

School board position finalists named

Last night, school board members named **Conrado Cavazos, Jr.**, **Dr. Christopher Jenkins** and **Ruth Ladderud** as finalists for the vacant school board position which came available when Jim Lehmann resigned to move closer to his family on the east coast.

Cavazos, Jr. lists himself as semi-retired. He is Gonzaga Law School graduate and current City of Walla Walla Council member. He has been active on the Walla Walla County Housing Authority Board and a member of several clubs which address Hispanic issues.

Jenkins is emergency room physician for Walla Walla General Hospital. He is a Wa-Hi graduate and Eagle Scout. He has five children and recently moved from rural Idaho to return to his home town.

Ladderud, a Whitman College employee and Wa-Hi graduate, is a member of the district Community Facilities Task Force. She has served on the Explorer Parent Organization and Citizens for Schools. She is a co-recipient of the Art Regier Volunteer of the Year award through her work with a local 4H Club. She is also active in AAUW.

Superintendent **Mick Miller** reported the school board will interview the finalists during a public meeting Tuesday, Sept. 25 at 4 p.m. A decision is expected to follow with the new board member sworn in Tuesday, Oct. 2. The new board member stands for election November 2013 to fill the remainder of the term through 2015.

Enrollment down to start year

Elementary grades see greatest drop

Chief Financial Officer **Pat Johnston** provided an update to school board members on the district's enrollment figures following last week's submittal of the first official count of the year.

Johnston reported the district is 48 students below General Fund budget targets. She said the most significant enrollment counts dropped in elementary grade levels. She reported the district built in contingency funds of \$200,000 to protect the district in the event of an enrollment decline. Johnston projected a nearly \$245,000 drop in state revenue through apportionment based on September's enrollment count. The district receives approximately \$5,118 per Full-Time Equivalent student.

Johnston says her office, working closely with Superintendent Mick Miller, will track enrollment figures each month to see if this declining trend continues. She said the district will also closely monitor spending to determine if mid-year reductions are necessary.

State School Board to visit Walla Walla

The Washington State Board of Directors will conduct a meeting in Walla Walla this month. State school board members will tour Blue Ridge, Wa-Hi and Lincoln HS Thursday, Sept. 27 as part of their stay. They are interested in learning how WWPS uses data to drive instruction.

High School Skill Center bids come in over budget

Superintendent **Mick Miller** reported to school board members general contractor bids for the \$7.7 million High School Skill Center are approximately \$1.1 million over cost estimations. Miller said the district is committed to seeing the project go forward. District options include rejecting all bids and rebidding after scaling back the facility and equipment. Miller will also work with OSPI to receive additional funding. The district has 45 days to respond to the bids.

In other School Board meeting business...

Board members:

- approved minutes from the Sept. 4, 2012, personnel report, Extracurricular contracts, Cocurricular contracts, Out-of-State travel, September 18 accounts payable, establish PayFlow Pro General Fund Imprest Account, Policy 5407/ Military Leave, and Policy 3115 Homeless Students/Enrollment Rights and Services.
- received for first reading/revision Policy 2022: Electronic Information System (Networks)

Personnel Report

Employment

(Certificated)

Candice Tan, Special Education (temp), Blue Ridge Preschool

(Classified)

Bethany Brown, Para-Educator, Green Park

Traci Eckley, Para-Educator (temp), Pioneer Middle School

Julie Fletcher, Para-Educator (temp), Blue Ridge

Jeffrey Givens, Carpenter, Facilities & Operations

Yesenia Gutierrez, Para-Educator, Prospect Point

Cindy Ramirez, Para-Educator, Blue Ridge Preschool

Resignations/Retirements

(Classified)

Tom Arland, Custodian, Walla Walla High School, 4 years

Shelly Watson, Kitchen Assistant, Walla Walla High School, 14 years

Tony Ongers, Painter, Facilities Support, 11 years

Out of State Travel - NONE TO REPORT

Quote of the Week

"We are working toward opening wider doors so that local public high school students with limited financial resources will be able to acquire additional education beyond high school."

Jerry Zahl

Creator of the new High School Scholarship Fund

Mark Harvey Remembered

Last night, school board members extended their thoughts and prayers to the Harvey family with the passing of longtime WWPS carpenter **Mark Harvey**. A Memorial Service was held last Saturday in Mark's honor.

District "focus schools" complete school improvement plans

Washington secures ESEA waiver to provide more local flexibility

In July, the U.S. Department of Education granted Washington's waiver request from Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requirements. Washington is one of 26 states that have received waivers from ESEA to date.

Last night, Assistant Superintendent **Dr. Linda Boggs** reported to school board members how the waiver impacts Walla Walla Public Schools. She said the waiver features a growth model so schools can track their progress over a three year span. The 2012-13 school year is the baseline year. She also said the district will no longer need to set aside Title I dollars for supplemental educational services. She said these funds, approximately \$300,000 annually, may now be used per the district's discretion to improve student learning. She said this will be a more effective use of these dollars.

The waiver request rested on three principles:

- Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
- Accountability System and Index
- Teacher/Principal New Evaluation System

Another part of the waiver agreement requires the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to annually identify "priority schools," "focus schools" and "reward schools":

- Priority schools are among the lowest 5 percent of Title I schools in the state.
- Focus schools are among the lowest 10 percent of Title I schools in the state.
- Reward schools are classified either as "highest-performing schools" or "high-progress schools."

Currently, Garrison Middle School is a "focus school" for the subgroups English Language Learners and Special Education. Lincoln High School is a "focus school" for graduation rates. Blue Ridge and Sharpstein are emerging schools. Each of these schools developed school improvement plans per the waiver requirements.

One component of ESEA, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), requires that all students pass both the reading and math assessments by 2014. The waiver agreement replaces that provision with a focus on opportunity gaps. Subgroups of students (such as black, Hispanic, Asian, special education, students receiving free or reduced-price meals) will need to have the difference between their scores in 2011 and 100 percent cut in half by 2018.