

SCHOOL BOARD ROUNDUP

District looks ahead to 2020-21

By KATHERINE LACAZE
For Seaside Signal

The Seaside School District has made a few alterations to the 2019-20 school calendar compared to previous years to lessen disruption to instructional time and better align breaks and in-service days among the various schools.

Superintendent Sheila Roley said this year, the administration made a concerted effort to gather ideas and hear concerns from staff members regarding the calendar to identify what changes to make to what has typically been done in the past.

She shared the proposed calendar during the district’s regular board meeting April 16.

In particular, the elementary schools “really provided some great, robust information,” Roley said, adding they also received input from the middle and high schools, as well.

According to the calendar, which was approved by the board, the school year kicks off Sept. 3 for first-through sixth-graders and ninth-graders; Sept. 4 for students in seventh, eighth, 11th, and 12th grades; and Sept. 5 for kindergarten students.

In-service days, during which staff receives professional development and there is no school for students, include Aug. 26 to 29, Oct. 11 and Nov. 25 in 2019 and March 9, April 27, and June 11 and 12 in 2020.

Students will not go to school during the week of Thanksgiving, or Nov. 25 to 29. Traditionally, trying to provide instruction for two-and-a-half days before the

holiday is challenging and does not provide optimal results, according to insight from staff members. The calendar still features a two-week winter vacation, which will occur from Dec. 23 to Jan. 3, 2020.

High school graduation is scheduled for June 8, 2020. The last day of school for all students will be June 10, 2020, which will give staff two full in-service days to work on packing and moving to the new school campus in preparation for the 2020-21 school year.

“Packing is more than a two-day job, and we’re going to try to provide opportunities to support staff throughout the last trimester of the school year to start getting things done, but it seems pretty essential we put in a little extra time there,” Roley said.

DAY CPM, the consulting firm managing the campus construction project for the school district, also will provide services and potentially labor to help the district’s schools transition to and settle into their new facility, Roley said.

In other news:

- The board approved the disposal of three outdated school buses.

- The board approved a gift donation of approximately \$6,700 from community member Tom Briggs. He requested the funds be divided among the four schools, with \$1,500 going to each elementary school and the remainder going to the high school. Briggs, who retired from the Boeing Company, has long been an avid supporter of the high school’s robotics team and consistent community partner, Roley said.

Prom: How Seaside kids made school prom a hit

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“This is the main responsibility of the junior class office,” junior class secretary Kara Spell said, adding the event is traditionally conceptualized as a parting gift for seniors as they prepare to graduate next month.

The theme of this year’s Seaside High School prom, held May 4, was “Second Star to the Right” and each aspect of the activities leading up to the event alluded to the story of Peter Pan and fantastical Neverland as they have been presented time and again in both book and film.

Detailed event-planning

With only five class officers to organize the event, the group dived into planning soon after the Associated Student Body’s major Dollars for Doernbecher’s fundraiser wrapped up in December.

“We started super early, because we all knew it was going to take a lot of time,” junior class sergeant-at-arms Emma Brown said.

The most important tasks included booking the venue, DJ, and photographer. After Seaside missed holding prom at the Red Building last year, as it was booked by another group, the school was proactive in securing the venue for this year, Brown said. They also acquired DJ “OSO Fresh” Wright, of Portland, and photographer Sara Absher.

Beyond that, Brown said, there is plenty of minutia to deal with that might easily be overlooked: Finding chaperones and getting them background checks, ordering party favors, acquiring crowns and sashes, developing a song suggestion list, selling tickets, and designing decorations.



Sunnia Chan and Karina Nolasco Huanosta Brianna Hill and Seth Trevino share a moment.

To accomplish the work, the juniors spent numerous lunch periods meeting with their advisors, Jim Poetsch and Anne Lynes, and also working after school and on weekends.

Prom royalty

Another critical task involved with the event is organizing the prom court of four princesses and four princes, who this year were seniors Seth Trevino, Alyssa Goin, Peyson Acree, Shelbylee Rhodes, Mason Crawford, Travis Fenton, Audrey Kunde and Annaka Garhofer.

