

School board visits Skills Center



Yesterday afternoon, **Sergio Hernandez** took school board members and Superintendent **Mick Miller** on a tour of the Southeast Area Technical Skills Center. Construction began in spring 2013 and classes will start in fall 2014. Hernandez reported the project is on schedule and remains within budget. The project cost is approximately \$11 million. The state funded this project through school construction match dollars. WWCC is leasing the land to Walla Walla Public Schools for \$1 per year. The district's matching portion of the project cost is the value of the lease over 30 years. There was no local bond taxes used to fund the project.

Programs Offered:

Digital Media Technology, Advanced Manufacturing and Welding Technology, Sustainable Energy Technology and Health Science Careers.

Partnering Districts:

Dayton, Waitsburg, Touchet, Prescott and College Place

Enrollment numbers near budget target

October's enrollment numbers are stronger than anticipated. The district gained 27 students this month so it is only three students below budget projections, according to a report last night from Business Operations Director **Ted Cohan**.

Cohan said Running Start and Greenways Online Learning program enrollment numbers accounted for the gains.

Fund balance remains strong

Cohan also reported the district is close to closing the books on the 2012-13 budget cycle. He said it appears the district will finish the year with a \$6.5 million fund balance which meets the budget target.

Facility use agreement fees

Cohan said the district is reviewing its policy on Facilities Use by community groups. Currently the district is not collecting fees as required by board policy.

The district is considering enforcing this policy beginning next year. Cohan said the district could collect up to \$50,000 in revenue to offset utilities and custodian fees.

"Fill the Bus" event Saturday

- Saturday, Oct. 19 / 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Albertsons, Safeway - Rose Street, Safeway - Plaza Way, Super One, Loney's Harvest Foods
All donations help the BMAC Food Bank.

In other School Board meeting business...

Board members:

- approved minutes from the Oct. 1, 2013 regular board meeting, personnel report, out-of-state travel, co-curricular contracts, Oct. 15 accounts payable, September financial report, and revision: Policy 1400/Meeting Conduct, Order of Business and Quorum.

Personnel Report

Employment

(Classified)

Stephanie Eastman, Assistant Secretary, Pioneer Middle School

Leave of Absence

(Classified)

Karen Hanson, Para-Educator, Sharpstein Elementary, 2 years

- January-May 2014 for student teaching

Kate Keyes, Para-Educator, Sharpstein Elementary, 3 years

- January-May 2014 for student teaching

Out-of-State Travel

- **Chris Gardea** to attend NCTM 2013 Regional Conference in Las Vegas, NV (Funding: C.I.A.)

Quote of the Week

“Education is the key to unlock the golden door of freedom.”

George Washington Carver

Pioneer students showcase Feats of Strength

Fundraiser brings in \$10,000 without sales

Pioneer Middle School teacher **Chris Plucker** and students from his Leadership Class reported to school board members on the school's newest fundraiser Feats of Strength. Students developed, organized and staffed all 16 events. Games included basketball, a dunk tank and slip n' slide and more.

Plucker said the students improved their leadership skills, took ownership in the event and learned how to work better with their classmates. The students reported how much fun they had while developing these skills.



Pioneer Middle School teachers Donna Morris (7th grade), Anne Schulz (6th grade) and Dennis Bennett (8th grade) show off the hardware their classes won in the Feats of Strength fundraiser.

The students earned more than \$10,000 by getting pledges for a variety of fun competitions. Superintendent Mick Miller and Principal Mira Gobel presented the awards to students Monday.

Ready for Kindergarten prepares Sharpstein students for school

Last night, Sharpstein Elementary Principal **Matt Bona**, kindergarten teacher **Terry Morgan** and Sharpstein Elementary Title I Specialist **Donna Austin** reported to school board members on the school's Ready for Kindergarten program.

Austin said the she has noticed a steady decline in students prepared for kindergarten so she sought out the program being used district-wide in the Kennewick School District to bring to Sharpstein.



Donna Austin

This year 38 families are participating in the program. Some of the families have a four-year-old child who will enroll next year and others have a current kindergarten student.

Participants in the program meet three times a year for two hours to develop skills for working with their child. They learn games and a better understanding of what is expected to be successful.

Each family in the program receives a kit at each training session. The learning kits have games, puzzles, books and more.

“Our goal is to teach them learning is fun,” said Morgan. “We want them to feel comfortable coming to kindergarten.”