

Blue Ridge teacher named state TPEP presenter

District on track to meet new legislative requirements

Assistant Superintendent of Personnel **Laure Quaresma**, WWVEA President **Margo Piver** and Blue Ridge Elementary teacher **Tina Brennan** updated the school board on the Teacher/Principal Evaluation Project (TPEP).

Walla Walla Public Schools is piloting the new model this year with about 20 percent of district teachers. Quaresma reports the State Steering Committee recommends all districts move to the new evaluation system for all classroom teachers and principals in 2013-14, with some classroom teachers on the Focused and some on the Comprehensive model.

Teachers will be evaluated on the eight state criteria as well as the student growth criteria and impact on student learning. Quaresma reports the local districts will have flexibility on which types of assessment tools to use to determine the student achievement gains measured between two points in time. Quaresma thanked the TPEP team for investing their time and talents into developing an implementation plan which is ahead of the legislative timeline. Brennan was selected by the state to serve as a TPEP presenter. She will be authorized to facilitate training throughout the state. Previously, district staff had to travel to Tri-Cities and Yakima for this training which impacted time and district funds.



Tina Brennan

Board praises citizens chairs



School board members and Superintendent **Mick Miller** thanked Walla Walla Citizens for Schools Co-Chairs **Craig Sievertsen** and **Shannon (Murdock) Bergevin** for organizing activities to educate the community on the Walla Walla High School bond. They devoted a tremendous amount of time and energy on the proposal.

Chief Financial Officer to retire in June

Chief Financial Officer **Pat Johnston** announced she plans to retire June 30, 2013. Johnston has been employed in the district for 23 years, including five as CFO. She thanked her staff for their dedication and support over the years.



Board approves resolution denouncing Sequestration

School board members unanimously approved a resolution urging Congress and the administration to avoid sequestration by amending both the Budget Control Act of 2011 and the American Taxpayer Relief Act. This move was taken to help mitigate drastic cuts to education sequestration would cause across America.

In other School Board meeting business...

Board members:

- approved minutes from the Feb. 5, 2013 board meeting, personnel report, extra curricular contracts, Feb. 19 accounts payable, January financial report, and ASB/District Imprest Accounts.
- approved Resolution #04-2013 - Sequestration and Federal Funding for Education
- approved Policy 6970 - Naming Schools and Facilities

Personnel Report

Employment

(Classified)

Benjamin Colvin, Technology Specialist, Technology Dept.

Guadalupe Mendez, Kitchen Assistant, Blue Ridge Elementary

Brad Nelson, Technology Specialist (temp) Technology Dept.

Resignation/Retirement

(Administrative)

Pat Johnston, Chief Financial Officer, Business Office, 21 years

(Certificated)

Pamela McBride, Science, Walla Walla High School, 30 years

Jo Anne Poulson, Physical Education Specialist, Pioneer Middle School, 22 years

Beverly Ziska, Language Arts/Reading, Pioneer Middle School, 13 years

(Classified)

Silva Gomez, Life Skills Assistant, Green Park Elementary, 1.5 years

Leave of Absence

(Classified)

Connie Hernandez, Intervention Specialist, Pioneer Middle School, 1.5 years

- For the remainder of 2012-13 school year

Quote of the Week

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Nelson Mandela

Energy Management Update

Superintendent **Mick Miller** updated the school board on the district’s Energy Management Program. This year the district saved \$383,888 through cost avoidance via reduced energy usage.

In year 13 of the program, the district spent \$1,198,574 in utility fees (electric, gas, water). In actual dollars, the district spent nearly \$15,000 more this year than last year. Miller said this is impressive in a time of rising energy costs.

Miller thanked **John Butenhoff** for his work as the district Energy Manager and said the program is effective.

Garrison takes different approach to improve behavior



Last night, Garrison Middle School Assistant Principal **Brett Cox** and 7th grader **Micah Aguilar** updated the school board on the school’s Positive Behavior Intervention and Support program. The program is in its first year at Garrison. The program hinges teaching and reteaching expected behavior. Students are rewarded with incentives, school assemblies and awards.

District schools on target to meet ESEA requirements

Assistant Superintendent **Dr. Linda Boggs** reported five district schools have been identified per the ESEA Flexibility Request as Emerging or Focus schools. Blue Ridge (Emerging), Edison (Emerging), Sharpstein (Emerging), Garrison (Focus) and Lincoln (Focus) are on the list. Boggs says each school will have its own improvement plan and must narrow the achievement gap in half by 2017. She said she sees this as an opportunity to grow and improve. Schools remain on the list at least three years.

District representatives testify in Olympia

School board member **Cindy Meyer** and Superintendent **Mick Miller** traveled to Olympia last week to testify in favor of Senate Bill 5477. This bill would allow for an applied diploma as well as a standard diploma.

“While the bill is not perfect, I believe it is a step in the right direction,” Miller said. “Currently, the diploma in Washington is “one size fits all” and is very much geared for four year college entry requirements.”

This year, 16,000 seniors in Washington are on track to graduate in regards to the credits they have earned, but have not met the end of course exams in Algebra or Geometry. Students have one more chance with a “collection of evidence” as an alternative assessment.

Miller says an applied diploma would allow students to take fewer math and English courses and “substitute” courses in applied areas such as technology, fine and performing arts, and career and technical education.

“I am supportive of this because it gives kids more options and provides more relevance to their educational experience,” Miller said. “Candidly, I do not believe this particular bill will be successful moving out of committee, but the discussion has begun.”