

10-10 Staff News

School Board Meeting Recap »

September 15, 2020

New School Year Update

Educators report school year off to a great start despite COVID challenges

Last night Superintendent Dr. Wade Smith invited Principals Michelle Carpenter (Berney), Kristina Duncan (Pioneer MS), Ron Higgins (Wa-Hi) and Walla Walla Online Director Carina Stillman to provide a week one overview report to school board members.

The consensus from these district leaders is the school year is off to a good start despite all the changes and technology demands associated with distance learning.

With week one in the books, attendance across the district exceeded 95 percent. Principals reported dropping into classrooms to observe live, synchronous learning sessions and witnessed teachers and students engaged, communicating and building relationships.

While there have been a few technology glitches here and there for a limited number of students, the district's IT department has been very responsive addressing the issues. This summer Superintendent Smith



Dr. Wade Smith
Superintendent

"It's amazing to be part of something that has never been done before. We didn't have a playbook, but here we are and it's working."

Michelle Carpenter
Berney Elementary Principal

supported the district's move to increase its telephone and internet service capacities and both systems met operational expectations and handled the increased loads. The new Walla Walla Online school has an enrollment of 475 students. This program appeals to families who need more flexibility in their schedules. Principals said they will closely monitor special education and primary classes as these groups need additional support and coordination.

Board Meeting Highlights

APPROVED »»

Minutes from the Sept. 1, 2020 regular study meeting, personnel report, non-athletic extra & co-curricular contracts, September 15 accounts payable, August Financial Report and Board Policy No. 6106 - Allowable Costs for Federal Programs.

ENROLLMENT REPORT »»

September enrollment numbers are coming into focus as kindergarteners started school this week. Superintendent Smith reported the district begins the year at 5443 FTE for its unofficial count. The state extended the deadline to later this month for official counts since many districts across the state are starting later due to COVID.

Superintendent Smith said enrollment was slightly higher than anticipated a month ago, but still expects overall numbers to be down about 170 FTE for the school year.

BUDGET UPDATE »

Superintendent Smith reported the district begins the year with a \$3.4M revenue shortfall and has trimmed expenses through its Two Phase approach to cost cutting. He said the district will closely monitor expenses all year as the district adjusts to COVID budget impacts.

HIGH SCHOOL UPDATE »

Last night, Wa-Hi student representative Jaden Bergevin reported there are 32 students in the leadership class. She said this is an increase over previous years. Jaden reported student leaders are planning virtual student activities, including assemblies.

Fresh look for WW Center for Children & Families



This summer the new Walla Walla Center for Children & Families received a fresh, new paint job and colorful graphics as the facility transitions to an early learning center.

RESIGNATION/RETIREMENTS . . .

Classified:

ROSALINDA GUTIERREZ | GARRISON MS, 1 YR

Quote of the Week

"I am often amazed at how much more capability and enthusiasm for science there is among elementary school youngsters than among college students."

Carl Sagan

Classified Employee of the Year

Walla Walla High School Intervention Specialist Melito Ramirez has dedicated the past four decades working professionally to support students and families in the Walla Walla valley. This week he was honored for his career being named the 2020 Washington Classified School Employee of the Year. Visit the district's website to see the full story.



Ramirez says his love for the community and helping people is what fuels his passion.

Bond Progress Report - Sept. 2020

Walla Walla High School

- Jackson Contractor Group worked with sub-contractors to get the new Science Building ready for occupancy, including fire alarms, HVAC systems, internet access, bathrooms and lighting.
- Jackson also aided the district in providing a new direct access to the old Science building's mezzanine to aid in removal of stored items.
- Infrastructure package nearly completed.
- Punch list items needed to be fixed for the new Science Building to be deemed complete.
- Wenaha Group and Jackson Contractor Group held a public opening of subcontractor bids and many local subcontractors have been awarded work. The bids were competitive and resulted in a budget allowing all desired alternatives.
- Wenaha Group compiled all necessary documentation for submission of the D-9 form to OSPI and OSPI issued a D-10 form authorizing the district to sign contracts and begin construction.

Pioneer Middle School

- The electrical work in the tent was completed.
- The close out items were completed in the modulars for teachers to move in.
- The low voltage internet work on modulars completed to provide data and communication.
- The bathroom trailer was delivered on site, the utilities were hooked up, and the ramp was installed by Royse Hydroseeding.
- Nelson cut into the CMU wall for access to the computer lab for in-person learning.
- Wenaha Group held a public opening for the Pioneer MS which had substantial interest with 8 general contractors submitting bids and eventual award going to local general contractor Jackson Contractor Group. The district was able to obtain every design alternate that was desired.
- Wenaha Group compiled all necessary documentation for submission of the D-9 form to OSPI and OSPI issued a D-10 form authorizing the district to sign contracts and begin construction.

Blue Ridge Elementary

- The general contractor is working on the landscaping and irrigation to finalize project.

Lincoln High School

- Construction documents are 50% completed and were turned in for review and comment.