

District reorganizes administrative positions to reduce costs in light of state budget cuts

Walla Walla Public Schools Superintendent **Rich Carter** announced during last night's school board meeting the district is reorganizing its administrative team to cut costs in the wake of state funding cuts to public education.

Garrison Middle School Assistant Principal **Josh Wolcott** has been appointed to replace Edison Elementary Principal Nancy Withycombe next year as a result of her retirement plans at the end of the 2009-2010 school year. The Garrison Middle School Assistant Principal position will be filled internally at a later date to reduce an additional district administrative position.

The district's Technology Director's duties will be reorganized with existing central office administrative staff taking on additional responsibilities. The reorganization will result in the elimination of one district office administrative position. District Technology Director **Janis Barton** will be reassigned next year to an open position in the district.

Facilities Support Director **Dan Johnson** will assume the duties of current Plant Facilities Director **Lowell Schneider** next school year. Schneider announced earlier this school year his plans to retire at the end of the 2009-2010 school year. In all, the administrative reorganization plan will eliminate three administrative positions netting a 7.5 percent administrative cut.

"These are tough economic times for our nation and our public schools are feeling the pinch," Superintendent Rich Carter said. "We are taking the necessary steps to balance our budget with less revenue by keeping

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District shines at Response to Intervention Southeast Conference

A team of Walla Walla educators reported last night on their recent all expenses paid trip to Charleston, South Carolina to present on the district's intervention strategies to improve student achievement at the Response to Intervention Summit.

District Response to Intervention (RTI) Coordinator **Maria Garcia**, Walla Walla High School Associate Principal **Mira Gobel**, Walla Walla High School teachers **Casey Monahan** and **Peder Fretheim** represented the district at the Southeast Comprehensive Center which was attended by state educational leaders from throughout the Southeast United States.

Gobel reported to the school board the district was contacted by representatives of the South Comprehensive Center to present at the RTI Summit after they read an article featuring efforts at Walla Walla High School which was published in educational magazine *Principal Leadership*, April 2009.

"I feel honored we were able to present to people who are in a position to make a difference for students in their entire state," Garcia said. "They wanted to know how to implement tiered instruction effectively."

Garcia presented on the district-level perspective, Gobel discussed the school-level process and Monahan and Fretheim talked about the teachers' role and specific interventions.

In other School Board meeting business...

Board members:

- approved minutes of the February 16, 2010 school board meeting, personnel report, and Resolution 17-2010/Cancellation of Outstanding Warrants.
- received first reading of Board Policy 6220/Bid Requirement.
- received a report the district meets the requirements of the State Board of Education/Compliance Basic Education Allocation Entitlement.

Personnel Report

• Employment

(Classified) **Olga Tkachev**, Para-Educator (temporary), Pioneer
Sylvia Neil, Food Service Assistant, Lincoln Alternative HS
Jose Villalobos, Para-Educator (temporary), Berney

• Resignations/Retirements

(Certificated) **Claudia Ford**, Third Grade, Berney Elementary, 39 years
Kellie Humbert, ESL Teacher, Edison, 2 years
• *Kellie was on a leave of absence for the 2009-10 school year*
Genie Huntemann, Fifth Grade, Edison, 10 years
Becky Rausch, Learning Specialist, Prospect Point, 27 years
• *Becky was on a leave of absence for the 2009-10 school year*
(Classified) **Heather Davidson**, Bus Driver, Transportation, 1 year
Traci Munns, Transportation Coordinator, 14 years
Jon Carle, Bus Driver, Transportation Coordinator, 14 years

• Leave of Absence

(Certificated) **Richelle Palmer**, Title I, Blue Ridge, 6 years (requesting a .5 FTE leave to serve as WWVEA President)
Anne Swant, Math Teacher, Wa-Hi, 18 years (requesting a leave to serve as a secondary math coach)

Quote of the Week

“The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.”

Alvin Toffler

Staff Transfer

Magdalena Gutierrez is transferring from Blue Ridge Preschool as a family advocate to Green Park Elementary as their Assistant Secretary.

Boys' State Basketball Tournament

Wa-Hi vs. Lincoln
Wednesday, March 3 - 3:30 p.m.
Tune to KTEL 1490 AM

Administration Reorganization *continued*

the reductions as far from the classroom as possible. Our administrative team consists of highly skilled professionals who are committed to doing the work with less people.”

Carter said this is just the first step of the district's 2010-2011 budget savings plan. He said the district is planning for more reductions pending the outcome of the state legislative session. Last year the district reduced \$3.5 million from its basic education budget and is anticipating cutting another \$1.5 million for 2010-2011.

“The house, senate and governor's budgets all call for reductions to public education,” Carter said. “We must be fiscally responsible and adjust our general fund budget to be in alignment with state revenue funds. Our goal again this year will be to maintain current class size numbers, sustain students programs and protect the jobs of our permanent employees.”

Wolcott is in his third year as assistant principal at Garrison Middle School. He has previous experience as an elementary and middle school teacher in the Post Falls, ID School District. Wolcott also heads the district's Interagency Truancy Committee. He received his undergraduate and graduate degrees in education from the University of Idaho.

Superintendent Carter said the district will continue to make technology a priority in the district. Technology planning and development will continue to move forward under the district's reorganization plan.

“Staff and classroom support remains a top priority as we strive to find more ways to integrate technology into classroom instruction in support of learning,” Carter said. “Our technology standards will remain high and the access to this technology will be vast.”

Changes as a result of the district's administrative reorganization plan will not take effect until the end of the 2009-2010 school year.

Classified Employee Week - March 8-12

Last night School Board President **Cindy Meyer** honored the district's support staff as part of Classified Employees Week - March 8 to 12. Meyer read a proclamation from Governor Gregoire officially recognizing this week across the state.

She said each one of the district's classified employees play a key role in supporting teaching and learning. She thanked PSE employees for their dedication and professionalism.

A decade of energy savings adds up

District Energy Manager **John Butenhoff** reported last night during his annual presentation to the school board the district saved more than \$300,000 in energy costs in 2008-09. This brings the district's total savings since the program began 10 years ago to nearly \$3 million dollars.

Butenhoff said he is proud to be part of a program which helps the district save precious district dollars for use in educational programs.

Picture Lady supports school art program

Picture Lady Coordinator **Augusta Farnum** reported to school board members on this volunteer led program which offers art opportunities to district second grade students. Now in it's 34th year, Picture Lady boasts 32 volunteers supporting all six district elementary schools. She encouraged the school board to support the Picture Lady program and make art a priority in district schools.