

March 15 • School Board Meeting Recap

All day kindergarten discussed at work session

More time needed to meet demanding state requirements

Board members held a public work session last night to discuss a district-wide all day kindergarten program. **Linda Boggs**, who was recently promoted from principal of Blue Ridge Elementary to Assistant Superintendent, facilitated the session.

Boggs said the district needs more time than the current 450 hours required per year to prepare students for state requirements of exiting kindergarten students. She said the all day program would not add more curriculum and materials to the program, rather it would afford more time to accomplish what is currently expected. Boggs said several schools already have some components of an all day program in place and the students are performing well.

Several parents in attendance last night had concerns over the proposal. Most concerns centered around parent loss of contact time with their children. Some parents requested the school board consider offering a half-day program as an option for families that want that educational opportunity. Boggs said all options were still on the table and would be considered.

Although no action was taken on this issue Tuesday night, Boggs said she hopes a decision could be made by Spring Break. Kindergarten registration is scheduled for April 18-29.

Key messages from work session

- All day kindergarten request an outcome of the Symposium.
- Some district students already have an all day program.
- Many parents have requested all day kindergarten.
- State requirements of exiting kindergarten students cannot be adequately addressed within 450 hours per year.
- All day kindergarten allows instructional flexibility.
- Fiscal savings through elimination of mid-day bus routes.

Board approves 2005-2006 calendar

School board members approved the 2005-2006 calendar last night per recommendation from the district's calendar committee.

Next year's calendar -- "*Option A*" -- will remain similar to the 2004-2005 calendar.

The calendar committee, which consists of representation from WWVEA, PSE, WWPS school board, PTSA, Dixie, College Place and the community, recommended adopting a one year calendar, instead of a two year.

"The committee felt it needed more time to continue delivering the message of the advantages of a mid-winter break," Committee Chair **Linda Boggs** said. "The mid-winter break would help ease teacher burn-out associated with teaching extended day programs for a longer period of time and help the district handle extensive staff and student illness during February."

Unofficial survey results from WWVEA and PSE revealed 60 percent were in favor of the calendar adopted last night with 40 percent in favor of "Option C," which included a mid-winter break.

"Committee member and local sleep expert **Dr. Richard Simon** supported "Option C" based on his research linked to student achievement ties with the physiological characteristics of students attending school when there is more daylight," Boggs said. "Days are short in February."

Calendar Committee members plan to reconvene earlier next school year to begin discussions on the 2006-2007 school year calendar.

In other School Board meeting business...

Board members:

- approved minutes of regular board meeting March 1, 2005, Personnel Report, Resolution #1-2005, WIAA Membership, payment of March bills and payroll.
- received for first reading the proposed revision of Policy 2331, Controversial Issues/Guest Speakers.
- tabled action on the revision of Policy No. 2020, Curriculum Development and Adoption of Curriculum and Instructional Materials. School board members encouraged a minor change in administrative procedures to better align with the policy. The delay allows time for the procedures to be revised and reviewed with staff and any interested community member.

Our Core Values
are more than mere words;

they're our business!

Quality | Integrity | Accountability | Respect | Courtesy

Personnel Report

• New Hires

NONE TO REPORT

• Resignations/Retirements

Classified

Lloyd Commander, Director of Head Start/ECEAP - 1 year

Kathy Riener, Cook Manager, Paine Campus - 15 years

Gail Danielson, Para-Educator, Blue Ridge - 22 years

Leave of Absence

Karen Alaniz, Special Education teacher, 15 years (medical leave through the end of the school year.)

Quote of the Week

"To accept good advice from others increases one's own ability."

Anonymous

Big 9 to expand if WIAA amendment passes

The Big Nine Conference could witness a growth spurt if a WIAA Amendment receives support from the organization's Representative Assembly next month.

An amendment on the table calls for the league classifications to change. Classifications, better known as 4A, 3A, 2A, 1A, and B in Washington state, are based on student enrollment.

Wa-Hi competes at the 4A level. Under the proposal, schools would need a student body of 1305 in grades 10-12 -- up from 1201 -- to qualify for 4A status.

In his report to school board members last night, Athletic Director **Don Wilkins** said some 4A schools in the Big 9 would become 3A schools under the proposal. Wilkins said several of the schools including Kamiakin, Southridge and Hanford have indicated they would opt to "play up" to the 4A level to maintain the integrity of the level of competition. He said West Valley (Yakima) and Sunnyside have also indicated a desire to play at the 4A level.

Wilkins said he feels strongly the amendment will pass in April, thus prompting the classification change to take effect in 2006-2007 school year and continuing through at least 2007-2008.

"The move is designed to balance the number of teams in each classification," Wilkins said.

Currently 91 schools compete at the 4A level. If the amendment passes, the number is expected to lower the number of schools competing at the 4A level. Wilkins said a 14 school Big 9 conference would create some scheduling challenges, but nothing that couldn't be worked out. He said league divisions would need to be established.

District's new Strategic Plan to go before board in April

Superintendent **Rich Carter** reported to school board members the district is on schedule to finalize the district's new five year Strategic Plan by April.

Carter said he expects to ask the board to consider approving the plan at the April 20 school board meeting (note date change).

Action teams are finalizing the goals, key action steps and desired outcomes. The Action Teams will meet for the final time Monday and the entire Strategic Plan Committee will meet to review the plan

March 28.

Development of the district's new strategic plan began in September with the successful Community Symposium at Whitman College. More than 100 people including staff, board members, students, parents and community members participated in the Symposium.

A Strategic Plan Committee was then formed to shape the recommendations from the Symposium into a plan to serve as a *Roadmap to the Future*.

Classified School Employees Week

March 14-18

School Retirees Appreciation Week

March 21-27

Thanks for all you do for the children of Walla Walla!

Art Regier Volunteer of the Year nominations due this week!

Nomination forms are available at each school office or by e-mailing Mark Higgins at mhiggins@wwps.org.

The nomination process is easy to complete, so please consider taking time to thank to those who are making a difference in your school.

Garrison Track Project gets okay to move forward with concrete work

With nearly \$90,000 in the bank, Citizens for a new Garrison Track Project are ready to begin concrete work on the long jump pits, shot and discus circles. Superintendent **Rich Carter**, with complete support of the school board, authorized the move.

The construction work will not impact current use of the facilities or be a danger to students.

In his report to school board members, spokesperson **Craig Nelson** said the group continues to get fundraising support. He said one way or another, the project will happen this summer.

The **10/10 Staff Newsletter** is published three times per month by the Walla Walla Public Schools Communications Department.

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