

Reser Road project to begin in August

Project to widen road and add sidewalks for improved safety

Walla Walla County Project Engineer **Aaron Grimm** reported to school board members the Reser Road project to improve the road from Howard to Fern Street is slated to begin no later than Tuesday, August 9. County Commissioners are expected to name a contractor July 26. Traffic flow will be impacted by the project, but Grimm said measures in the contract are expected to minimize delays.

The Reser Road project will widen the road to 40 feet and feature sidewalk, sign, bridge, fencing and bike lane improvements. Grimm said work is expected to continue on the project through November 2011 and then resume next summer to complete the Yellowhawk Bridge phase. The entire project is expected to be completed in September 2012. The project will not impact the playground at Prospect Point. No district funds are being used to pay for the Reser Road project.



Washington State Department of Transportation Safe Routes to Schools Coordinator Charlotte Claybrooke (L) visited Walla Walla last fall as part of a grant application submitted by Walla Walla County. The state approved a \$330,000 grant to help fund the \$1.7 million Reser Road improvement project.

District remains fiscally sound

Cooperative effort key to stability

District Chief Financial Officer **Pat Johnston** reported to school board members during a public work session the district will not face any staff cuts or significant program changes when the 2011-12 general fund budget is recommended for adoption next month.

Johnston said spending reduction efforts the past several years and increased student enrollment in recent years has helped the district weather the global recession.

Johnston did report the district was cut \$517,000 in revenue in a mid-year state funding reduction during the 2010-2011 school year. She said the district will also face nearly a \$529,000 cut in state funding for general fund programs for the 2011-12 fiscal year.

“Fortunately, Walla Walla Public Schools planned for this type of legislative action and took proactive measures during the past two years to tighten its belt,” Johnston said. “The district was able to use fund balance to offset the reduction and was not forced to reduce staff or programs.”

The district is budgeting for 100 more students in 2011-12. The district has grown more than 400 students in the past five years. Johnston said the 2011-12 General Fund Budget will maintain an approximate eight percent undesignated reserve. The school board will vote on the 2011-12 budget August 16.

District Office Summer Hours

- 8 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 to 4 p.m.
- Normal hours will resume Monday, August 22.

In other School Board meeting business...

Board members:

- approved minutes of June 29, 2011 board meeting, personnel, July 6 and 19, 2011 accounts payable and payroll, June Financial report, Out-of-State Tuition 2011-12 and minutes of June 21, 2011 Board Meeting.

Personnel Report

Employment - (Certificated)

Jeanne Bailey, Learning Specialist, Green Park

Tiffany Buissink, English Teacher, Walla Walla High School

Alicia Brock, Lang. Arts/Music Teacher, Pioneer

Shelly Crump, Title I Specialist, Garrison

Jayne Eacker, Art Teacher (.5 FTE), Lincoln Alternative High School

Genie Huntemann, RTI Literacy Specialist, Lincoln Alternative High School

Karen Lehman, Director of Special Education, Special Programs

Eva Matson, Bilingual Kindergarten Teacher (Temp.), Blue Ridge

Sarah Wilkins, School Psychologist, Special Programs

(Classified)

Alexandra Andary, Para-Educator (Temp.), Edison

Cheryl Copeland, Health Clinician (Temp.), Sharpstein

Resignation/Retirement

(Administrative) **Dana Rosenbach Jones**, Principal, Pioneer Middle School, 7 years

(Certificated) **Christina Khail**, 5th grade teacher, Sharpstein, 1 year

(Classified) **Jennifer Knight**, Para-Educator, Prospect Point, 3 years

Out-of-State Travel

Veronica Esparza to attend Discovery Kingdom in Vallejo, CA (Funding: Staff Achievement Grant)

District names new Special Education Director

Walla Walla Public Schools Board of Directors named **Dr. Karen Lehman** the new Director of Special Education. Lehman will succeed former director Marcia Walters who is returning to the classroom for the 2011-12 school year.

Lehman majored in education leadership with an emphasis in special education. She also holds a program administrator endorsement. Lehman will start in August.

Professional Experience:

- Assistant Professor, New Mexico Highlands University, 3 years
- Adjunct Professor for San Juan College, 2 years
- Student Services Director, Quillayute Valley School District, 1 year
- Speech Language Pathologist Administrative Intern, Longview School District, 1 year
- Speech Language Pathologist, Special Education Teacher, Camas School District, 10 years

Professional Training:

- Doctorate, Washington State University
- Master's Degree, Pacific University
- Bachelor's Degree, Pacific University

Quote of the Week

"A well-informed mind is the best security against the contagion of folly and of vice. The vacant mind is ever on the watch for relief, and ready to plunge into error, to escape from the languor of idleness."

Ann Radcliffe

First Day of School

Tuesday, August 23

Board reviews grading policy revision as district transforms to a standards based grading model

Assistant Superintendent **Dr. Linda Boggs** presented a revision of Policy 2420: Grading & Reporting for first reading to the school board last night as the district continues its journey of transforming to a standards based grading and reporting model.

Boggs said it could take three to four years for the entire K-12 system to operate under this model, but she wants to make sure the school board and all stakeholders are informed throughout the process. The school board is not expected to act on the policy revision for some time.

In June, more than 40 district educators and administrators received two days of professional development on standards based grading and reporting from **Dr. Karen Harvey**. Dr. Boggs is heading the reformation effort for the school district.

This week Boggs will work with Communications Director **Mark Higgins** to begin framing an outline for a comprehensive web presence. Boggs stressed the process to transform the district to a standards based grading and reporting model will be thoughtful, inclusive and transparent. She said open communication and vast input and dialog will be critical at every step of the process.

The primary principle of a standards based grading and reporting model is to clearly communicate student achievement of targeted curricular outcomes. Boggs said the elementary schools will implement this model first with secondary schools to follow.