

Calendar committee set to meet next week

Open enrollment and kindergarten registration dates delayed

Blue Ridge Elementary Principal and Calendar Committee Chair **Linda Boggs** reported the district's calendar committee will meet for the first time, Thursday, Feb. 10 to develop the district's next two-year calendar. The calendar committee has school board, administration, WWVEA, PSE, College Place, Dixie, PTA, and community representation.

Boggs said the committee will review options to develop a calendar which best supports learning. The group will explore all day kindergarten districtwide and a consistent professional development time for elementary staff through a regularly scheduled early release schedule. Open enrollment and kindergarten registration dates have been moved back to April to allow more time for study and discussion (*see schedule below*).

Results of fall Ad Council survey regarding district calendar needs:

- Calendar should support student learning
- Calendar should provide time for professional development
- Community needs must be considered
- Current secondary late start has been effective
- Elementary staff are in need of similar professional development time as part of the calendar
- More frequent breaks, modifying the length of the school year

New Open Enrollment & Kindergarten registration dates

April 18 –29, 2005

Registration Hours

April 18 7 a.m.- 4 p.m.

April 19-29 8 a.m.- 4 p.m.

- Open enrollment forms may be obtained from the attendance area school beginning April 11, but will not be accepted at the receiving school until April 18-29.

Contact elementary school secretaries or
Elizabeth Adkins at 526-6734 for more information.

February 1 • School Board Meeting Recap

Wa-Hi facility needs addressed at campus board work session

Board members were able to dream at Tuesday night's work session in the Wa-Hi Commons as Superintendent **Rich Carter** presented a slide show of some of the Northwest's most modern high school facilities.

With aging science labs, outdated learning areas, cramped classrooms and storage spaces, and limited technology, Wa-Hi has a long list of facilities needs for the school board to consider as the district continues its long-range planning.

Carter said the work session was scheduled to discuss Wa-Hi's vast needs. Wa-Hi has created a building design team to assist staff in planning ways to improve the facilities over time.

Referring to the slide show, Carter said it's clear there are ways to make Wa-Hi better support learning. He said it will take careful planning, staff input and communication to see it through.

Pathways Back program finds niche

Board members received a progress report on the new *Pathways Back* program which operates out of a portable at the Juvenile Justice Center.

Pathways Back is a short-term program designed to help youth under court management resume an educational experience. **Rhonda Olson**, who serves as the program's classroom teacher, says *Pathways Back* supports up to 20 students via a half-day instructional period and is making a positive difference for the students it serves.

In other School Board meeting business...

Board members:

- approved minutes of regular board meeting January 18, 2005, Personnel and Out-of-State Travel Reports, Interlocal Agreement with OSPI for professional training.
- received an update on the revision of **Policy 2020**. Curriculum Director **Len Taruscio** said additional time is needed to finalize the proposed policy changes. Taruscio said a work session will be scheduled March 1, with the second reading tentatively scheduled for the March 15 regularly scheduled board meeting. Taruscio said he appreciated all the input on this policy.
- learned **Graduates of Distinction** nominations are now being accepted. Forms are available in the Curriculum Department.

Personnel Report

• New Hires

NONE TO REPORT

• Resignations/Retirements

(Administrative) - **Mark Agrellas**, Assistant Principal, Wa-Hi - 3 years
(resignation effective June 30, 2005 - pursuing educational mission opportunity in Guatemala)

• Out-of-State Travel

John Golden to Basketball Coaching Clinic in Las Vegas, NV (funding - Professional Growth)
Dana Jones to ASCD Annual Conference in Orlando, FL (funding - Principal's travel, Professional Growth)
Mike Locati to District Coaching Clinic in Bristol, IN (funding - Professional Growth)
Lori Parnicky to ACDA National Convention in Los Angeles, CA (funding - Professional Growth)

Quote of the Week

"To travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labor."

Robert L. Stevenson

Bilingual educators stress importance of early childhood education and parent involvement to Hispanic Commission

Many Hispanic children are starting kindergarten already behind academically, according to a message from Bilingual Coordinator **Cindy Gregoire** to the state's Commission on Hispanic Affairs during her presentation last weekend at Walla Walla Community College.

In her report to school board members last night, Gregoire said the Commission is most concerned with lower on-time graduation rates and higher drop-out rates for Hispanic students. She told the commission, which is appointed by the governor, the gap often begins before we ever see the students. Gregoire suggested more resources for Birth-to-Five programs and parenting programs for Hispanic families. Sharpstein Bilingual teacher **Jackie Martinez** also shared with the 11 member commission program highlights in place in our district to curb this trend.

Walla Walla High School Drop Out Prevention Specialist and Hispanic Liaison **Javier Hernandez** assisted Gregoire Saturday in providing an overview of the successful adult education program - Garrison Night School - the district operates in partnership with Walla Walla Community College. The Garrison Night School serves nearly 300 adult students, many of whom have children attending Walla Walla Public Schools. The program helps the adult students further their education and improves parent involvement in district schools.

Exchange students feel at home in Walla Walla

Big stores, big cars, big roads and big houses represents the greatest differences between America and Germany, according to a report during last night's school board meeting from Wa-Hi German Exchange student **Vera Ortlieb** on her experiences in Walla Walla.

"Everything is so big here," Ortlieb said. "We are really happy to be here and love the school activities -- especially the dances."

Ortlieb was joined by fellow German and Wa-Hi Exchange student **Axel Lamers**. This year seven students from countries spanning the globe are spending a year at Wa-Hi through the AFS program.

AFS is an international, voluntary, non-governmental, non-profit organization that provides intercultural learning opportunities to help people develop the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to create a more just and peaceful world.

Both Vera and Axel said despite the language differences, they were amazed how similar they are to other Wa-Hi students. "Our families are similar too," Ortlieb said. "It's been a great experience."

Wa-Hi International Club Advisor and Social Studies Teacher **Michelle Higgins** introduced the students.

Wa-Hi Art Program supports learning

Wa-Hi Art Teacher **Julie Wallace** reported to school board members on some of this year's highlights from the Wa-Hi Art Program. Wallace said a Wa-Hi Art Club has been formed this year to help students raise funds to further pursue their art interests. Art Club members are planning a trip to Seattle or Portland later this year to visit art museums. They meet twice a week afterschool.

Wallace has also created a weekly "open studio" for students to come in during the evening to work on art projects. She says between 10 and 30 students show up each week. She displayed several samples of student work and said her students are working hard to get better and improve their skills.

The Wa-Hi Art club is planning a special event for K-3 elementary students, Saturday, February 12 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Wa-Hi Commons. For more information and a registration form, call Julie at 527-3020 Ext. 4667.

Sharpstein to host next Superintendent's Coffee

Friday, February 11 • Sharpstein Foyer
7:50 - 9:00 a.m.

This activity is an opportunity for parents and community members to get to know Superintendent Rich Carter. He will discuss issues facing Walla Walla Public Schools and talk about ways they can support efforts to improve district schools.

This will be a very informal setting, so please encourage people to drop in for coffee, juice and sweet rolls.

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To submit materials for this publication, contact Communications Director Mark Higgins:

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