

Walla Walla Public Schools 10-10 Staff News



School Board Meeting Recap | May 21, 2019

District planning for Replacement Educational Enrichment Levy in 2020

Legislators relax cap and increase accountability

Alarms of financial insolvency have been sounding off from school districts large and small across the state following the approval of the 2017 “McCleary” levy swap and tighter limits placed on local educational enrichment levies.

Based on statewide outcry, legislators realized the arbitrary caps they placed on locally approved levies were too aggressive, and relaxed the cap on how much school districts can collect from local property-tax levies beginning in 2020. However, with the relief, comes increased accountability and scrutiny to ensure levy resources are applied only to enrichment activities, reported Superintendent Wade Smith.

In 2017, state legislators voted as part of the McCleary Decision to cap local levy collections for most districts at \$1.50 per thousand dollars of assessed value. That has been increased to \$2.50 per thousand for most districts in 2020, still far under the \$3.81 per thousand approved by Walla Walla voters in 2016.

The levy-lid impact in Walla Walla resulted in a reduction of over \$2 per thousand from what voters overwhelmingly approved in 2016, resulting in approximately \$6.5 million less in annual operating funds to support student enrichment activities such as fine arts, Highly Capable, AP classes, extra-curricular programs, school safety, and additional staffing to support students.



Wade Smith

"Although the state doesn't seem to feel the need to fund AP classes, fine arts, and student safety, our voters have spoken loud and clear that is what they expect from their local school system."

Wade Smith, Superintendent

Smith reviewed the new legislation with school board members last night to explain the steps needed in place to meet the new auditing requirements.

"For decades our Walla Walla voters have overwhelmingly supported these enrichment activities through our local levy," said Smith. "Although the state doesn't seem to feel the need to fund Advanced Placement classes, fine arts, and student safety, our voters have spoken loud and clear that is what they expect from their local school system."

The biggest change with the new law is a far more cumbersome accounting requirement and penalties that can be assigned if districts misappropriate local enrichment levy dollars.

The district is set to reauthorize their replacement Enrichment Levy to voters in February 2020.

Board Meeting Highlights

■ CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL . . .

Minutes from the May 7, 2019 regular study meeting and May 8, 2019 special meeting, personnel report, May 21 accounts payable, April financial report, 2019-2020 student insurance, Head Start governance and Pioneer MS educational specifications.

■ Enrollment Report . . .

Superintendent Smith reported the district's enrollment count for May 2019 is 5649. The budget target is 5600 FTE.

■ Curriculum Adoption . . .

School board members unanimously approved the adoption of new High School Science and High School Algebra Geometry Algebra II curriculum. Executive Director of Teaching and Learning Christy Krutulis made the recommendation following a thorough vetting process which included reviews by the Curriculum Adoption team, public input meetings, materials reviews and pilots. The new curriculum will be implemented this fall.

■ Wa-Hi Student Update . . .

Student Zoe Gannon reported class officers elections are completed and ASB commissioners will be named next week. Students volunteered for the Day of Champions event. Board members honored Gannon for her service.

PERSONNEL
REPORT

EMPLOYMENT . . .

Certificated:

HEATHER BABBITT | K-3 INTERV TEACHER, PROS PT
 BRENDA BERUMEN | 1ST GR DUAL (SP), EDISON
 MEGAN DAVIN | 3RD GRADE, BERNEY
 ANA DIAZ MADRIGAL | 4TH GR DUAL (SP), SHARPSTEIN
 STEPHANIE GARCIA | SPANISH, WA-HI
 BROOKE KIMBALL | SPEC EDUCATION, LINCOLN HS
 MELISSA LOPEZ | DUAL KINDER (SP), GREEN PARK
 MIKAYLA MCFETRIDGE | K-3 INTERV TEACHER, SHARP.
 AMITY PRIORE | DUAL KINDER (SP), GREEN PARK

RESIGNATION/RETIREMENT . . .

Certificated:

CARALYN SMITH | PROSPECT PT, 3 YRS
 - WAS ON A LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR 2018-19

Classified:

GARY LEVALLEY | TRANSPORTATION, 3 YRS
 ESPARANZA MARTINEZ | BLUE RIDGE, 2 YRS

HALLEY MCCORMICK | GARRISON MS, 2 YRS
 SHELLY NORSWORTHY | LINCOLN HS, 3 YRS

LEAVE OF ABSENCE . . .

Classified:

NATHAN FERRARO | GARRISON MS, 12 YRS
 - WILL SERVE AS SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER AT GARRISON FOR THE 2019-20 SCHOOL YEAR

Quote of the Week

"Children need to get a high-quality education, avoid violence and the criminal-justice system, and gain jobs. But they deserve more. We want them to learn not only reading and math but fairness, caring, self-respect, family commitment, and civic duty."

Colin Powell

School Board continues Elementary Consolidation and Early Learning Expansion Study

Last night, school board members continued work on their Elementary Consolidation Review and Early Learning Expansion study. The study includes options to address declining elementary enrollment and the need for more early learning programs to support kindergarten readiness and overall school success. Board members reported they believe they are on the right track with the study and appreciate having the necessary time to get stakeholder input, analysis and data. No changes will take place for the 2019-2020 school year. Board members will make a decision in November for implementation in the 2020-2021 school year.

Wa-Hi window options decided

A decision has been made on the type of glass and paneling to be used for the Walla Walla High School renovation following a community survey and consultation with design experts. There was overwhelming support for the frosted bottom panel, option E on the survey. It allows in natural light while obscuring sight inside along the portion of the window closest to ground level. There was a virtual tie between C and D for the top panels, the most tinted options. The district consulted with design experts following the survey results and selected panel D to break the tie based on natural light differences. Option D lets in nearly twice the amount of natural light providing the best experience for students and faculty.

Partners of the Year

Walla Walla Public Schools established Partners in Learning Month in May 2010. This month the district sent nearly 150 proclamations and letters of recognition to our Partners in Learning.

"We so appreciate the individuals, businesses, organizations and agencies who partner with the district throughout the year to support our students," said Superintendent Wade Smith. "We strive to Develop Washington's Most Sought-After Graduates and each of these partners offers unique experiences and opportunities for our students and staff."

Last night, the district recognized WW FFA Alumni & Friends (Michelle & Staci Humphreys), WW Valley Early Learning Coalition (Samantha Bowen) and Betty's Preschool (Betty Lodmell) as 2019 Partners of the Year.

