

Grads

Continued from Page A1

MORROW COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

"This group of seniors has overcome a lot in their four years," Dirk Dirksen, Morrow County School District superintendent, said.

Set to retire this year, Superintendent Dirksen celebrated graduations at four different schools — Riverside Senior High School, Heppner Senior High School, Irrigon Senior High School and the Morrow Education Center.

"This is my 11th year as superintendent," he said. "We have increased pretty much over that 11-year period. We've always stayed above the state average, but we are well above it now."

The Oregon Department of Education reports graduation rates statewide hover over 80%.

Meanwhile, according to Dirksen, Morrow schools are looking pretty good by comparison. He said 157 of 163 students in the 2022 cohort group were set to graduate on time, giving the district a graduation rate over 96%.

"This is an estimate, he added. As with rates given by other superintendents, numbers are not official until they are reviewed by ODE.

According to the superintendent, Irrigon High alone has 47 graduates. Heppner High has 32, Riverside, 71 and Morrow Education, 7.

The number of graduates does not tell the full story, though, he stated. Also, one should look at the scholarships earned. This class, he said, is typical of recent classes, as they earned around \$2.5 million in scholarships.

"You really have to congratulate the students themselves for their dedication, their parents, teachers, administrators, all the people working hard to make sure (students) were able to get across the stage with a diploma," Dirksen said.



Kathy Aney/Hermiston Herald

Echo senior Kolby Spurlock passes the flame of education to Logan Hansen as part of a graduation ceremony Friday, June 3, 2022.

STANFIELD SECONDARY SCHOOL

Beth Burton, Stanfield School District superintendent, praised the graduating class of 2022.

"I am sincerely happy for the Class of 2022," she said. "They completed high school during one of the most interesting and unique times in our country, and I think each of these students is stronger for it."

On May 29, Stanfield Secondary School graduated 38 students — 37 seniors and one junior, who managed to graduate early, according to the superintendent.

"All of the seniors that we saw in the building this year made it," she said.

She said notable students included Rheanna Rivera, a co-valedictorian, who spoke at graduation. In all, according to Rivera's speech, 458 college credits were earned by students of the graduating class. Also, eight students graduated with an honors diploma — no small feat, as students must earn at least 30 college credits to achieve this distinction. Rivera stated that 26 students graduated with a 3.0 GPA or higher.

Burton went on to say one of the graduates, Jennifer Flores, is a Ford Family Scholar.

In addition, Burton boasted, 52% of this class has college plans for the fall. Nine students are going into the workforce,

two students are entering the military and four students are going to trade school, she said.

"Collectively, this group of seniors is pretty determined," she said. "I am excited to see what they do next."

Burton credited teachers, administrators and other employees of the school for their efforts, too.

"The staff at Stanfield Secondary School have worked for years to build a college-going culture and we are seeing the effects of that work," Burton said. "Stanfield students have many opportunities, and we see students taking advantage of those in similar numbers year to year."

ECHO HIGH SCHOOL

Confetti dropped on the graduating class of Echo High School in a recent ceremony for its graduates.

According to Mandy Palmateer, administrative secretary, 15 students graduated.

"No one was left behind," she said; all of the seniors graduated.

What's more, Palmateer said, all of the graduates have plans to further their education with college. This, she said, is pretty common for Echo.

"We're obviously super proud of them," she said. "It's a big accomplishment. They've made it this far, and we're excited to see where they go in the future."

UMATILLA HIGH SCHOOL

Of the 92 enrolled seniors at the high school, 90 graduated on time, according to Heidi Sipe, Umatilla School District superintendent.

"We'd be happier if it was 92," Sipe added.

She said that the high school usually has a "very good" graduation rate, in part thanks to a dedicated team at the high school. Employees of the school, she said, track students and encourage good performance.

The students, though, deserve much of the credit, as they were the ones who pushed through the COVID years, she said.

"I think that it's really important to recognize that the kids who graduated worked really hard to walk across that stage," she said.

Sipe spoke of two students who worked especially hard, as they earned their associate of arts transfer degrees. Marisol Santa Cruz and Thalia Trujillo are planning to continue their education at Portland State University in the fall.

Numerous others, she added, earned college credits. And that's not all.

"We have a number of students who are graduating with their biliteracy seal from the Oregon Department of Education," Sipe stated.

Those students, who earned their biliteracy seal, are Isaac Armenta, Neida Espain Aceves, Crystal Garcia, Gerardo Garcilazo Escobedo, Fernando Godinez Morelos, Brauyan Gomez-Meza, Perla Leon-Mendoza, Kevin Meza Macias and Ashley Nava.

The biliteracy seal indicates that a student has completed rigorous language testing in both English and Spanish.

Dee Lorence, UHS counselor, shared yet another accomplishment of this class. She said scholarship and grant totals "should be between \$767,000 — \$800,000 over two to four years."

