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Focus on Education

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Walla Walla Public Schools

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Coach to Cure MD

Walla Walla School Football players Reid Magnaghi and Mitchell Huffman support the fundraiser during the Kennewick HS football game.

Walla Walla High School football coaches and players teamed to raise more than \$2000 for the Coach To Cure MD project. Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy is the most common fatal

genetic disorder diagnosed in childhood and leads to progressive muscle failure. Coach Eric Hisaw reports the Blue Devils are the only team in the state to support this project.

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Walla Walla Public Schools

Focus on Education

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Wa-Hi student has her sights on college

Ocampo juggles a full schedule and finds time for her family

This time next year Walla Walla High School senior Veronica Ocampo will be enrolled in college. She will be the first in her family to attend. In fact, she will be the first in her family to graduate from high school.

The path to college has not come easy. She has been raised by a single mom

with a significant role in helping provide for her three younger siblings.

"I want to be a role model for my brother and sisters," Ocampo said. "I want to make good choices and set a positive example for them to follow."

As president of the Latino Club, Ocampo has accepted the challenge of being a leader for her peers as well. Her club organizes childcare for Garrison Night School families, sponsors cultural awareness events and raises funds to support college scholarships. She would like to attend the University of Washington or Seattle University to study International Business.

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"Our Core Values are more than mere words; they're our business!"

Quality
Integrity
Accountability
Respect
Courtesy
Innovation
Diversity

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE...



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Welcome to the new school year

“ We are well into the quarter as you receive our Fall issue of the Focus on Education community newsletter. Our staff and students are working hard and engaged in vast learning opportunities throughout the district.

I want to thank the school board and community for providing me an opportunity to once again serve this great district.

I began my career in Walla Walla Public Schools in the late 1960s as a fresh graduate of the University of Idaho. As a new teacher at Pioneer Junior High School, I was afforded the opportunity to learn from so many dedicated educators about what it takes to inspire academic achievement.

I've based my 45 year career in public education on a philosophy which puts the needs of students at the forefront of all decisions. We must have clear and open

communications and high expectations for all. This creates a foundation of trust.

We are proud to announce graduation rates remain well above state averages and our ACT scores exceed state averages as well.

We also face challenges this school year as we fully implement the Common Core Standards and the new state assessments which follow. We are in the midst of a transition at Wa-Hi as the new College Place High School opens.

We are excited to support our students this year as they strive to make tremendous academic and personal gains. We appreciate your support and partnership in providing a quality education for all Walla Walla students

Together, we are having an important impact on the young people in the Walla Walla Valley area. ”

cont. from p.1... Ocampo's involvement in the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program has also helped support her dream of attending college. She says her road to college began in Walla Walla Public Schools.

"I'm so thankful for the support I have received from all my teachers," said Ocampo. "When I first started school, I didn't know English and was very shy. Now I'm in leadership roles at

school and have made many friends. She is also especially thankful to Latino Club Advisors Bill and Diana Erickson and Refugio Reyes for all their encouragement.

Veronica Ocampo is not letting up during her senior year. In addition to her rigorous class load, she continues to make time to help others. Veronica realizes her potential and is determined to succeed.



Veronica Ocampo

Farm girl finds home in Wa-Hi Ag program

Lindsey Butcher uses school farm to make learning fun

As a child growing up on a cattle farm in Snohomish, WA, Walla Walla High School Agriculture Science teacher Lindsey Butcher learned first-hand the importance of hard work.

Her grandfather was an auctioneer which brought many different animals to the family farm. For young Lindsey, it meant more critters to feed and care for each day.

Her Monroe High School Future Farmers of America (FFA) teacher saw potential in Butcher and asked her to consider a

career in Agriculture Education. Lindsey took the recommendation seriously and decided to attend Washington State University and major in agriculture education.

Now in her eighth year at Wa-Hi, Butcher is highly regarded by her peers and students. She currently teaches Animal Science, Agricultural Food & Natural Resource Science and Veterinary Assistance. She also supports the operations of the school farm which is the home of sheep, alpacas and pigs.

Some of Butcher's students have struggled in school. She uses a hands-on approach to make learning connections.

"Our program allows the students to apply their learning through real life experiences," Butcher said. "I'm so proud of my students for all of their hard work.

Although Lindsey Butcher is all grown up, she is still a small town farm girl at heart.



Lindsey Butcher
Wa-Hi Agriculture Teacher

"Agricultural classes help students make the connections between the academics they learn in other classes and the real world."

