

February 20 • School Board Meeting Recap

Edison Bond: The Next Step

Although the election doesn't officially certify until later today, last night Business Manager **Aron Rausch** said planning steps to build the 63,000 square foot school have already begun.

In what Rausch described as hectic, but exciting, times he unveiled a four-page document detailing a seven month schedule to get the project design process underway.

Last week Rausch met with **John Evans** of Architects West in what he referred to as the first project meeting. Evans and his firm designed the award winning Sharpstein Elementary modernization seven years ago.

Rausch said he feels comfortable working with Architects West since a relationship has already been established through the Sharpstein project. He also said area sub-contractors have praised the district's choice, noting the firm's exceptional record for communications and attention to detail.

Planning highlights to look for in the coming weeks:

- Meet with home owners (get appraisals on 8 homes)
- Organize neighborhood meetings
- Conduct monthly planning meetings
- Develop design standards for 21st Century classrooms
- Work with financial advisor (Seattle NW Securities)
- Meet with Edison staff
- Hire construction manager (Roan & Associates)
- Competitive bond sale
- Apply for state matching funds
- Edison construction project page on district's website

Collaboration schedule to remain split

Challenges of common schedule out weigh benefits

In a unanimous decision last night, school board members voted to keep the district's Wednesday collaboration schedule the same.

After months of study which included parent and staff surveys, discussions with outside district officials and numerous planning meetings, Assistant Superintendent **Linda Boggs** said last night final reports reveal there are more challenges to creating a K-12 common collaboration schedule than benefits.

Boggs said most of the challenges revolve around student safety, supervision, learning trends, and student program demands.

As a result of these findings, the district will continue offering a split schedule on Wednesdays -- early release for elementary and late start for secondary students -- for teacher collaboration and training. Boggs stressed teacher collaboration remains a high priority and is positively impacting learning.

"We recognize this split schedule presents challenges for some families, but when you look at what's best for students the split schedule best meets their needs," Boggs said.

Boggs reminded school board members that all schools have options for parents which vary from open gym to study sessions if they need to keep their children in school during collaboration time.

"All principals are committed to working with parents' individual needs if our current options don't work," Boggs said.

In other School Board meeting business...

Board members:

- approved minutes of the board meeting of February 6 & 15, 2007, Personnel Report and Out of State Travel, and Payment of February Bills and Payroll.
- approved employment of Roan & Associates for: Edison Construction Management; Value Engineer; Constructability Review.
- received a report from Assistant Superintendent **Linda Boggs** stating the district meets BEA Compliance requirements.
- viewed a video highlighting the YMCA's 100 years of excellence serving the Walla Walla valley.

Personnel Report

• New Hires

(Classified) **Karen Hindman**, Para-Educator, Opportunity

Brian Heim, Para-Educator, Wa-Hi

Nancy Taylor, Substitute Coordinator/Receptionist, District Office

• Resignations/Retirements

(Certificated) **Sue Friese**, Music Teacher, Garrison (30 years)

Kari Jones, Fifth-Grade Teacher, Sharpstein (5 years)

• Kari was on a leave of absence for the 2006-07 school year

Adam Withycombe, Explorers Program Teacher, Pioneer (4 years)

• Adam was on a leave of absence for the 2006-07 school year

Jenny Withycombe, Fifth-Grade Teacher, Prospect Point (4 years)

• Jenny was on a leave of absence for the 2006-07 school year

*NOTE: Certificated resignations are effective at the end of the 2006-07 school year.

(Classified) **Carolyn Dietzman**, Health Clinician, Prospect Point (3 years - total of 23 years in the district.) * Effective April 9, 2007

• Out of State Travel

Linda Boggs and **Judy Peasley** to attend Induction Institute/New Teacher Center USC in Aptos, CA (Funding: Curriculum, Instruction/Assessment)

Doug Venneri to study Ancient Rome for Curriculum Development in Rome, Italy (Funding: Staff Achievement Grant)

Ginger Heiser to attend School Dude University training at Myrtle Beach, SC (Funding: Professional Growth, Plant Facilities)

Quote of the Week

“Conversation means being able to disagree and still continue the conversation.”

Dwight MacDonald

Girls varsity basketball team academic champs

Ten of Walla Walla High School's 13 winter season teams earned Washington Interscholastic Activity Association (WIAA) recognition for their academic success.

The WIAA gives two awards based on accumulative team GPA. The WIAA Distinguished Academic Award is given to teams with a GPA of 3.0 to 3.49 and the WIAA Outstanding Academic Award is given to teams with a GPA of 3.5 or better.

The Girls' Varsity Basketball team was given special recognition—with a team GPA of 3.774. They were the State Academic Champions with the highest team GPA of any 4A team in the state. Congratulations to Coach **Jack Mehn** and the girls on the varsity team.

The following teams received WIAA recognition:

Outstanding Academic Award

- Varsity Girls' Basketball 3.774
- Frosh A Girls' Basketball 3.589
- JV Boys' Basketball 3.553
- Frosh A Boys' Basketball 3.517
- Boys' Swimming 3.510

Distinguished Academic Award

- Frosh B Girls' Basketball 3.355
- Varsity Boys' Basketball 3.48
- Soph Girls' Basketball 3.265
- JV Girls' Basketball 3.243
- Varsity Wrestling 3.242

“Congratulations to our athletes and coaches for setting and reaching high expectations in the classroom,” District Athletic Director **Don Wilkins** said.

Art Regier Outstanding Volunteer Award

2006-2007 Nomination Announcement

Nominations for the annual *Art Regier Outstanding Volunteer Award* are now being accepted. Forms will be sent out to all staff this week.

This award was instituted in 1991 as a memorial to “Grandpa Art” Regier. Regier, a retiree who devoted years of service to elementary schools in Walla Walla, epitomized the spirit of volunteerism in education.

Send completed nomination forms to the Communications Department (364 South Park Street, Walla Walla, WA 99362) through **Friday, March 30**.

Each nomination may be accompanied by no more than three letters of recommendation.

Recipients will be recognized at the April 18 school board meeting. Contact Communications Director **Mark Higgins** for more information, 526-6716.

Graduates of Distinction nominations sought

Walla Walla Public Schools graduates who have distinguished themselves in their communities, professions, or careers will be formally recognized this spring through the Graduates of Distinction program.

Nominations for inductees to this special program are now being accepted. Application forms are available at the district office, 364 South Park Street, and under District A-Z on the district website.

They must be completed and returned by April 15, 2007. Inductees will be recognized during a public reception and at the Wa-Hi Academic Recognition evening.