

All teachers in district receive technology training via Intel grant

From page 1

team events. The team has placed first in team events and is working hard to earn the league Sportsmanship Award. Their final league competition of the season will be in McMin-nville, April 19, 20, and 21 and several team members are expected to qualify for state competition.

"Teach to the Future"

Because "Computers aren't magic, teachers are," Intel's "Teach to the Future" grant program provides training and equipment for a master teacher, who then trains the remainder of district staff. Small school districts, like Vernonia, have too few people to qualify for the program, but Intel provided a bonus: The Vernonia district combined with the Jewell School District made a large enough group. Vernonia teacher Doug Tesdal, who completed his master teacher training during the summer, taught teachers in Vernonia and in Jewell, simultaneously, using V-Tel equipment provided by Intel as part of the grant program. All 40 Vernonia School District teachers have now completed training in how to use Power Point and other applications as tools for lesson planning and presentation to students.

Glenda Delemos, who emceed the presentation to the board, also wrote the grant that provided funds so the district could participate in the program. In addition to the master teacher training and the V-Tel equipment, both the grade school and high school received computer labs with up-to-date laptop computers for student use, and a large "smart board" to use for presentations.

Tesdal required every teacher to write a lesson plan for their students using the laptop computer lab. Music teacher Bonnie Holtz described her lesson plan on sea shanties and explained to the board how she would use it with her students. Her son, Ben, also demonstrated how he had used the technology to write a report about his recent trip to Washington, DC. The two presentations made the use of the technology – and the Washington, D.C., trip – come alive for the board of directors.

According to the elementary and high school principals, the laptop computers are in con-

stant use. The kids are quiet, intense and working when they can get a laptop. For example, Cari Bickford's fourth grade class is working on their seventh project. All students in the district will have an opportunity to use this exciting technology to write reports and make presentations.

Concluding the presentation, Delemos emphasized that the Intel grant funded the entire program, including all of the teacher training, equipment and software necessary to operate the system.

Policy on foreign exchange students

Nona Skinner, program representative for the American Scandinavian Student Exchange (ASSE) advised the board that revisions in the district's policy on exchange students have created deadlines that make it difficult for exchange programs to comply with U.S. State Department guidelines. In addition, the policy is unclear about whether board action is required for a program to have more than two students enrolled in the school.

Last month, the board changed the policy, removing American Field Service from the list of recognized programs and adding Council on International Educational Exchange.

The board directed high school principal Mike Durbin to discuss the problems with both programs and develop a reworded policy. The board also will take action on an additional ASSE student at the April 18 meeting.

Northwest Regional ESD

Superintendent Larry McClellan praised the work of the local ESD after Jerry Jones and Kenda Shoemaker presented the board with the Northwest Regional Educational Service District annual report. NWRES is very conscious of being a service agency that works for kids, McClellan said.

Jones also briefly explained ESD funding to the board, and discussed the disparity between funding for NWRES and Multnomah ESD, which have the same number of students. Jones said that during the last legislative session a five-year equalization plan was approved.

Grant applications

McClellan praised the efforts of staff in developing a complicated grant application for the School Repair, IDEA and Technology Renovation Grant Program, which is actually three separate federally funded grant programs. The largest grant application is for \$500,000 to provide funds that would allow the district to build a multi-use building to get children out of the Washington Grade School basement. The district has high hope of securing these funds since a preference for high-poverty, rural communities is included in the grant legislation. A second application, for \$217,389, was submitted for funds to replace obsolete classroom computers. The third part of the request, for \$86,662, is for IDEA funds, for improvements in the special education department.

In other business the board:

- Again tabled discussion and action on the communication audit and the contract extension for the district's architect.
- McClellan reported that school enrollment numbers continue to fall to a greater extent than expected.
- Approved a resolution that would allow the district to participate in an OSBA-sponsored pension bond program that may reduce costs to the district. The program is still being re-

searched and actual participation will be decided at a future meeting.

• Elementary Principal Kirk Sherrill reported that WGS is having a penny drive to raise funds for new sports/play equipment.

• Agreed to have a board retreat in July, soon after a new superintendent is hired.

• Received a draft of next year's school calendar. The draft is being reviewed by the staff.

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