

September 4 • School Board Meeting Recap

High School Task Force to tour schools

School board member and High School Facilities Task Force Co-Chair **Cindy Meyer** briefed her fellow school board members on progress made by the recently formed action group.

Meyer reported the task force met in June and will meet again September 27. They are also scheduled to take a three hour tour of Wa-Hi and Lincoln High School prior to this month's meeting.

Meyer said the district has assembled a dynamic group of Walla Walla leaders to help study district high school needs and issues. She said this group's interests, passions, and expertise will provide key insight to this study.

The work of the High School Facilities Task Force will be organized into three phases. First, the group will answer the question -- "What is?" Next, they will reflect on -- "What Should Be?" in relation to a successful high school experience. The group will then determine the best strategies for narrowing the difference in Walla Walla. Staff and public input will be gathered along the way as the group completes its work.

Recommendations will then go to the school board for consideration and possible action plans.

High School Facilities Task Force Members

Cindy Meyer: Co-Chair / John Rowley: Co-Chair

Darcy Weisner	Scott Krivoshein	Lawson Knight
Jim McCarthy	Mike Pettyjohn	Jim Hayner
Cindy Widmer	Clint Gabbard	Mindy Meyer
Jim Sporleder	Max Carrera	Everett Knudson
Nanqi You	John Butenhoff	Dave Warkentin
Ruth Russo	Ruth Ladderud	Carrina Stillman
LaDessa Smelcer	James Payne	Dick Cook
Jim Sanders	Jody Schneidmiller	Rob Ahrens

Pioneer summer "boot camp" takes students to outer space

Summer break was an adventure for Pioneer Middle School students participating in the school's extended learning programs offered at no cost through GEAR UP and Millennials grants. Summer programs -- coordinated by **Marika Tomkins** -- included Space and Technology Boot Camp, Human Health Expedition, Career Explorations, Creative Writing and Music Camp.

In addition to being well planned and organized, students reported they had fun learning. The summer programs also allowed Pioneer teachers to team teach and improve by reflecting on each other's work.



(L-R) Pioneer Middle School 7th grade students **Kelsey Gabel** and **Isaiah Stodola** reported to school board members how much fun they had learning while working with scientists from the LIGO Observatory during the summer Space and Technology Boot Camp.

In other School Board meeting business...

Board members:

- approved minutes of the board meeting of August 21, 2007, Personnel Report, Out of State travel, Title V Grant Application, Resolution #11-2007, Authorized Signatures for Edison Project, Resolution #12-2007, Certifying Racial Balance, Edison Project.
- approved Board Policy No. 5001, Employment of Retirees. (this state mandated action further limits time retire/re-hire employees may work before retirement benefits are impacted. The entire policy will be on the district's website soon.)

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

Quality | Integrity | Accountability | Respect | Courtesy

Personnel Report

• New Hires

(Certificated) **Rich Gwinn**, Physical Education Specialist, Sharpstein (.2 FTE)

(Classified) **Carol Gallinat**, Para-Educator, Prospect Point

Annette Holden, Para-Educator, Prospect Point

Cathy Koehler, Para-Educator, Berney

Sandra Pfeifer, Para-Educator, Berney

Vanessa Prull, Para-Educator, Green Park

Tina Schmatt, Para-Educator, Green Park

• Resignations/Retirements

(Classified) **Ronald Gonzales**, Bus Driver, 1.5 years

Cynthia Johnson, Food Service Assistant, 7 months

Cindy Nichols, Para-Educator, Garrison, 20 years

• Leave of Absences

(Classified) **Toni Lynn Steele**, Reading Specialist, Blue Ridge, 18 years

• Toni will serve as WWVEA President and will continue as .5FTE Reading Specialist

• Out of State Travel

Linda Boggs to attend AASA Women in School Leadership Forum in Chicago, IL (Funding: Curriculum)

Lindsey Butcher and **Arch McHie** to attend National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, IN (Funding: Vocational)

Pat Hanford and **Jeanne Ruecker** to attend Carroll College in Helena, MT (Funding: Carroll College)

Quote of the Week

“Don’t ever take a fence down until you know why it was put up.”

Robert Frost

Preliminary enrollment counts up this fall

With the first official enrollment count of 2007-2008 due Friday, Deputy Superintendent **Dr. Bill Jordan** reported to school board members last night preliminary “head count” tallies are up nearly 200 students from this time last year.

As of Tuesday, head count numbers were 6258 compared to 6091 last September 1.

One reason for the bump in enrollment to start the year is the addition of the Columbia Virtual Academy extension of the Homelink program at Berney Elementary. Currently 110 students are enrolled with this number possibly growing as the school year continues.

Jordan noted the district’s 2007-08 budget was based on 5700 Full-time Equivalent (FTE) students. He said by Friday’s official count he’ll have a clear picture on the district’s FTE count.

Jordan said he is encouraged by the early enrollment figures and will continue to closely monitor student counts.



Transportation perfect on inspection

Last night Business Manager **Aron Rausch** recognized the district’s Transportation Department for recently receiving a perfect, 100 percent score on its Washington State Patrol bus inspection.

Rausch said although the department has an excellent record with inspections, this is the first time Walla Walla Public Schools scored perfect.

He gave special recognition to Transportation Mechanic **Colter Mohny** for his dedication, experience and attention to detail to help the department meet this outstanding standard.

Inspectors test lights, brakes, tires, safety equipment and more during this comprehensive inspection. No unsatisfactory marks were noted on the district’s entire bus fleet.

“In three years as a bus inspector, this was the best inspection I have been involved in,” Washington State Patrol Inspector **Michael McKnight** said in his recap report to the district.

Rausch also introduced new Transportation Director **Steve Olson** to school board members. Olson, who was the Director of Transportation for the Bellingham School District prior to coming to Walla Walla, said he is proud of the department and is excited about finding ways to further improve. Olson has extensive experience in school bus maintenance, operations and scheduling.

“I take maintenance and school bus safety very seriously,” he said. “We always scored perfect in Bellingham and expect the same here.”