Unlike previous years, Brown said, they conducted the election online, which generated automatic results and made the process simpler.

While the concept of prom king and queen is shrouded by negative connotations because of its stereotypical portrayal in movies and television shows, Spell and Brown don’t believe the Seaside student body approaches it in an overly competitive way that leads to drama and hurt feelings.

“I don’t think the court is as big of a deal as maybe it would be in other places,” Brown said.

However, one of the pre-prom activities that’s become tradition at the high school is announcing the court members during an assembly in a fun, entertaining way. After Trevino, Acree, Crawford and Fenton were announced as the princes, they were then dressed in fairy wings and tutus to complete an obstacle course that resulted in revealing the names of the princesses. All the obstacles were on-theme: knocking down a bowling pin, or “sinking the ship”; spinning on a pirate sword and walking the plank; and fishing with a clothes hanger hook.

At the dance, students then voted as they arrived for prom king and queen, ultimately selecting Goin and Trevino.

Time-honored tradition

While putting on prom requires considerable amounts of time and hard work, many students still view it as one of the import-



The theme of this year’s Seaside High School prom, held May 4 at the Red Building in Astoria, was “Second Star to the Right.”

ant social events that contribute to the overall high school culture and experience.

“I love getting people together and prom is a huge part of bringing people together,” Brown said, adding it also presents a rare opportunity for young people to get dressed up to dance and socialize.

She also feels being involved in school activities leads to an enriching high school experience, which is one of the reasons she joined student leadership — “so I could be involved as best I can,” she said.

While the challenge of setting up an event they have yet to experience was interesting, the juniors pulled it off.

“We have different strengths and they go together well,” Spell said, adding they weren’t faced with notable disagreements along the way. On the night of the dance, they were able to relax, except for minor duties, and enjoy the fruits of their labor.

“It’s fun to have ideas and see them come to life,” Brown said.



Stacey Dundas

Kierra Gastelum, Stacey Dundas, Savannah Cisneros-Breitmeyer, Makenna White, Amelia Gastelum, Malory Dundas, Alona Whisenhunt, Victoria Soprano, Ella Clyde, Brody Brenden and Ella Boles. Not picture: Allison Whisenhunt, Becky Boles and Stephanie White.

Jump rope: Skippers head to Norway

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and have done high school halftime shows, Blazer pregame shows. They’ve marched in parades. The Norway trip is a trip of a lifetime. The Tsunami Skippers are the only jump rope team from Oregon making the journey.

“We only found out six months ago the World Jump Rope Championship would be in Oslo,” Dundas said.

The Tsunami Skippers team includes 20 kids, but only nine will be headed to Norway. “I had to pair them to compete, so there’s been some shifting around,” she said.

To prepare for the championship, she said she’s been pushing them a little harder and expecting a bit more of them.

Traveling to Norway are nine kids and four competing adults.

Six from the 11 and 12-year-old group will attend, and three from the 13 and 14-year-old team. Four adults will accompany the group.

Sponsors include Duane Johnson Real Estate; Dundees Bar & Grill; Clatsop Distributing; Defiant Boatworks; Gearhart Dentistry; Inland Electric; John-

son and Sons Electrical; Inland Electric; Lum’s Auto Center; Providence Seaside Hospital; Moto Mortgage Professionals; Rivertide Suites; Providence Seaside Hospital; Seaside Aquarium; and Seaside Family Dentistry, among others.

Preparation for the trip is focusing on the speed events. “We’re pushing past each event by ten seconds to build up stamina,” Dundas said.

The Tsunami Skippers train two days a week at Broadway Middle School.

“This trip will be the first time for most of the kids to leave North America,” Dundas said. “It’s the last World Jump Rope Championships before the special qualifications. After this, the odds of being able to go dramatically will shift.”

On April 27, the Tsunami Skippers participated in a tournament at Seaside High School. “We hosted,” Dundas said. “We had three other teams beside our own attending. We had Hotdog USA from Kirkland, Washington; West City Rope Ninjas from Seattle; and Bainbridge Island Rope Skippers from Bainbridge. There were about 90 competitors. We had 20 kids competing on our teams and we had 17 personal records set, which

is exciting. In our speed events we placed 35 times in the top five, and in free-style events, 27 times in the top five. The kids did really well.”

