

10-10 Staff News

School Board Meeting Recap »

August 20, 2019

Early Learning Blue Ridge tops list for site

Board seeks stakeholder feedback



Dr. Wade Smith
Superintendent

Last night school board members unanimously identified Blue Ridge Elementary as the leading candidate from the district's six elementary schools to house an Early Learning Center tentatively slated for implementation in the 2020-21 school year. This preliminary conclusion follows months of discussion, numerous studies, site visits, and opportunities for stakeholder input.

According to Board President Ladderud, "we have undergone a very deliberate review and analysis surrounding all of the implications of consolidating six elementary schools to five, and using that opportunity to convert one site into an early learning center. Although we have included numerous opportunities for stakeholder input, we want to share our conclusion with our stakeholders to ensure that we haven't missed anything in

our six-month study."

The school board's Elementary Consolidation Review and Early Learning Expansion study began last spring. The Board will now host opportunities to share with the community their research, preliminary findings, and seek additional feedback.

The study originated to both seek options to address declining elementary enrollment as well as the need for more early learning programs to support kindergarten readiness and overall school success. Blue Ridge was named the front runner for an Early Learning Center by the Board based on eight different criteria reviewed. The school maintains a very small K-5 student population, currently

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Budget Approved

General Fund maintains board reserve target

District required to dip into savings to balance budget

School board members unanimously approved an \$86.8M General Fund budget last night for the 2019-2020 school year. The general fund maintains the minimum ending fund balance target established by board policy of 8%, but does reflect the need to dip into reserve funding to balance the budget. The impact of the McCleary funding changes, which capped the amount of money districts can collect through their local enrichment "learning" levy, in addition to declining student enrollment, requires utilization of reserve dollars to ensure sufficient revenue to offset programmed expenditures. This school year's General Fund budget is based on a projection of 5608 Full-time equivalent (FTE) students, down 52 FTE from last year. Since state school funding is largely based on student enrollment, the

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Board Meeting Highlights

■ APPROVED »

Minutes from the July 16, 2019 regular business meeting, personnel report, 2019-20 teachers assigned out-of-endorsement area or teaching with a limited teaching certificate, Aug 6 AP and July payroll, Aug 20 AP, July financial report, minimum Basic Education Requirement Compliance, Res. 07-2019 Authorized Use of GC/CM on Wa-Hi modernization project and Res 08-2019 Authorized Signatures for Wa-Hi, Pioneer, Lincoln HS modernization projects.

■ ESSENTIAL STANDARDS »

Executive Director of Teaching and Learning Christy Krutulis briefed school board members on the work teachers have done to identify essential standards for math and language arts. Krutulis said these are the need to know, not nice to know standards the district will promise to deliver on. Representatives from all schools and grades have weighed in. Krutulis said the process will help teachers focus their instructional time and interventions to ensure all students achieve proficiency in meeting the essential standards. She also shared the various ways the district will be communicating with parents, including videos, website and fact sheets.

■ BOND PROGRAM UPDATE »

Superintendent Smith reported approximately \$3M in improvements were completed at Berney this summer in roof and HVAC upgrades. Green Park has a new roof and access controls have been installed at several schools. The district will break ground on the new Wa-Hi Science building in October.

EMPLOYMENT ...**Certificated:**

KRISTINA CARNEY | JROTC ARMY INSTRUCTOR, WA-HI
 MELISSA HOLGATE | TITLE ONE/LAP, BLUE RIDGE
 DENYSE HUTCHINSON | KINDERGARTEN, BLUE RIDGE
 MICHAEL PATTERSON | PE (TEMP), PROSPECT POINT
 SADIE TONN | TITLE I/LIB MEDIA SPECIALIST, EDISON
 LISA WAGNER | SPANISH (TEMP), GARRISON MS
 QUIN WISE | ENG LANG DEVELOPMENT/ENGLISH, WA-HI

Classified:

