

Lawmaker talks tsunami awareness in Seaside

Student leaders highlight need to relocate schools

By Katherine Lacaze
Seaside Signal

Tsunami preparedness was the focus of Seaside High School's special assembly Tuesday, Feb. 9, that included a presentation by some of the school's student leaders and a visit from U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici.

"We know we can't prevent an earthquake and a tsunami, we can't," Bonamici said. "But we can work on resilience, which is how we prepare to get through those events and how we come back from them after they happen."

One way Seaside School District board, staff and students want to prepare is by moving at least three of the district's four schools to a higher location, where they will be out of the tsunami inundation zone.

"That's a pretty big task, to move schools," Bonamici said. "But it's something that we need to draw attention to, and I applaud you for your leadership and talking about that issue and how important it is."



KATHERINE LACAZE/SEASIDE SIGNAL

U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, D-Ore., paid Seaside High School a visit for a schoolwide assembly. Student leaders Taylor Barnes and Whitney Westerholm are to her left.

In 2013, a \$128.8 million bond measure to build a new campus was defeated by voters. Now Seaside's Associated Student Body leaders are spearheading a campaign, called Don't Catch This Wave, to raise tsunami awareness

and school relocation funds. Superintendent Doug Dougherty also has said he will seek a new bond measure on the ballot this year.

In Congress, Bonamici sponsored the Tsunami Warning, Education and Re-

search Act of 2015. The bill, which Bonamici said has bipartisan support and passed once in the House of Representatives, would do four things: create better tsunami warning systems; provide more assistance for tsunami

preparation; improve coordination between different agencies dealing with tsunami science, technology and regional preparedness and provide more community support through outreach and education.

"I'm really proud of that bill," Bonamici said. "I'm working on getting it through the House again, because of the slight changes made in the Senate."

After Bonamici spoke, Associated Student Body co-Presidents Taylor Barnes and Whitney Westerholm and Treasurer Jesse Trott gave a presentation detailed the impending Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake, anticipated to be at least a magnitude of 8.7, and the following tsunami, projected to bring surging water about 80 to 100 feet above sea level.

As part of the students' Don't Catch This Wave campaign, they are trying to raise \$2 million to relocate the high school, Broadway Middle School and Seaside Heights Elementary School, in addition to spreading awareness about the importance of being prepared. On April 30, the students will partner with the city of Seaside for the Seaside Dash to Safety 5K Run/Walk and Safety Fair.

"What you are doing as students here at Seaside High School, raising awareness about this issue, is really important," Bonamici said. "Your leadership is being recognized, not only by me, but by others across the state."

District approves road map for superintendent search process

Stakeholders provide input to consultants through online survey, meetings

By Katherine Lacaze
Seaside Signal

Seaside School District staff, administrators, student leaders and community members have high expectations for the superintendent who will take over when Doug Dougherty retires at the end of this school year. They hope the person will have leadership qualities, excellent communication skills and a genuine concern for student success and well-being.

During a meeting Feb. 16, the board of directors set a road map for the superintendent search process, including a search calendar, advertising budget and candidate qualifications. Members also officially declared the position vacant, effective July 1.

The district plans to accept applications through March 18. The board then will review and screen applicants and hold interviews, with the goal of hiring someone by the end of April and announcing the decision at the May 17 board meeting.

The board also approved a salary range of \$118,000 to \$128,000 for the new superintendent.

Gathering data, input

To get input from stakeholders about desired qualities for the new superintendent, the district hosted a series of meetings Feb. 9 with district employees, teachers, adminis-



R.J. MARX PHOTO/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Search consultant Greg McKenzie of NextUp Leadership at Seaside High School.

trators, student leaders, parents and community members. The meetings were facilitated by Greg McKenzie, a search consultant from NextUp Leadership, based in West Linn.

The community meeting was poorly attended, with only a single person present, though three school board members showed up to observe. McKenzie said more people opt to share their opinions online, not just in Seaside but in other districts, as well. In general, people show up in person more often if "there is a controversy going on" in the district, McKenzie said.

However, he added, "We're getting very good participation

on the survey." The survey ran from Feb. 1 to 12, so consultants could prepare a report for the board meeting. Overall, about 140 people participated in one form or another.

After reviewing the information collected from the meetings and survey, consultants recommended criteria, a profile and desired characteristics for use in the superintendent search. McKenzie said they were "really looking for the common threads" from the input they received.

Responders' descriptions of the district and area included: a close-knit community on the beautiful Oregon coast; a

small, friendly town working together for its schools; and a collaborative work environment. They also mentioned the district's high-quality, dedicated staff, administrators and school board; school and community partnerships with the hospital, local government and businesses; and that there have been only three superintendents since the district was formed in 1967.

Steven Blakesley, of Arch Cape, a health promotion specialist for Clatsop County who attended the community meeting, said while he feels there are more positives than negatives in the district, the new superintendent could improve a few aspects. He would like the new superintendent to lead the district in gathering data on students' health and wellbeing for the county's Public Health Department; have the ability to work with the community as a

whole and understand the interconnectivity of services for students; and support a strategic plan around curriculum.

Board member Hugh Stelson said another important leadership skill is familiarity with capital improvements and experience overseeing school construction.

The desired candidate, according to participants, will be an effective communicator, a good listener, open-minded,

well-organized, approachable, motivating, humble, a life-long learner and someone with a good sense of humor, positive attitude and high degree of integrity.

Although Seaside is a "stepping stone-sized district," McKenzie said, the consultants want to help the district find someone who will stay for a long time.

"We try really hard to find the right fit, and not the right resume," he said.

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