Dundas said at the tournament in April she got to see her own jump rope coach, who she hadn’t seen since she was in fifth grade.

“I cried,” she said. “He was my PE teacher in elementary school in Eugene. We were called ‘The Hot Peppers.’ That’s where it all began.”

Jump rope, as Dundas can attest, is a way to see the world.

“I went on my first airplane ride through jump rope,” she said. “I went to the San Diego Soccer stadium to perform in front of 20,000 people. I did an international jump rope camp, which was a game changer for me, seeing different styles.”

It was her own experience of jump rope that inspired her to start the Tsunami Skippers when her daughter Haylee was in third grade at Cannon Beach Elementary School. Haylee is a college student now. She does photography for the Tsunami Skippers.

For more information about the Tsunami Skippers, log on to their website at tsunamiskippers.com.

At Cinderella’s Closet, the door opens for girls to go to prom

By BRENNA VISSER
The Astorian

Krystal Pike remembers what it felt like to worry about getting a prom dress.

As the daughter of a single mom, there was rarely extra money left over for things like a ballgown or salon day.

“I felt like those kinds of things wouldn’t be for me,” she said.

But Pike also remembers friends who lent her dresses to make sure she could attend dances when she went to Warrenton High School.

“It was a feeling of acceptance ... the feeling of being included,” she said. “They didn’t want me to miss out on something like that. We still wanted to do things together, but if you didn’t have a dress you couldn’t go — just like Cinderella. I just remember feeling like somebody cared enough.”

So on Saturday, it was especially meaningful for Pike, a stylist for Allure Salon, to be able to help girls getting ready for Warrenton and Seaside proms through Cinderella’s Closet. The program, run by the Assistance League of the Columbia Pacific, lends prom and homecoming dresses to students who may not otherwise be able to afford the attire.

About 30 students on the North Coast took advantage this year of the stockpile of shoes, accessories and more than 600 donated dresses.

The hope is to make everyone “feel like a princess” at prom, said Seana Fields, the program’s newly named chairwoman.

“Going to dances is expensive. This is about giving girls the opportunity to level the playing field,” she said.

This year, the program



Colin Murphey/The Astorian

Seana Fields looks through a rack of prom dresses at Cinderella’s Closet in Warrenton.

worked with four local salons to give students a free hair and makeup session.

“We thought, ‘How could we make it more special?’” Fields said.

When Pike heard about the opportunity, she knew she had to get involved.

“I just wanted to give back to a young girl like myself who couldn’t drive to Portland and try on a bunch of dresses,” she said.

Adding a free salon day is part of Fields’ overall goal to expand Cinderella’s Closet and revitalize its image. For several years, the Assistance League has seen participation lag.

In the past, the league has struggled to get the word out through schools, as well as battled the perception the donated dresses are too out of style or only for girls with single-digit dress sizes.

Fields hopes to change that by doing a fundraiser so the program can have its own money and flexibility to buy a variety of dresses each year.

Fields joked that she has already started studying by scrolling through everyone’s prom photos on Facebook.

She also wants to include boys by accepting

donations for items like dress slacks and shirts.

“Yes, (dances) are frivolous and fun. But it’s another layer of what it’s like to be in high school,” Fields said. “I want to see people feeling comfortable and happy, and I think it’s important to give people the opportunity if it’s there. These things aren’t necessities, so it’s nice to not add additional burden to families.”

For Janessa Bork, a freshman at Warrenton High School, the idea of getting all dolled up in make-up and a fancy dress for prom made her a little nervous.

“I wasn’t sure how I’d like it on me,” she said.

Buying an expensive dress for one night seemed financially unrealistic for her family. Her initial local shopping trip to find a dress in her budget wasunfruitful.

So when Bork saw a flyer for Cinderella’s Closet, she decided to give it a try.

“I think it’s great,” June Bork, her mother, said while watching her daughter’s hair get curled. “Dresses are expensive, and we couldn’t find anything here. Her friends would have been doing her hair instead if it weren’t for this.”