

## 10-10 Staff Newsletter

Partners in Learning

## School Board Meeting Recap • November 4

**Board proposes four year levy***Levy amount to reach state levy lid by 2007*

Board members last night approved a resolution asking Walla Walla voters to consider a replacement Maintenance and Operations Levy proposal, Tuesday, February 3.

This proposal would replace levy funding 68 percent of Walla Walla voters approved in February 2002.

Maintenance and Operations funding provides approximately 13 percent of the district's operating budget and closer to 18 percent when additional funding contingent on levy passage is figured in.

The school board this year has proposed extending the M&O levy from two to four years. Many districts throughout our state, including our neighbors in College Place, have opted to propose four year levies. Extending the life of the levy has been found to help school districts provide stability to essential educational programs and activities, save on expensive election costs and provide taxpayers a tax rate they can forecast for a longer period of time.

After witnessing state and federal funding cuts the past several years, including **\$807,353** loss in state funding for the 2003-2004 school year, board members voted to push the proposed levy amount to the state lid by year three of this proposed four year levy.

Funding losses from the state and increased operations costs slashed district reserves 3.1 percent this school year. Cash reserves currently rest at four percent. Board mandates call for a three to five percent cash reserve.

Levy funding is no longer just for enrichment, it pays essential educational programs and activities, while also lowering class size and enhancing school safety.

All replacement levy dollars stay in Walla Walla to help fund district operations.

*See Levy back page***Garrison and Pioneer improvement plans target yearly progress marks**

Middle school students 'rock' was the theme middle school principals brought to the board room last night as they reviewed details of their school improvement plans to school board members.

Pioneer Principal **Lyla Riebel** and Garrison Principal **Jim Sporleder**, joined by their assistants **Josh Almy** and **Gina Yonts**, respectively, said student achievement remains the core of their school improvement plans.

Principals thanked staff for their commitment to students and sense of urgency to meet today's tough state and federal standards.

Sporleder reported failure is not an option in our district middle schools. He said an array of safety nets for students in the form of extended learning programs, tutors and special programs are providing avenues for success.

Reibel said middle schools serve as a bridge between elementary school and high school. She said middle school staff are committed to helping students graduate high school. She said collaboration efforts, better understanding of assessment data and professional development are helping staff identify students' needs and develop educational plans to meet them.

**Sharpstein students chart scientific discoveries**

In what had to be the most popular report during last night's school board meeting, Sharpstein Second Grade Teacher **Mary Cortinas** brought several of her students in to review their science notebooks.

In front of a packed house of proud parents and friends, students explained how they

chart their scientific observations.

In addition to learning science content, the projects also helped the students improve their reading and writing skills.

Cortinas said many of the students started their science notebooks last year and have made great gains in 2003.

**In other School Board meeting business...**

November 4 • Board Meeting

**Board members:**

- approved Oct. 21, 2003 board meeting minutes; Personnel and Out-of-State travel reports; and payment of additional October vouchers.

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

Quality

Integrity

Accountability

Respect

Courtesy

## Personnel Report

### • New Hires

(Certificated) - **NONE TO REPORT**

(Classified) - **Jennifer Cisneros**, Bilingual para-educator, Wa-Hi

**Scott Erickson**, Bilingual para-educator, Wa-Hi

**E. Gabriela Horn**, Bilingual para-educator, Green Park

### • Resignations/Retirements

(Certificated) - **NONE TO REPORT**

(Classified) - **NONE TO REPORT**

### • Out-of-State Travel

**Rick Nebeker** to National Association of Bilingual Education Conference in Albuquerque, NM (*funding - Principals & I-728 travel*)

**Janifer Sams** to 5th Annual National Renaissance Conference in Orlando, FL (*funding - Staff Achievement Grant*)

### Quote of the Week

"Genius is 99 percent perspiration and one percent inspiration."

**Thomas Edison**

## 2004 Levy Facts & Information

- The voter approved 2002 M&O Levy, which passed at 68 percent, expires in December 2004 and this Levy would *replace* it.
- This proposed M&O Levy would help *maintain* the current level of teaching and programs.
- This proposed M&O Levy provides approximately *13%* of the operating budget. Additional funding contingent on levy passage, together with the proposed M&O Levy, make up about 18% of the district's operating budget.
- This proposed Levy impacts about *one-sixth* of district programs and services.
- A four-year levy provides *stability* to essential educational programs and activities, cuts expensive election costs and provides taxpayers a tax rate they can forecast for a longer period of time.

### Summary of 2004 Levy Proposal

**2005** - \$6,428,000 (approximate rate \$3.85 / \$1,000)

**2006** - \$6,828,000 (approximate rate \$3.97 / \$1,000)

**2007** - \$7,278,000 (approximate rate \$4.11 / \$1,000)

**2008** - \$7,778,000 (approximate rate \$4.27 / \$1,000)

*These amounts are based on per \$1,000 of assessed property value.*

*Current Levy Amounts w/Projected Rates and Actual rates*

**2003** - \$5,878,000 projected rate \$3.89 / \$1,000 (actual rate - **\$3.74**)

**2004** - \$6,078,000 projected rate \$3.95 / \$1,000 (actual rate - **\$3.78**)

**NOTE:** Law prohibits collection of more money than the total figure approved by voters - even if property assessments increase.

**Remember to Vote!**

**Tuesday, February 3**

## Board approves firm to conduct long-range facilities master plan

With the district eyeing a bond issue in 2005, board members last night cleared the way to begin an in-depth study of district needs by hiring *Architects West* and *MGT of America* to help craft a long-range facilities master plan.

Business Manager **Aron Rausch** reported work to develop a long-range facilities plan would begin immediately as the firms set out to complete eight essential tasks by April 2004.

*Architects West* and *MGT of America* teamed to provide the study and survey for the successful Sharpstein project. *Architects West* went on to become the lead architect for the Sharpstein Modernization project.

Rausch included a draft work plan to the board detailing some of the main objectives and activities to be completed in the next few months.

### Master Plan Tasks include:

- #1 - Initiate and gather information
- #2 - Review current programs
- #3 - Solicit public involvement
- #4 - Develop standards for ranking needs
- #5 - Review and verify enrollment projections
- #6 - Review current school capacity
- #7 - Conduct facilities assessment
- #8 - Develop and select district master plan

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**'Keeping Our Team Informed'**