

Music, soccer and mascots keep Banks school board occupied

Mark Anderson, the new elementary music teacher, and Ron LaGrone, the district's new band teacher, told the Banks School District Board of Directors how they are enjoying their new positions and what progress they have made, at the board meeting November 5. Anderson said that he really enjoys the students and the design of the music room. He has been working on providing students with many hands-on music opportunities. He has over 30 students participating in the fourth-grade choir and another dozen in a combined fifth- and sixth-grade choir.

LaGrone, who teaches band at all three schools, outlined his plans for competition and performing. He has 43 students in

fifth-grade band and 11 in sixth-grade band. He has combined these groups and they are meeting every day in the cafeteria. He has the horns two days a week, the woodwinds two days a week and the entire band on Fridays. LaGrone plans to combine this group with the beginning band from the junior high and have them march in the Junior Rose Festival Parade in June. He has combined the intermediate junior high band, which has 18 players, with the high school band to increase the pep band ranks at football games, and also plans to have this group march in the StarLight Parade. LaGrone hopes to have the intermediate band compete at the Oregon State Middle

School band festival. His goals for the high school band are to keep them active and out in public. LaGrone has also formed a jazz band of combined grades that meets after school and will, hopefully, be competing in December.

In keeping with the musical theme of the evening, third-grader Noah Tufts demonstrated his flute playing ability to the board by playing two songs. Tufts has two wooden flutes, one small and one large. The large one was a gift from his grandfather. He explained that he became interested in flutes after his older sister started playing.

Steven Kiss, president of the Banks Youth Soccer Association, presented the board with a proposal for establishing a self-funded varsity program for soccer starting in the fall of 2008. He reported that the program is viable because there is a critical mass of players, both boys and girls, entering high school next year who have expressed interest in varsity soccer. He also showed that there are many more players coming up the ranks behind them, with community participation increasing every year. He ex-

plained that the program would be self-funded by player fees and commercial sponsorship. Practices and games could be conducted on existing fields and the BYSA would continue to work to increase field space. The board thanked Kiss for his proposal and promised to look into it soon.

Tim Collier, chief financial officer of the Northwest Regional Education Service District made the annual presentation to the Banks School District. Collier reported that Banks will receive \$295,000 in services this academic year. These funds are used to provide various needs, such as autism services, early intervention and enrollment in alternate schools when necessary. The ESD also provides core services that all participating districts receive equally.

Duane Lundsten, chair of the board of directors, asked Jim Smith to speak about the mascot controversy concerning Native American mascots. Smith, along with high school Principal Jim Foster, had attended a hearing of the Oregon Department of Education. All of the 16 high schools in the state with Native American mascots were represented at the meeting. Smith said that State Superintendent Sue Castillo did not attend the hearing but had members of her staff present. Nationwide, 29 states have banned the mascots. Smith feels that there is a national momentum that doesn't reflect

any local concern. Smith said "I'm fearful that the political machine is in process. It may not be a community decision." There have not been complaints from any of the local Oregon tribes, according to Smith, but seems to be a few individuals driving the action. Tribes did not attend the hearing and some schools have written support from local tribes to keep their mascots. Smith said the overwhelming feeling of the schools at the hearing was that the mascots should be left alone. Castillo should make her decision in the next month or two. The recommendation from an advisory committee was to have new mascots in place by September 1, 2009 and retire all logo materials by September 1, 2011.

The consent agenda included the following personnel changes:

Resignation: Dan Mullen, High School Math teacher, effective October 26, 2007

Extra duty contracts for the 2007-08 school year: Tim Hardie, eighth grade girls' basketball coach; Gabe Pagano seventh and eighth grade wrestling coach; Parker Bode, seventh grade boys' basketball coach; Lori Martin, seventh grade girls' basketball coach; Jonathan Pearson, eighth grade boys' basketball coach; Jim Gerlinger High school assistant boys' basketball coach.

The board took action on many policy updates. This was

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