★ LEARNING SUPERHERO FINDS HER ROOTS ★



Tracy Williams

When Tracy Williams last took a job with Walla Walla Public Schools in 1982, the Pomeroy native was fresh out of Whitworth College when Principal Bill Jordan hired her at Garrison Middle School.

Fast forward 32 years. Now Williams boasts vast public schools and college experience on her resume as she begins her next tenure in the district. This time, she will be using her superhero-like passions for learning to help the Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Department make sense of

the the new Common Core Standards. Williams serves as the K-12 Content and Technology Coordinator. She will spend most of her time in schools and classrooms working with principals and teachers. Williams is a technology guru and ultimately plans to develop an online clearinghouse for curriculum to support the new rigorous learning standards in Math and English/Language Arts.

Though Williams does not have superhuman powers, she does possess the extraordinary talents needed for this daunting job.

SEA-TECH opens its doors



Thank You Walla Walla!

Walla Walla Public Schools officially dedicated the new Southeast Area Technical Skills Center Sept. 18. Elected officials, local higher education leaders and representatives from partner school districts converged on the site to join in the celebration. SEA-TECH staff and students led guests on guided tours of the facility.

College and Career Readiness

SEA-TECH offers digital media technology, welding, renewable resources and health occupation programs. SEA-TECH is a branch campus of the Kennewick School District's Tri-Tech Skills Center. Partnering districts are Dayton, Waitsburg, Touchet, Prescott and College Place. Students from Walla Walla and all the partner districts attend a morning (AM) or afternoon (PM) block schedule at SEA-TECH. Students are able to earn industry certificates at SEA-TECH.

Southeast Area Technical Skills Center offers job ready skills

No increase to local bond rates

The Washington state legislature, with the strong support of Senator Mike Hewitt and Representatives Maureen Walsh and Terry Nealey, approved \$11,519,000 to fund the design development, construction and equipment for the Southeast Area Technical Skills Center during the 2011-13 biennium. This state action was part of a development model for Skills Centers which provided 90 percent of the funding for the facility and equipment.

Walla Walla Community College leases the land to Walla Walla Public Schools

for \$1 per year. The land agreement represents the district's 10 percent matching portion of the project. The state funded the remaining 90 percent. As a result, this project did not raise local bond rates.

Photos

Left: Student Adrian Sandoval explains to school board member Cindy Meyer, parent Cheryl Heller and former school board member Mary Jo Geidl how SEA-TECH students learn to produce, edit and publish videos.

Center: Health Science Careers Instructor Sandy Thomas RN and students Lexuana Rodriguez (Wa-Hi), Gina Davis (Wa-Hi), Samantha Davis (Dayton HS), and Jade Cramer (Wa-Hi) show off their new SEA-TECH nursing uniforms.

Right Odd Fellows Home residents Louie Brand and Jim Patzkowski look at a drone from Dennis DeBroeck's Digital Media class.

School Board...

Proud to serve our community.

...Forum

Walla Walla Public Schools Board of Directors has established the School Board Forum to respond to questions and issues from the community.

Q Why is the search for a superintendent delayed?

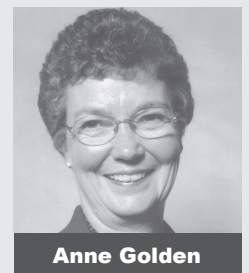
A. The school board is extremely pleased with the job Dr. Bill Jordan is doing since accepting the interim superintendent position in June. He has the experience necessary to help the district transition to a new leader. It's a challenging time for the school district as we face pressures from the state and federal governments. We are fully implementing Common Core Standards, shifting to a new teacher and principal evaluation model and adjusting staffing ratios for fewer students as College Place High School opens. We also have a Replacement Levy in 2016. The school board strongly believes Dr. Jordan is the best person to lead the district over the next two years. The additional year will also allow the school board more time to work with the community to find the best fit for Walla Walla. The formal search will begin Fall 2015.

Q What are the goals for the school board this year?

A. Our focus is to ensure progress is being made in relation to the Strategic Plan goals. The Strategic Plan goals center on learning opportunities for all students, a positive work environment for staff, two-way communications with stakeholders, and ensuring adequate resources to support the district's mission. We will dedicate more time to prioritizing goals, developing strategies and monitoring success.

We will also commit to improving communication, working as a team and preparing for a national superintendent search.

Email your questions to School Board President Anne Golden at: goldenaa@charter.net.



