

10-10 Staff News

School Board Meeting Recap »

May 18, 2021

Pandemic Relief Funds

School Board Approves Fall Recovery Plan

Last night school board members approved the district's Academic and Student Well-Being Recovery Plan. Throughout the month school board members and officials deeply explored ways to support students and staff over the coming school years as a result of the pandemic by leveraging federal funds targeted for schools to support these efforts.

OSPI provided guidance to all districts on when, how, and what the pandemic relief dollars could be used for over the coming three-year spending window. School boards were required to adopt their Student Recovery and Well-Being Plans by the end of this month for next fall. Walla Walla Public Schools' plan addresses a comprehensive list of recovery elements, including missed learning opportunities, social emotional needs, student engagement, supporting students who qualify for special services, and leveraging community partnerships.

The district received \$14M in federal recovery dollars and will utilize \$4M during the 2021-2022 school year to support the plan. See WWPS Recovery Plan to learn more: <https://www.wwps.org/district/information/school-board/student-recovery-plan>



Dr. Wade Smith
Superintendent

"We are prioritizing millions of federal pandemic relief dollars to support academic acceleration and social/emotional support. Our Summer Sol program has more than 1000 kids already signed up. We're hiring 20 teachers to reduce class size, eight new school counselors and bringing in additional home visitors and intervention specialists to make positive connections with our students. Our recovery plan is based on best practices for supporting the whole child."

Dr. Wade Smith, Superintendent

Board Meeting Highlights

APPROVED »»

Minutes from May 4 regular study meeting, personnel report, extracurricular athletic contracts, May 18 accounts payable, April financial report, Resolution 04-2021 Cancellation of Outstanding Warrants, Head Start Grant Renewal, Middle School and High School World Language Curriculum Adoption and excused absence for Director Mr. Wells.

BUDGET UPDATE »»

Last night Superintendent Smith and Director of Fiscal Services Nancy Taylor provided school board members an update on the development of the 2021-2022 General Fund Budget. Currently the district is basing the budget on 5575 FTE students which represents a "roll up" of students enrolled this year. This figure could change in coming board meetings. Current projections have the budget based on \$88.9M with expenditures exceeding revenues by about \$1.6M due to the dip in enrollment this year. The budget is on target to have a fund balance within the board mandated range of 6 to 8 percent.

POLICY FIRST READING »»

1430 - Audience Participation; 3122 - Excused & Unexcused Absences; 6000 - Program Planning, Budget Preparation, Adoption and Implementation; and 6230 - Relations with Vendors.

BERGEVIN HONORED »»

Wa-Hi school board student representative Jaden Bergevin was honored for her two years of service.



CEE survey data reveals students feel supported by staff

Erich Bolz from the Center for Educational Effectiveness (CEE) briefed school board members on this year's Educational Effectiveness Survey (EES) results representing students in grades 4-12. This anonymous survey tool is used annually to help the district better serve parents, students and faculty. The pandemic pushed the traditional fall release date of the survey to the spring time, making it nearly 18 months between administrations.

Bolz said despite the pandemic, student input on topics like clear and shared focus, high standards and expectations, parent and community involvement and supportive learning environments improved this year.

He did report the data suggests approximately 20 percent of students have struggled during the pandemic and need additional support. Superintendent Smith reported the district's Pandemic Recovery Plan addresses these needs and the district will use the annual survey data to continue to better support its students.

EMPLOYMENT ...**Certificated:**

ALEXIS AUSTIN | SPEC ED (2021-22), PIONEER MS
 KARLI HART | ENGLISH (2021-22), WA-HI
 JACOB HEEZEN | ENGLISH (2021-22), WA-HI
 SARA LAMANNA | KINDER (2021-22), SHARPSTEIN
 MATTHEW MANLEY | LANG ARTS (2021-22), PIONEER MS
 BRITTANY MILLER | SPEC ED (2021-22), GREEN PARK
 JENNIFER MOUAT | ENGLISH (2021-22), WA-HI
 ELISABETH ROBERTS | COUNSELOR (2021-22), TBD
 ANNE VALLERGA | ENGLISH (2021-22), LINCOLN HS

Classified:

GERALD TOWSLEE | BUS DRIVER, TRANSPORTATION

RESIGNATION/RETIREMENTS ...**Certificated:**

TYLER COMSTOCK | SPECIAL EDUCATION, 3 YRS
 ELIZABETH JAGELSKI | BERNEY, 31 YRS

Classified:

LYNETTE ECHEVARRIA | GARRISON MS, 10 YRS
 - SHE HAS BEEN ON LEAVE OF ABSENCE SINCE FEB 2021
 CECILIA SOLIS AVELAR | EQUITY & DUAL, 2 MONTHS

Quote of the Week

"An investment in knowledge pays the best interest."

Benjamin Franklin

2021 Partners in Learning recipients named

May is Partners in Learning Month. This month Superintendent Dr. Wade Smith sent nearly 150 proclamations and letters of recognition to the individuals, businesses, organizations and agencies who partner with the district throughout the year.

Last night Superintendent Smith honored this year's Partners of the Year recipients.

- Blue Mountain Community Church
- Camp Fire of Walla Walla
- Care-A-Lot Daycare and Preschool Center
- Little Angel's Bio-Dome Daycare & Preschool
- Providence St. Mary Medical Center
- Teacher Katie's Preschool
- Walla Walla County Department of Community Health
- YMCA of Walla Walla

"These Partners of the Year served a large number of district students when the district was required to move to distance and hybrid learning," said Superintendent Smith. "Childcare staff helped students log into their classes; assisting with synchronous and asynchronous learning during the school day. Our local health experts assisted with testing, safety planning, vaccinations and communication. COVID created anxiety in the community and their expertise helped school officials have the factual information necessary to ease the fears of staff, students and parents. It is a tremendous privilege and responsibility to be charged with educating children. We know we cannot do this work alone. It is through community partnerships where we broaden our reach and have a greater ability to improve student achievement."

Ramirez named America's Best!**Melito Ramirez USA's first RISE Awardee**

U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona announced Monday the selection of Wa-Hi's Melito Ramirez as the nation's first Recognizing Inspiring School Employees (RISE) awardee. This new honor, established by Congress in 2019, spotlights classified school employees' outstanding contributions to quality K-12 education in the United States.

Over his 40-year career, Ramirez has worked for multiple school districts in more than a dozen different roles, such as migrant home visitor, summer school coordinator, special education secretary, and bus driver. Ramirez now conducts home visits, bridges the gap between home and school for Spanish speaking families, and works to secure the mental health and technological resources students need. Ramirez helped to organize a night school in English and Spanish for adults in the Walla Walla community.



Congratulations Melito!