

10-10 Staff News

School Board Meeting Recap »

March 2, 2021

Specialized Services

Board praises staff for providing specialized services and supports

Last night school board members received a review of Elementary Specialized Services. The report focused on how educators are adjusting these services during the pandemic as the district transitions to in-person learning in the AM/PM model.

Executive Director of Teaching and Learning Christy Krutulis, Berney Elementary Principal Michelle Carpenter and LAP Coordinator Shannon Hand provided an update on Title I and LAP services. Equity and Dual Programs Director Dr. Julie Perron, Edison Elementary Principal Jenny Foster and Edison teacher Sofia Parsons shared information on English Language services. Special Education Director Libby Thompson, Prospect Point Principal Barb Casey and Green Park teacher Marcia Frandsen discussed Special Education programs.

All these experienced educators stated their programs focused on ensuring staff and student safety by complying with all federal, state and local COVID requirements. They also said staff throughout these programs went above and beyond to support students. School board members agreed as praise was shared throughout the presentation for efforts to continue learning at high levels during these challenging times.

All presenters said technology was a challenge early in the pandemic, but students have vastly improved in this area over time. They also said Zoom can be challenging for teachers to make connections when physical



Christy Krutulis
Teaching & Learning

"Our teachers and support staff have been amazing at finding new ways to make connections with students. We are fortunate to have highly individualized instruction and supports as we work collectively to meet the needs of all students."

Christy Krutulis, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning

cuing is needed. They reported they are taking advantage of small class sizes and enhanced teacher-student attention within the classroom setting. They also report there are less distractions allowing for more focused instruction.

"I'm so proud of our amazing Special Education teachers and para-educators for their professionalism, innovation and passion to support students during these unprecedented times," said Libby Thompson. "Our team will continue to study and reflect on student outcomes and adjust programs as needed to best meet the needs of students."

Board Meeting Highlights

APPROVED »»

Minutes from Feb. 16 regular business meeting and executive session, minutes from the Feb. 24 special meeting, personnel report, extracurricular athletic contracts, March 2 accounts payable and February payroll.

SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT »»

School board members finalized and approved Superintendent Dr. Wade Smith's annual evaluation last night. Board members judged his performance to be excellent or outstanding across all professional standards. They also extended his contract for three years. School Board President Derek Sarley sent an email to all staff with more details on both items.

PARENT CONFERENCES »»

Parent/Teacher conferences for middle school and high school are next week. Conferences will be held virtually again this spring. There is NO SCHOOL for middle school and high school students Thursday, March 11 and Friday, March 12. Parents may schedule a Zoom conference by using the web scheduler located on the district and school websites.

Education Support Professionals Week 2021

March 8-12, 2021



Games Schedules & Links!

wallawallaathletics.com

EMPLOYMENT ...

Classified:

KEVIN ARIZMENDI-CARRILLO | CAMPUS SUP, PIONEER
MARIBEL DE LA CRUZ | ASST SEC/RECEPTIONIST, WA-HI

RESIGNATION/RETIREMENTS ...

Certificated:

JOHN BUTENHOFF | WA-HI, 31 YRS
KENNETH JEPSON | PIONEER MS, 21 YRS
LORI PARNICKY | SHARPSTEIN, 20 YRS
GINA STAHLHEBER | PIONEER MS, 23 YRS
(WALLA WALLA ONLINE 2020-21)
DIANE WRIGHT | PROSPECT POINT, 5 YRS

Classified:

ROY LIGHTLE | TRANSPORTATION, 6 YRS
KAREN TELLO | WWCCF, 3 YRS

LEAVE OF ABSENCE ...

Classified:

ANA CAMPOS | WWCCF, 6 YRS
- FOR THE 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR
LYNETTE ECHEVARRIA | GARRISON MS, 11 YRS
- FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR
JENNY SWAGGER | GARRISON MS, 4.5 YRS
- FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR

Quote of the Week

"Education is for improving the lives of others."

Marian Wright Edelman

New program to address learning loss

Federal funds target COVID impact on learning

Longtime district 21st Century Afterschool Program Director Brent Cummings has been promoted to Director of Supplemental Learning and Support for Walla Walla Public Schools effective Monday. In his temporary role, which extends through next school year, Cummings will be tagged to manage the district's portion of federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) fund dollars. These federal funds will be used to address the extraordinarily challenging times students, educators and administrators have faced in absence of in-person instruction. Last night he was introduced to the school board and shared his thoughts on the next steps of his new role.

"We will be doing a lot of fact-finding in the coming days, weeks and months," said Cummings. "We'll be talking to students, parents, families, community stakeholders and community organizations to learn more about the challenges, barriers and needs, and then brainstorming and prioritizing solutions to meet them."

The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSA), was signed into law on December 27, 2020 and provides an additional \$54.3 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER II Fund).

Cummings has held his current position with Walla Walla Public Schools since 2013. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Montana. Cummings and his wife Audra, a Walla Walla High School graduate and former district teacher, have four young children.

Free COVID testing coming to district

New WA State program to help keep schools safe

Walla Walla Public Schools will have access to free COVID-19 testing services for students and staff as part of the new Learn to Return partnership with the Washington State Department of Health (DOH), Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and Health Commons. Test supplies and support are provided at no cost to the school district. Rapid testing provides results within 15 minutes utilizing a self-administered, shallow nasal swab test. Additionally, the district will have access to a non-invasive saliva based PCR test, considered the "gold standard," receiving results typically within 48 hours.

Health Services Director Amy Ruff says the testing, combined with other mitigation strategies like practicing six feet of physical distancing, using face coverings, keeping students in smaller cohorts, maximizing/improving ventilation, and practicing good hygiene and disinfection habits, will help build confidence in safer in-person learning.

