; Sam Boardman Elementary, Boardman-338; Heppner Elementary-166; Irrigon Elementary-215, Windy River Elementary, Boardman-289; Heppner Jr./Sr. High-167; Irrigon Jr./Sr. High-367; Riverside Jr./Sr. High, Boardman-428; Morrow Education Center, Irrigon-55; Total-2,289.

- approved the following employment action: resignations/non-renewals-Loren Dieter, RSJSH assistant high school football coach; employment/promotions/transfers-Cole Ashby, RJSJS weight training/PE teacher 2019-20; Elizabeth Campos, ABC room behavior technician; Viviana Colin-Torres, WRE fifth grade teacher 2019-20, Charlene Cooley, payroll specialist, Clair Costello, RJSJS PE teacher 2019-20, Alexandra Hobbs, IES sixth grade teacher 2019-20, Patricia King, RJSJS special ed teacher 2019-20, Makayla Mangione, RJSJS language arts teacher 2019-20, Laura Rowe, WRE Title I teacher 2019-20, Mike Royer, IJSHS counselor 2019-20, G'Ann Thomas, RJSJS language arts teacher 2019-20; extra duty contracts-Michelle Hagen, IJSHS junior high track coach 2018-19, Stephanie Simpson, RJSJS high school assistant volleyball coach, 2019-20.

- approved the following classified/confidential/district office personnel recommended for rehire (Heppner area only listed): Heppner Elementary-Lorna Botefuhr, Missy Cutsforth, Rebecca Evans, Darcee Mitchell, Janet Wilson, all ed assistants; Jackie Alleman, head cook, Debra Campbell, ed assistant, library tech, Kathy Cutsforth, assistant custodian, Kelly Fox, lead maintenance/facilities coordinator, HES & HJSHS, Tami Lien, assistant custodian, Darcy Robinson, head secretary, Stefanie Sweeney, behavior technician; Heppner Jr./Sr. High School-Ken Grieb, Jennifer Jaca, Stephanie McAninch, ed assistants, Ginger Bowman, library tech, Tiffanie Greenup, head secretary, Lori McCabe, head cook, Teresa Parret, assistant custodian, Robert Wilson, head custodian; confidential/district office personnel-Cheryl Costello, executive secretary/human resources assistant, Heidi Garcia, Connie Lobato, student services technicians, Autumn Morgan, fiscal services specialist/accounts payable, Brandi Sweeney, maintenance coordinator, Renee Zielinski, food service co-

ordinator.

- adopted a resolution accepting and appropriating \$25,000 for Heppner Jr./Sr. High School from Bob and Kelly Hale.

- adopted policy on federal procurement.

- heard the following announcements: make-up snow days, April 12 and May 3 for all schools; teacher appreciation week, May 6-10; budget committee meeting, Monday, May 13, IES; next board meeting, Monday, May 13, Irrigon Elementary.

## Obituaries

# Marsha L. White

Marsha L. White, 66, of Hermiston, died Saturday, April 6, at Richland, WA. A private family graveside service will be held at a later date at High View Cemetery in Ione, OR.

She was born October 10, 1952, at Heppner, OR, the daughter of Donald and Lorraine (Sherman) Ball. She was raised in Ione where she graduated from high school in 1970. Marsha then attended Western Business College, graduating in 1971. She became disabled in 1989 due to an

automobile accident.

Marsha is survived by a sister, Melani Harshman of Baker City; brothers Donald (Jay) and his wife (Connie) Ball of Pendleton, Robert (Bonni) Ball of Ione, Ed Sherman (Cathy) of Pendleton and Fred Sherman of Ione.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Ione Community Pool, P.O. Box 167, Ione, OR 97843.

Sweeney Mortuary of Heppner is in care of arrangements.

## Sheriff's Report

**The Morrow County Sheriff's Office has released the following information:**

**January 26:** Morrow County Sheriff's Office received a report at SE Utah Ave, Irrigon that there were two hunters in a red Ford extended cab that didn't yield right of way to him.

-MCSO received a report on W Main St, Lexington that a male subject that was living with her family and is moving owes another subject money. That other subject is threatening to burn her house down.

-MCSO received a report at MW Water St/NW Minor St, Heppner that there are two kids playing with a puppy on Water Street without a leash. RP advised the kids are in the road and not paying attention to traffic. Unable to locate.

-MCSO received a report at Morrow County Fairgrounds on Hwy 74 Lena, Heppner that a brown Chevy is parked behind the fairgrounds. Unable to locate.

-MCSO received a report at Castle Rock Apartments on Tatone St, Boardman that dad and brother are fighting. No weapons.

-MCSO received a report on Tower Rd, Boardman that there is a brown pickup off the road, looks like it may have slid off the road this morning.

-MCSO received a report at Sub Zero Motel on S First St, Irrigon that Umatilla County is working on a missing person - ATL. MCSO checked, unable to locate.

-MCSO received a report that Michael Brian Oliver was arrested by UCSO on MCSO warrant. Subject lodged at UCJ with a bail of \$250,000.