Threat

Continued from Page A1

"Even allowing \$50,000 for the car, that leaves \$20,000 for personal gear," he said.

Hermiston officers and the Oregon State Police SWAT team plan to train for three days in late July at Rocky Heights Elementary School, slated for demolition, Edmiston said. The old Armand Larive Middle School previously served as a training site prior to its demolition.

"It's a good deal for both of us," he said. "The OSP 'ninja' team gets to practice at a real world site, and we can learn from them."

TRAINING TOGETHER ESSENTIAL FOR LOCAL POLICE

Boardman Police Chief Rick Stokoe echoed his colleagues. He said his department's procedure on a school shooter and the like is to "immediately engage the threat." That applies to a school resource officer or the first patrol unit to arrive at the scene, he said, but the situation dictates what the engagement looks like.

A shooter who drops their weapon, surrenders and complies with police is likely to end up in handcuffs.

"If they are actively shooting, that's probably not going to be a good outcome," he said.

Police in that situation can "neutralize" — shoot and even kill a suspect — and Stokoe

said that's about minimizing the number of people who are victims.

"That's the way our agency trains," he said, "and we do train on it."

Riverside Junior-Senior High School in April 2018 was the site of an active school shooter training that involved Boardman police and local law enforcement from throughout the region, as well as Oregon State Police. Almost 400 people in all watched or participated in the drill, including 45 students and 260 members of the Morrow County School District. Stokoe stressed the importance of area law enforcement training and learning together.

"In small rural communities, we have to rely on each other," he said.

Three Boardman police personnel were among other locals who responded Feb. 7 to Richland, Washington, for the deadly shooting at a Fred Meyer store. If there was a similar shooting in Boardman, he said,

officers from Umatilla County and agencies in Washington are likely to respond.

Stokoe said Boardman police follow the model from the I Love You Guys Foundation, which developed its Standard Response Protocol based on five actions: hold, secure, lockdown, evacuate and shelter. According to the foundation, more than 30,000 schools, districts, departments, organizations and cities around the globe use the protocol.

But not every agency in the area follows the protocol, he said, and one element of training is to make sure different agencies can communicate effectively with each other during a crisis.

"You want everyone on the same sheet of music," he said.

Stokoe added he recently reached out to the Morrow County School District and Mark Mulvihill, superintendent of the InterMountain Education Service District, to do more training for this kind of school emergency.

Advertisement for Leaf Filter gutter protection, featuring a close-up of the gutter filter and promotional text: "BACKED BY A YEAR-ROUND CLOG-FREE GUARANTEE", "15% OFF & 10% OFF", "5% OFF TO THE FIRST \$1,000", "CALL US TODAY FOR A FREE ESTIMATE 1-855-536-8838".

Church Directory advertisement featuring a large "Church DIRECTORY" title, a decorative cross, and several church listings including: Seventh-day Adventist Church, St. Johns Episcopal Church, Landmark Baptist Church, New Beginnings Christian Fellowship, First Christian Church, and Iglesia Católica Nuestra Señora de los Angeles.

Generac PWRcell advertisement: "Prepare for Power Outages & Save Money", "REQUEST A FREE QUOTE!", "ACT NOW TO RECEIVE A \$300 SPECIAL OFFER!", "Blazing Fast Internet! ADD TO YOUR PACKAGE FOR ONLY \$19.99/mo. where available".

Generac advertisement: "Prepare for power outages today", "WITH A HOME STANDBY GENERATOR", "FREE 7-year Extended Warranty* A \$695 Value!", "REQUEST A FREE QUOTE", "CALL NOW BEFORE THE NEXT POWER OUTAGE (877) 557-1912".

Impact Careers advertisement: "Careers that make a difference", "Work with people with disabilities!", "www.ImpactOregon.careers", "impact".

Dish advertisement: "BRING EVERYTHING YOU LOVE TOGETHER!", "Blazing Fast Internet! ADD TO YOUR PACKAGE FOR ONLY \$19.99/mo. where available", "2-YEAR TV PRICE GUARANTEE \$69.99/mo. for 12 mos.", "190 CHANNELS Including Local Channels!", "CALL TODAY - For \$100 Gift Card", "1-866-373-9175".

AT&T Internet advertisement: "FEEL THE SPEED, EVEN AT PEAK TIMES.", "Get strong, fast Wi-Fi to work and play throughout your home.", "No annual contract.", "Power multiple devices at once—everyone can enjoy their own screen.", "Over 99% reliability.", "CALL 888-486-0359".

Smart Security advertisement: "Smart security. Professionally installed. Protection starts with prevention.", "Get FREE Professional Installation and Four FREE Months of Monitoring Service*", "CALL NOW TO CUSTOMIZE YOUR SYSTEM 844-894-8790", "vivint".