

Strategic plan issues values, mission statements

District aims to provide 'safe learning environments'

By R.J. Marx
Seaside Signal

Seaside School District laid out its mission and vision statements for its upcoming strategic plan. "This is kind of the 'what do you believe' and 'why are we here,'" Seaside School District Superintendent Sheila Roley said. "The next part is what are we going to do."

In their "Beliefs and Values statement," committee member Lori Lum said "The Seaside School district is dedicated to providing equitable safe learning environments and engaging well rounded education and focus on collective wellness and community partnerships."

In the mission statement, "the Seaside school district is committed to ensuring opportunity, strengthening community and inspiring possi-

Seaside School District expresses values:

BELIEFS AND VISION STATEMENT: The Seaside School district is dedicated to providing equitable safe learning environments and engaging well-rounded education and focus on collective wellness and community partnerships.

MISSION STATEMENT: The Seaside School District is committed to ensuring opportunity, strengthening community and inspiring possibility.

bility."

The two statements are a prelude for the upcoming five-year strategic plan, ap-

proved by the school district board in December.

With a new campus ahead after the approval of a \$99.7

million bond last November, the time is now for a strategic planning process, members felt, as building and relocation will likely dominate discussions in years to come.

Twenty committee members have been meeting monthly to develop the statements and plan, under the director educator Jerome Colonna.

Colonna, who brings more than 45 years experience in Oregon education, is the former superintendent of Beaverton and Redmond schools. He served on the board of the

Oregon Department of Education until last year.

The group received input through online surveys, public meetings, staff, parents and focus groups.

"We received over 200 responses of what people would like to see us do better," Lum said.

The strategic plan committee will continue to meet, with a vision statement anticipated in November regarding strategic goals, performance indicators as well as how we will implement it and, how we will monitor it.



KATHERINE LACAZE/FOR SEASIDE SIGNAL

Parents and students attend registration at Gearhart Elementary School in preparation for the start of the 2018-19 school year.

Seaside school district practices the art of collaboration with new year ahead

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said Juli Wozniak, who will be principal of both schools. "When we come together (in 2020), both staff will know both Jeremy and I, so it will be a much smoother transition, is what I'm hoping for."

Wozniak will have her office at The Heights while Catt will be headquartered in Gearhart. Both administrators, however, will share responsibilities at the two facilities.

"Juli and Jeremy will be a great team," said Sheila Roley, who is going into her third year as the district's superintendent.

In the past, the elementary schools have worked together frequently through regular grade-level meetings and teachers collaborating with and supporting one another for professional development, lesson-planning and problem-solving. They will continue focusing on and increasing that collaboration moving forward, Wozniak said.

The school district also has hired 21 new staff members, including teachers, educational assistants and administrative staff. Lynne Griffin is the new director of special services, the position formerly held by Catt.

Strategic planning

As with each new school year, Roley said they are approaching the 2018-19 year with a "fresh new mindset," and other administrators shared a similar attitude.

"It's very exciting for everybody," director of curriculum Sande Brown said. "It's an opportunity for a new start, to be the best we all can be and do the best job we can."

Since the beginning of the calendar year, the school district has been in the process of forging a strategic plan contain-



KATHERINE LACAZE/FOR THE SEASIDE SIGNAL

Gearhart Elementary School holds an open house for students to get registered for classes ahead of the 2018-19 school year.

ing long-term goals to "make sure we're always in a continuous mode of improvement for the outcomes for our kids," Roley said. The process began with a survey and focus groups to obtain buy-in and opinions from stakeholders across a broad spectrum, from administrators and teachers to parents and community members.

During a regular meeting Aug. 14, the Seaside School Board adopted a new mission statement and beliefs and values statement as part of the strategic planning process. The district will create goals within a five-year time frame, and then work backward to determine what steps need to be taken in what order to move toward those goals, Brown said.

"They're all our kids, whatever level they're at," she said, adding the district's responsibility is "making sure we have the right scope and sequence in place to support them all the way through."

According to Roley, the district has not had a strategic plan that's been so formalized

and comprehensive in years past.

"We've always had goals for our students, at both a classroom level and building level," she said. "We're taking a fresh look to make sure all the things we do for the students is going to get them where they need to be."