-MCSO received a report at Willow Creek Rd/Hwy 207, Heppner that at the second bridge towards Willow Creek there is a female standing in the middle of the highway, possibly high or intoxicated. Gena Marie Tortolani was arrested by MCSO for assaulting an officer x3. Subject lodged at UCJ with bail of \$15,000.

**January 27:** Morrow County Sheriff's Office received a report at Boardman rest area eastbound on I 84, Boardman of a possible overdose at the rest area. RP advised the subject was doing drugs and is now slumped over and the vehicle is running.

-MCSO received a report on W Fourth Rd, Irrigon that RP has about 25 cows.

-MCSO received a report at Hwy 74 Lena, Heppner that there is a vehicle that has been parked off the side of the road. Looks like they drove the vehicle off the road and just parked it there.

-MCSO received a report of an alarm at Heppner Grade School on NE

Stansbury St, Heppner. Made contact with teacher from the school that advised there is youth practice today. Alarm false.

-MCSO received a report that Douglas Duane Jones was arrested by Spokane PD on MCCC warrant. Lodged at Spokane County jail with bail of \$20,000.

-MCSO received a report at Willow Creek Reservoir on Willow Creek Rd, Heppner that he passed a vehicle going 35 mph, door propped open with male leaning out.

-MCSO received a report at Boardman Recreation Center on Olson Rd NE, Boardman that there is a young lifeguard cussing and getting in the RP's face. BPD made contact.

-MCSO received a report on NE Main Ave, Irrigon that he had a couple of screens popped out of his windows.

**January 28:** Morrow County Sheriff's Office received a report at Bucknum's on N Main St, Heppner that there is a white SUV behind the post office with a group of 3-4 individuals around it that have been out there for several hours.

-MCSO received a report at Riverview Motel on Front St, NE, Boardman that there is a male walking by and making threats against him.

-MCSO received a report on SE Utah Ave, Irrigon that a three-axle trailer with a small backhoe is headed towards Boardman with no lights on it. Unable to locate.

-MCSO received a report at Pole Line Rd/Frontage Ln, Boardman that there is a green pickup pulling a travel trailer right on the edge of the road with yellow flashing light, not a hazard.

-MCSO received a report on SE Park Pl, Irrigon of 59-year-old female not feeling well. Transported.

-MCSO received a report at Bella Vista Estates on Paul Smith Rd, Boardman that teen daughter called advising she was thinking about suicide.

-MCSO received a report that Jessica Ann Withrow was arrested by MCSO on CC warrant. Subject lodged at Yakima County jail with a total bail of \$320,000. No local charges.

-MCSO received a report at Main ST N/Front St NE, Boardman of MVA, two vehicles red Chevy and minivan.

-MCSO received a report on SE Utah Ave, Irrigon that two dogs are on the street. RP advised he will be taking the dog to pet rescue.

-MCSO received a report of a white goat on Hwy 74, Heppner.

-MCSO received a report on I 84 E, Boardman

that vehicle rear-ended RP, Dodge pickup and Chevy pickup. Non-injury.

-MCSO received a report on NE Ninth St, Irrigon that her Siamese has been missing for the last couple days.

-MCSO received a report of a white Chevy Tahoe on fire on I 84 E, Boardman. Fire was put out.

-MCSO received a report at Frontage Ln/Pole Line Rd, Hermiston that at approx. 0430 this morning he came across a vehicle with its blinkers on. On his way home from work it is still there with blinkers on.

-MCSO received a report that RP came across a male and female with four kids who advised they got their Dodge pickup stuck and cannot get out. Western Route Rd towards Ukiah turn right on 21 Rd towards Penland Lake, then turn off onto 2103 Rd. RP advised there is about 3-4 feet of snow. MCSO responded and was able to get individuals to a motel in Heppner.

-MCSO received a report at Heppner Grade School on NE Stansbury St, Heppner that her car was keyed while at the basketball game. MCSO made contact.

-MCSO received a report on SE Utah Ave, Irrigon that a maroon Buick with black trim flew down towards Tenth. Unable to locate.

**January 29:** Morrow County Sheriff's Office received a report on Willow Creek Rd, Heppner that RP has hit a deer, just before the gravel turnout.

-MCSO received a report at US Post Office on NE Main Ave, Irrigon that maroon sedan approached her acting suspicious. Unable to locate.

-MCSO received a report at SE Utah Ave/SE Tenth St, Irrigon that two dogs got out of the yard and charged. Unable to locate.

-MCSO received a report at AJ Martin, Lexington that he takes his dogs for walks and today as he was passing one of the dogs crawled under the fence and started attacking his dogs. RP confronted the owner who was outside and the owner of the building threatened him.

-MCSO received a report at Green Acres on Paterson Ferry Rd, Irrigon that he was at his friend's house showing him his coin collections and a subject that was there stole two of his coins. Coins value around \$100-150.

-MCSO received a report that Joseph Arthur Manning was lodged at Multnomah County jail by US Marshalls on parole violation. Will be transported to UCJ on 1/30/19.