Anne Golden



Sam Wells



Cindy Meyer



David Hampson



Ruth Ladderud

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Michelle

Mental health services at Blue Ridge

Michelle Coleman LICSW has accepted a position as Director of Mental Health services for The Health Center (THC). In her role, she will have clinical oversight for the excellent team of THC therapists providing services for the students of Lincoln High School and Blue Ridge Elementary School. A grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is funding this service.



Brent

Cummings named Afterschool Ambassador

The Afterschool Alliance announced Brent Cummings, 21st Century Community Learning Center Program Director for WWPS, has been selected to serve as an Afterschool Ambassador to build support for afterschool programs. He is one of just 13 leaders from 12 states to be chosen for the honor this year.

Feats of Strength
Pioneer Middle School fundraiser also creates positive school culture



Pioneer Middle School teacher John Carter leads students through a team building activity during the all school Feats of Strength ASB fundraiser organized by teacher Chris Plucker and the school's leadership class. All proceeds support the school's ASB activities. Principal Mira Gobel said the event is a great way to enhance the school's culture.



Dr. Linda Boggs

Common Core Standards

Ensure high school graduates are prepared for college and careers

By Dr. Linda Boggs Assistant Superintendent – Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

School districts in nearly every state across America are fully implementing the Common Core Standards. This is an important positive step forward for public education as we strive to prepare students for college and the work place.

There has been a great deal of misinformation in the media in recent months on this issue. The biggest misconception revolves around the issue of curriculum. Common Core Standards are not curriculum. The Common Core Standards detail what K-12 students should know and be able to do in English/ Language Arts and Mathematics at the end of each grade level. The standards are similar to those used by top-performing nations.

The other issue which seems to have gained public attention is linking the Common Core Standards to a takeover of public education by the federal government. This view point is based on emotion and not the facts. The Common Core are standards which are consistent across the nation. How those standards are taught however, is up to Washington's 295 school districts and more than 2,000 individual schools.

Our district and Walla Walla teachers will still have the flexibility and control to set the curriculum best meeting the needs of students.

We live in a global economy and a mobile society. We see this trend with our students in Walla Walla. This year for example, we had students withdraw from Walla Walla schools and move to Hawaii, California, Oregon, and North Carolina.

With the Common Core, we can be sure our students are learning the skills they need to be prepared for a successful transition to their new school districts. We owe it to Walla Walla students to provide them the skills necessary to be players in the global economy.

Common Core Standards are not curriculum. The Common Core Standards detail what K-12 students should know in English Language Arts and Mathematics at the end of each grade level.

Right now, Washington has 25,000 unfilled jobs for highly-skilled workers — and that number is projected to double by 2017 according to Ready Washington Coalition. We want Walla Walla students to be in a position to compete for these jobs. Teaching to the Common Core Standards will help our students build and learn to apply real-world skills as we prepare them for college and careers.

The other connection linked to the Common Core Standards are the new state assessments -- Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium exams in Math and English Language Arts. Students will take these rigorous exams for the first time this spring to better measure knowledge and establish a baseline for

the future. This is a positive step for our students as we prepare them for college and careers after high school.

The Smarter Balanced assessments will replace the Measurement of Student Progress (MSP) this year, and will also gradually replace the High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE) and End-of-Course exams, with full implementation in place for the Class of 2019.

This new generation of student assessments will be taken completely online, with results available to schools and families much more quickly than is currently the case. The Smarter Balanced website (www.smarterbalanced.org) has vast resources for families and educators, including sample tests showcasing the sophisticated technology used to engage students.

In Walla Walla Public Schools, we rely on multiple assessments throughout the year, not just state-mandated tests given on one day at the end of the year, to ensure that every student reaches full academic potential.

With you as our partner, I'm confident we will realize our mission of helping students become educated, productive citizens and lifelong learners.

Questions or Concerns...

- Visit our Common Core web page www.wwps.org
- Contact Dr. Linda Boggs lboggs@wwps.org / 509.526.6733



School Zone Safety Team research revealed running flashing signs all day results in diminishing effectiveness.

School zone flashing signs to operate during peak travel times

This fall, motorists will notice the school zone flashers alerting them to the 20 mph speed limit will only be operating before school, during lunch and after school. In the past, school zone flashers operated from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. This change was made by the City of Walla Walla following a recommendation from the district's School Zone Safety Team.

"Our research revealed running flashers all day results in diminishing effectiveness," said Ki Bealey, City of Walla Walla Public Works Director. "Also, solar powered school zone flashers are generally not suitable to operate nine hours a day, especially during the winter months."

Several other cities and school districts around the state have adopted similar strategies.

- If no flashing signs are present, then school zones shall be signed, "When Children are Present," in accordance with WAC 46895335.