

October 17 • School Board Meeting Recap

Surveys show strong support for Edison

With nearly 1,100 surveys received the past two months via the district's "Let's Talk Schools — We're Listening" campaign, responses made it clear Edison Elementary was their top priority.

Nearly 90 percent of survey-takers said Edison should be included on the next bond ballot. (*see complete list of messages/themes below*). School board members read each survey and thanked everyone for their input.

School Board President **Mary Jo Geidl** asked Superintendent **Rich Carter** to research costs for replacing Edison Elementary and to have this information available for a public work session, Tuesday, Nov. 7 at 5:30 p.m.

Common Survey Messages/Themes (*as interpreted from survey comment sections by school board.*)

- Involve community in bond planning and facility decisions
- Limit the issues for the bond (one, maybe two projects on the bond at a time)
- Keep cost low
- Prioritize needs based on long-range facilities plan
- Edison is top priority
- Community seeks comprehensive study of the high school experience.

Study areas should include:

- Remodel vs. replace existing Wa-Hi buildings
- Alternative Education experience (including Paine and Opportunity)
- Second high school
- College Place High School (future potential)
- Athletic facility options

Complete list of survey results will be available on the district's website later today: www.wwps.org

School construction costs increase

School construction costs have increased approximately 15 percent according to a report from Superintendent **Rich Carter** at last night's school board work session.

Carter said each year it gets more expensive to replace aging schools. Cost per square foot for elementary schools has jumped from \$240 per square foot for spring 2007 bids to an estimated \$280 to \$315 per square foot for projects to be bid in 2008 -- the earliest the district could bid on construction work should community members pass a 2007 bond.

He noted this does not include money for land purchase. Carter said he will bring hard numbers for replacing Edison Elementary at next month's school board work session.

Carter said growth projections for the city and county anticipate slow, but steady upward movement.

Celebrate American Education Week

Community members invited to go back to school
Thursday, November 16

Join us in celebrating American Education Week!

- Tour the school of your choice
- Learn more about our success stories & challenges
- Interact with students and staff
- And we'll treat you to lunch!

Please contact Communications Director **Mark Higgins** at 526-6716.

In other School Board meeting business...

Board members:

- approved minutes of the board meetings of October 3, 2006, Personnel and Out of State Travel Reports, Basic Education Funding Application and Payment of October Bills and Payroll.

Personnel Report

• New Hires

(Classified) **Rocio Gonzalez**, Bilingual Para-Educator, Blue Ridge
Cresencia Gutierrez-Duran, Bilingual Para-Educator, Sharpstein

• Leave of Absence

(Classified) **Karen Larson**, Para-Educator, Wa-Hi (7 years)
• for the 2006-07 school year

• Out of State Travel

Judy Anderson, Shannon DeBeaumont, Angela Gardea, Dawn Jepson, Dana Jones, Lani Kiefel, and Rilke Klingsporn to attend National Middle School Association Conference in Nashville, TN (Funding: Professional Development)
Kate Venneri to attend Winter 2007 Range Finding for 3/4 WASL (Math) in Lansing, MI (Funding: OSPI)

Quote of the Week

“The great and glorious masterpiece of humanity is to know how to live with a purpose.”

Michel de Montaigne

FFA tractor team plows state competition again

In recent years students from the 222 schools facing the Walla Walla High School's Future Farmers of America Tractor Driving have basically been competing for second place. With six state titles in the past eight years and three consecutive state trophies in their display case, it's clear Wa-Hi is the dominant team in the state.

This year competitors didn't even get a peek at second place as Wa-Hi teams finished first and second in state to continue their reign as the best Tractor Driving program in the state.

Last night advisor **Mike Martin** introduced the teams to school board members and talked about the team. He said Wa-Hi FFA students out work their competitors and put in the practice time necessary to earn these honors.

He said in addition to being superior drivers, Wa-Hi students also score high in the knowledge test which is part of the competition.



Wa-Hi Future Farmers of America Tractor Driving team of Tanner Simmons (10th), Dane Swenson (11th), Blake Hale (12th), Zach Harvey (12th) and Bryce Buckley (10th) took the state title for the third consecutive year.

Wa-Hi Student Assistance Program helps students facing challenges

Wa-Hi Principal **Darcy Weisner** presented to school board members on the school's Student Assistance Program led by **Casey Cramer**. This program helps provide support and counseling to students who are facing substance abuse issues and other personal challenges.

Weisner said recent *Healthy Youth* survey results do concern him as students on the campus continue to be at risk for substance abuse. He said Wa-Hi staff, under the direction of Assistant Principal **Matt Bona**, are working hard to ensure each student has a meaningful relationship with an adult on campus so they have someone they can trust if they need to talk to them about these issues.

Plant Facilities staff continue to live up to motto -- "Quality comes first"

Plant Facilities Department staff members take pride in maintaining school district facilities, according to an annual department report to school board members from Director **Lowell Schneider**.

Schneider thanked his staff for outstanding craftsmanship and professionalism -- noting the crew is experienced and offers vast skills to the district.

Schneider reviewed summer project accomplishments, which included significant work at all district schools. He said quality service and stringent maintenance is provided for 12 district structures, including 10 schools, a central administration building, and the support services complex.

“Our ‘can do’ attitude keeps our buildings safe, efficient, clean, and operational for Walla Walla youth and our entire community to use,” he said.