

Board pushes to finish strategic plan

Visioning process to drive any future bond issue projects

School board members said last night during a public work session they want to see the district's strategic visioning process completed before moving forward with a facilities bond.

"I would like the process to set the date of a bond issue," Board President **Tim Donaldson** said. "We need to complete the visioning process first before making plans for a bond."

The district will now move forward with efforts to finish a new strategic plan to help chart a vision for our district for the next five years or more. Superintendent **Rich Carter** is in the midst of a significant communications effort to get more staff and community input for the plan. He is making public presentations and recapping recommendations from September's successful Symposium 2004. Carter is providing feedback sheets to all staff members and community members to get additional data for the strategic plan.

Former Deputy Superintendent **Dr. Judy Reault**, who now supports regional school districts through ESD 123 in developing strategic plans and curriculum advancements, will work with the district to facilitate the remaining strategic visioning efforts.

"We know what we are getting with Judy Reault and her processing skills will be valuable in finalizing a vision driven plan," Carter said.

A district Strategic Planning "Core Team" of staff, school board members, administrators, parents, students and community members has been formed to complete the strategic plan work. Five evening meetings have been scheduled thus far to support these efforts. The district hopes to bring a draft of the new Strategic Plan to the school board in early 2005. Detailed action plans will then be developed to realize the goals.

Board members said they support district efforts to develop a long-range facilities plan and would consider a multi-issue facilities bond at some point to support findings of last spring's MGT of America independent study which cited the district's vast needs. Board members agreed that the visioning process would help determine how modernized facilities would improve student achievement by supporting curriculum and staff needs and other promising practices expectations.

October 19 • School Board Meeting Recap

Berney celebrates century of excellence



Long-time Walla Walla resident **Bill Berney** (L), grandson of the school's namesake, and **Virgil Whiteley** who attended Berney from 1932 to 1936, look at historic school annuals during last week's Centennial Celebration.

Displays of photos, annuals, uniforms and more representing eras from 1904 to the present were showcased during the event.

Berney students sang, danced and played instruments to pay tribute to students who came before them. Staff members paraded in clothes from various eras during a one-of-a-kind fashion show. The Berney Centennial was a huge success.

Special thanks to Berney staff and students, Principal **David Talley** and especially to Learning Specialist **Susan Meiners** for coordinating the event.

In other School Board meeting business...

Board members:

- approved minutes of regular board meeting October 5, 2004, Personnel and Out-of-State Travel Reports; Basic Education Act Funding Application; and payment of October bills and payroll.

Personnel Report

• New Hires

(*Certificated*) - **NONE TO REPORT**

(*Classified*) - **Maria 'Alex' Covarrubias**, Bilingual Para-Educator, Blue Ridge

Kelli Jo Smith, Special Education Para-Educator, Berney

Ann Caulk, Library Tech, Wa-Hi

• Resignations/Retirements

NONE TO REPORT

• Out-of-State Travel

Lori Finn and **Kirk Jameson** to ACTE Conference in Las Vegas, NV (*funding - Vocational*)

Oscar Graybill to National Staff Development Conference in Vancouver, BC (*funding - I-728*)

Quote of the Week

"Children need love especially when they don't deserve it."

Harold S. Hulbert

Summer school more than just math and reading

Thanks to creative efforts to blend funds from I-728, grants and basic education sources, middle school students participating in summer school programs were able to create computer animated cartoons, take digital photos and explore robotics, according to a report last night from Garrison Principal **Jim Sporleder** and Pioneer Principal **Dana Rosenbach Jones**.

Don't be alarmed, students also received heavy doses of math, reading, writing and science during the summer session. Garrison served on average 50 students per day, while Pioneer participation numbers were very similar. Although summer session is mandatory for students who failed two or more classes, voluntary participation was also encouraged for the exploratory offerings.

Sporleder said 544 hours of instruction were delivered to his students, most of whom he said were struggling to make grade level advancements.

"Most of these kids would be home unsupervised without this program," Sporleder said. "We offer a structured learning environment for students who are in the greatest need."

Both principals said they would like to see the program expanded next summer to serve even more students.

Celebrate American Education Week

Thursday, November 18

10:00 a.m. to 12 noon

Visit the school of your choice

Help us find more participants! They will...

- tour the school of their choice
- learn more about our successes and challenges
- interact with students and staff
- review school improvement efforts

We'll even treat them to lunch!

Please contact Communications Director Mark Higgins if you know someone who might be interested in participating.

Walla Walla Troop Support Ribbons

The National Guard Family Support Group of Walla Walla is selling three varieties of magnetic car ribbons at the Postal Annex (near Plaza Way Safeway store) and at the Bank of America - Main Street Branch for \$5 each.

The funds will be used for a HOMECOMING CELEBRATION for local "National Guard" troops next spring.

"Please refer interested individuals to the above mentioned places to purchase a "support the troops" ribbon," said Special Program's **Marcia Clausen**. "When my son was home on leave from Iraq this summer he noticed every vehicle with a ribbon. It was important to him to see that people in his community supported him and his fellow soldiers."

Hernandez brothers offer Mexican cultural experience

If dancing under the star lit evenings to Mexican music, climbing ancient pyramids, learning how to cook authentic Latin food and improving your Spanish skills sounds tempting, pick up the telephone today and call Wa-Hi's Javier Hernandez or Garrison's Salvador Hernandez.

The Hernandez brothers reported to school board members last night on their cultural exchange program which takes staff members to the heart of Mexico for a month long immersion program.

Sharpstein kindergarten teacher **Jenny Alford** and Wa-Hi Spanish teacher **Matt Bayley** participated in the program and encouraged more staff members to take advantage of this opportunity. Staff members are matched up with Mexican families during the four week stay.

"They made me feel like I was a part of their family," Alford said. "I learned so much more about their culture. It was amazing."

The cultural experience takes staff members to Jungapeo, Mexico in the Southeastern part of the country. The Hernandez brothers take care of all the logistics to support the program. Staff members who go also teach English to people from Jungapeo. Salvador showed a slide show from the program which was nothing short of amazing. They are willing to provide a presentation to individuals or groups interested in learning more.

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'Keeping Our Team Informed'