

Transportation Cooperative on schedule



Architect **John Evans** of Architects West reported to school board members on three capital projects: High School Skills Center, Transportation Cooperative and new Support Services facility.

Evans has created preliminary plans for the Skills Center which will be submitted to the state in an effort to secure additional funding to develop a comprehensive architectural building design.

Ultimately, the district will apply for state construction funds to establish the facility on the campus of Walla Walla Community College. The district stands to receive a state match to fund 90 percent of the project and the equipment necessary to operate it as a branch campus of the Tri-Tech program in Kennewick. The Skills Center proposal offers the following vocational programs: welding, construction, technology, health services and green technology. Evans also reported the Transportation Cooperative construction project is on schedule and on budget. The facility is expect to be completed this summer and operational next fall. He said bids for the Support Service facility will go out later this winter.

Walla Walla among first in state to meet safe and civil schools mandates

Walla Walla Public Schools recently received confirmation from the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs the district is 100 percent in compliance with the reporting requirements of Senate Bill 5097.

Walla Walla is one of the first school districts in the state to have 100 percent of their school reporting completed, according to the notification.

“Walla Walla School District is among the first school districts in the state to have 100 percent of their school reporting completed,” said **Bruce Kuennen**, Manager - Tactical Operations Support for the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs. “Your district is to be commended for its efforts. It is rare.”

The legislature did not authorize any additional funding to schools to complete these tasks.

“This confirmation from the state sends a clear message Walla Walla Public Schools, to a person, makes safety and civility a top priority,” said Communications Director **Mark Higgins** who manages the district’s Safe and Civil Schools program.

Superintendent **Rich Carter** presented Sheriff Deputy and Resource Officer **Scott Brashear** with a letter of commendation for his leadership and law enforcement skills in helping the district receive this distinction. Brashear manages the Rapid Responder program which electronically houses all the district’s emergency plans.

Winter Break Schedule

Friday, December 18 is the last day of school prior to the winter holiday break. Classes will resume Monday, January 4.

In other School Board meeting business...

Board members:

- approved minutes of the November 17, 2009 school board meeting, Personnel Report, Out-of-State travel, December bills and payroll, October Financial Report, November Financial Report, and Revision to Policy No. 6212/Credit Cards and Procurement Cards.

Personnel Report

• New Hires

(Classified)

Margaret Fazzari, Bus Assistant, Transportation Dept.

• Resignations/Retirements

(Classified Administrator)

Lowell Schneider, Director of Plant Facilities, 17 years (to retire August 31, 2010)

(Classified)

Donna Frei, Bus Assistant, Transportation Dept., 19 years

Gerald Taylor, JROTC Instructor, Walla Walla High School, 21 years

• OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL

Margaret "Meg" Cochran to attend Pacific Rim Conference on Disabilities in Oahu, HI. (Funding: Staff Achievement Grant)

Quote of the Week

"Study as if you were going to live forever; live as if you were going to die tomorrow."

Maria Mitchell

School board members take Oath of Office



Last night Superior Court Judge **John Lohrmann** officially confirmed the November General Election of Dan Hess to the school board by conducting an Oath of Office ceremony. Cindy Meyer also took the Oath of Office. Hess and Meyer will serve four-year terms.

Walla Walla High School prepares for Yamate Exchange

Walla Walla High School Associate Principal Mira Gobel and Science teacher Rob Ahrens reported to school board members on the school's Yamate Japan Cultural Exchange Program.

Students from Japan will be visiting Walla Walla April 9 to 23. The students will be staying with host families during their two week stay. Gobel and Ahrens plan to host students in their homes and are looking for other families to host students. Ahrens traveled to Japan in 1986 as a high school student through this program which began in 1969.

Walla Walla High School students will travel to Japan July 18 to August 4 to complete the exchange program. Students will stay in the large city of Yokohama near Tokyo. Ahrens and Gobel said Walla Walla students will have opportunities to sight see, learn more about the country and its culture.

Meyer elected school board president

School board members last night unanimously elected **Cindy Meyer** board president. **Dr. Jim Lehmann** was elected vice president. Both terms are for one year.

Last night Superior Court Judge **John Lohrmann** officially confirmed the November General Elections of **Dan Hess** and Meyer to the school board by conducting an Oath of Office ceremony. Hess and Meyer will serve four-year terms.

Governor's budget hits schools hard

Chief Financial Officer **Pat Johnston** briefed the school board on how Governor Gregoire's recently release preliminary supplemental budget impacts Walla Walla Public Schools.

Johnston reported Governor Gregoire has already publicly said she does not support the budget she released, but Gregoire said it was necessary to illustrate the seriousness of the state's economic shortfalls.

Johnston said Gregoire's preliminary budget would equate to nearly \$4 million in cuts to Walla Walla Public Schools. Johnston said this is especially alarming in light of last year's savings plan which spurred a \$3.5 million district basic education budget reduction.

Johnston said Gregoire's preliminary budget numbers which were reported to school board members last night are soft. But, she said they offer enough information to prompt Walla Walla and all other school districts in the state to connect with legislators to send a message they are not acceptable.

Johnston said she will lead an open, collaborative district budget adoption process which will ramp up after the winter break.