BELINDA AMUNDSON | PARA-ED, PIONEER MS
 NATHAN DOSTAL | PARA-ED, GARRISON MS
 GRISELDA GARCIA ALVAREZ | ASST SEC, GREEN PARK
 JESSICA GRIMES | ED COORDINATOR, HS PRESCHOOL
 ROSALINDA GUTIERREZ | PARA-ED, GARRISON MS
 ISAAC HATCH | CUSTODIAN, WA-HI
 RACHELLE LEBOLD | PARA-ED, GARRISON MS
 MELISSA QUEZADA-CROSBY | PARA-ED, PIONEER MS
 TINA RAWLINS | PARA-ED, HEAD START PRESCHOOL
 NICOLE REAVIS | PARA-ED, PIONEER MS
 NIKKOLENA RILEY | PARA-ED (TEMP), BR PRESCHOOL
 J GUADALUPE RIVAS | CUSTODIAN, WA-HI
 KAREN ROMO | SEC TO DIRECTOR, HS PRESCHOOL
 APRIL SORENSEN | PARA-ED, LINCOLN HS
 IRENE VIRAMONTES | PARA-ED, GREEN PARK

RESIGNATION/RETIREMENT ...**Certificated:**

CATHERINE DENNIS | HEAD START PRESCHOOL, 4 YRS
 ANNE MARIE JONES | GREEN PARK, 2 YRS
 MARIO URIBE SALDANA | GARRISON MS, 9 YRS

Classified:

REBECCA COOLEY | SHARPSTEIN, 2 YRS
 CHRISTIAN FUENTES | PROSPECT POINT, 2 YRS
 SONIA HANTKE | GARRISON MS, 3 YRS
 STEVIE NOBLE | GARRISON MS, 2 YRS
 CYNTHIA STRANG | GARRISON MS, 21 YRS
 TARA WYREMBELSKI | BERNEY, 2 YRS

LEAVE OF ABSENCE ...**Certificated:**

KEITH REARDON | PROSPECT POINT, 20 YRS
 - FOR THE 2019-20 SCHOOL YEAR

Classified:

REGINALD BYRD | GARRISON MS, 2 YRS
 - FOR THE 2019-20 SCHOOL YEAR

EARLY LEARNING continued

houses the district's preschool program, and meets rigorous state and federal facility requirements to serve pre-kindergarten students. In addition, it continues to exhibit a shrinking elementary population, forecasted to only have one kindergarten section this year, maintains one of the largest percentages of bus ridership, and consists of disproportionately higher student poverty and diversity makeup, offering an opportunity to improve integration of students across the district when new boundaries are considered. The outreach phase will include open house meetings, communication, and opportunities for parents, staff and stakeholders to offer additional input. No changes will take place this school year. Board members are slated to make a final decision in November for implementation in the 2020-21 school year.

BUDGET continued

district continues to look at ways to address efficiencies to offset the loss of funding. According to Dr. Smith, "This proposed budget represents the Board's and community's continued emphasis and expectation to offer high quality programs and opportunities that lead to the long-term success for all of our students. However, we are going to need to look for additional ways to thoughtfully reduce expenditures over the next few years in order to align costs with long-term revenue projections to ensure long-term fiscal solvency and accountability."

School Safety Update

School teams prepare for new year

As the school year rapidly approaches, Communications Director Mark Higgins and Facilities and Operations Director Mike Kay briefed school board members on steps being taken to keep district schools safe. Two years ago, school board members invested \$85,000 in support of Goal Four of the Strategic Plan to enhance safety efforts. The funds paid for 70 new cameras across district campuses, security guards at both middle schools, additional staff training, two-way radio improvements, school bus camera and audio enhancements and safety supplies and signage.

Walla Walla Public Schools meets state Emergency Preparedness requirements outlined in RCW 28A.320.125. The district's plan focuses on crisis prevention, management and recovery. Higgins and Kay reported school safety teams will meet Thursday at SEATech for the annual School Safety Summit. Teams will review drill and reporting requirements, discuss and role play emergency scenarios and hear from Resource Officer Ian Edwards about using the Rapid Responder website. This year's safety awareness communications campaign will continue to stress: See Something, Hear Something, Say Something.