Roley herself is balancing the campus relocation and construction project, which she described as "a big part of my work," with business as usual and day-to-day operations. She feels, though, that from the project consultants and the school board to principals and assistant principals, she has "wonderful people with me every step of the way."

In the long run, she said, "both our strategic plan and our physical location will give us a lot more tools to support kids."

Evolving approaches

As for instruction, the district is adopting new health curriculum at the middle and high

school levels. Each year, the district re-adopts the curriculum for one area of instruction, so subjects are updated every seven years. They choose one subject per year for budgetary reasons and to not strain the instructional staff, Brown said. Next year, the new curriculum will be for social studies.

Additionally, "as a district, we are kicking off our move to training our administrators and teachers, and eventually teaching assistants, in Constructing Meaning strategies," Brown said.

Constructing Meaning — although originally an English Language Development curriculum based in language acquisition research — is a comprehensive approach for developing English proficiency to help students read, write and speak more proficiently, which then helps them progress in all areas of learning, Brown said.

In conjunction with strategic planning, staff district-wide has been divided into three cohorts to be trained in the Constructing Meaning instruction method during the next three years. In Brown's experience, for students exposed to this approach, "their writing is so much more polished and thoughtful and supported." It also encourages them to speak more in the classroom to practice processing ideas and thoughts out loud.

Brown also is looking forward to consolidating the district's schools into one campus for both primary and secondary education, and they are testing programs and curriculum in anticipation of that transition.

"There are some opportunities that will present themselves by having all our experts and kids in one place," she said. "We'll be able to more efficient in our services and our time."

Uber simplistic: A&B Pizza opens in Seaside

Mike Kaffer's art of the pizza pie

By Brenna Visser
Seaside Signal



BRENNA VISSER/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Mike Kaffer opens a new pizza shop on Avenue B and U.S. Highway 101.

Mike Kaffer is giving Seaside locals simple, quality pizza another go.

Kaffer briefly owned and operated Avenue Q pizza before having to close in March due to mechanical issues with the building. But when he saw the vacancy on Avenue B left by Gray Whale BBQ earlier this summer, he decided to give his dream of starting a pizza parlor of his own another chance.

"Life is so complicated now. I'm not into smart phones or computers. I just like making food," Kaffer said. "It's a simple, old school thing."

Simple and old school is what Kaffer is trying to encapsulate at A&B Pizza. The shop is a one-man operation. The entire menu consists of a concise list of classic toppings scribbled onto a chalk board, such as pepperoni, sausage, mushroom, olives, basil and pineapple. To drink? A small selection of water and soda \$1 a piece. Only full 16-inch thin crust pizzas will be offered, created with a handmade, long-fermented pizza dough.

At A&B pizza, his goal is to not only create quality pizza, but quality connections with the local community.

"I really like the model of The Stand," Kaffer said, refer-

ring to the Mexican restaurant on Holladay Drive. "Being conscious to the locals is important. I want a personal relationship with my customers, so that when you walk in I know if you want more or less char on the crust than I normally do, or how much cheese you like. I don't want to just capture the people driving by the highway."

Growing up in Tennessee, Kaffer has been making pizza for the majority of his life. While he's ready "to be his own boss," he has no desire to be a restaurant manager or to start a small pizza empire.

"If I did that, I'd be spending less time making pizza, which is what I love to do," he said.

Although the interior still has a minimalistic aesthetic to it, Kaffer is open for business Tuesday through Saturday from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

"I love Seaside, and Seaside has been very accepting to me," Kaffer said.

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County employment sizzles with summer

The Daily Astorian

Clatsop County's seasonal unemployment rate in July was the 10th-lowest in the state, according to the state Employment Department.

Seasonal rates compare employment

changes with reality. The county's seasonal unemployment rate was 3.7 percent in July, down from 3.8 percent in June and slightly below the state and national average of 3.9 percent.

The county was expected to gain 140 positions in July,

but only added 40. The private sector added 510 jobs with the busy summer season, while government employment fell by 470 during the break, including 410 in education.

Total nonfarm payroll employment was at 18,600

in July, a 140 increase from the year prior. Leisure and hospitality added 260 jobs over the past year, along with 120 in retail trade and 60 in construction. Professional and business services lost 180 jobs over the past year.