

Walla Walla High School Orchestra impresses school board



Walla Walla High School Orchestra Teacher **Julia Woods** leads the Chamber Orchestra performance during last night's school board meeting. The orchestra played the National Anthem and Overture to Water Music, Suite in D by G.F. Handel. School board members praised the performance and thanked them for sharing their time and talents.

District seeks architect to study high schools

Superintendent Miller says conceptual designs are next phase

Last night school board members informally gave Superintendent **Mick Miller** the go ahead to submit a request for proposal for architectural services. Miller said this level of professional support is needed to advance the district's facilities improvement planning process. Miller plans to meet with Walla Walla and Lincoln High School staff members in the coming weeks to begin discussing priorities and needs for improvements on both campuses. Local facilities studies put Walla Walla and Lincoln High Schools at the top of the district's list for improvements.

District receives energy grant for Pioneer heat and light systems

Chief Financial Officer **Pat Johnston** reported to school board members last night on the \$350,000 energy grant the district recently received from the Department of Commerce to help pay for energy efficiency improvements at Pioneer Middle School.

The project will include new heat pumps and cooling system upgrades and energy efficient lights.

The total cost of this project is approximately \$868,000. The district estimates it will save nearly \$14,000 annually in utility fees from these upgrades.

"In these times of reduced revenues from the state, we are looking for any opportunity to reduce our operating costs," Johnston said.

Engineers will begin designing the heating system in preparation for a Summer 2011 installation.

Johnston says contractors will mostly likely work on the lighting phase during the evenings and weekends so the project can be completed during this school year. She said the improvements will enhance the learning environment at the school.

The district reinvested the under budget funds from the Edison construction project to successfully secure these match required grant funds.

District funds must be used as a match in order to apply for these state energy efficiency grants.

In other School Board meeting business...

Board members:

- approved minutes of October 5, 2010 board meeting, personnel and out-of-state travel reports, September Financial report, and October bills and payroll.
- received a report on the Department of Commerce Energy Grant the district received to make heating, cooling and lighting improvements at Pioneer Middle School.

Personnel Report

• Employment

(Classified) **Krista Garcia**, Secretary to Director, Transportation
Bridget Jacobson, Asst. Secretary (temp), Walla Walla High School
Ashia Jordana, Para-Educator/Family Advocate (temp), Blue Ridge

Resignations/Retirements

Kristen Duede, Intervention Specialist, Berney, 2 years
Barbara Thatcher, Intervention Specialist, Green Park, 16 years

Quote of the Week

"We have an obligation and a responsibility to be investing in our students and our schools. We must make sure that people who have the grades, the desire and the will, but not the money, can still get the best education possible."

Barack Obama

Staff Transfer

John Pemberton transferred from his assistant custodial position at Prospect Point to a Trades Assistant position in the Facilities and Operations department.

Walla Walla High School team to present Response to Intervention model to Delaware Board of Education

Last night Walla Walla High School Associate Principal **Mira Gobel** reported to school board members on the school's success using the Response to Intervention model. Gobel said the staff has developed a culture committed to ensuring success for every student. She says it's working and statistics like 96.4 percent of the students graduating on time supports this belief.

Other districts and states are taking notice, according to Gobel. She said the State of Delaware Board of Education has invited a team to travel back east and present Walla Walla High School's Response to Intervention strategies and success stories. Administrators from Bellevue High School have also come calling to learn more.

Gobel also reported on Act Study which develops skills and knowledge needed for college readiness or entry into the workforce in a job paying a living wage. The ACT Study program is being implemented at WWHS this year and will focus on results to ensure all students are college and or career ready following graduation.

Gobel said there is more work to do, but the schools is making tremendous academic gains, especially in reading and writing.

GEAR UP program has positive impact on district schools

Genoveva Morales-Ledesma, Director of Early Outreach Program at Washington State University Tri-Cities reported on the GEAR UP program and the partnership with Walla Walla School District.

The GEAR UP program has been in place in Walla Walla for nine years. The program's primary goal is to prepare students for college. Morales-Ledesma said the program will be here for at least four more years, but she is hopeful successful grant applications will extend the support for additional years.

She thanked the school board, administration, staff and students for helping make this program successful in Walla Walla. She praised the local GEAR UP staff for their dedication to helping students succeed.

Pioneer and Garrison plan "Food Bowl" to support Realtors Food Drive

- **Game: Oct. 20 at 4 p.m.**
- **Borleske Stadium**
- **Bring canned food to support effort**

Staff and students at Pioneer and Garrison Middle School are teaming with the Realtors Association to collect food for area food banks during "Food Bowl" 2010.

Pioneer and Garrison are reinstating the Food Bowl in conjunction with the annual 8th grade football game Wednesday, October 20 at 4 p.m. at Borleske Stadium.

Staff and students will be collecting food two weeks prior to the big rivalry game. Game spectators will be asked to donate a can of food to the school of their choice for entrance into the big game. Students from each school will man the donation stations during the event.

There will be a final weigh-in to determine the winning school. In addition, students will participate in the weekend food pick up campaign with the Realtors Association.

"In this spirit we will compete to raise donations as we work together as Walla Walla middle schools to give back to our community," said Pioneer Middle School Principal **Dana Jones**. "In this annual football game, the athletes begin the game as two middle school teams and end the game as one team helping the community."

Walla Walla High School "Trunk-or-Treat" offers kids safe Halloween experience

Walla Walla High School's Key Club will be sponsoring "Trunk or Treat" Saturday, October 30 from 5 to 7 p.m. in the SCIENCE parking lot. (NOTE LOCATION CHANGE).

"Where Are They Now?" - Your Alumni Connection

Walla Walla Public Schools has established a "Where Are They Now?" alumni program on the district web site: www.wgps.org. Just click on the web link and enter your information. It's easy and a great way to stay connected!