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District Stories

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District Stories

Blue Ridge Elementary to re-open for business August 29; Blue Ridge will open the first day of school

Blue Ridge will re-open for business Wednesday, August 29 at 11 a.m. following a Monday morning fire in the school's basement near the kitchen area which caused minor structural losses and significant water and smoke damage. The Blue Ridge K-5 Open House remains on schedule for Thursday, August 30 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The school will be open for the first day of school on September 4.

The district will also conduct an air quality test to ensure the school is safe for re-entry prior to allowing staff and students back into the building. The district's Transportation Cooperative, located at 1162 Entley St. near Koncrete Industries, will continue to serve as the temporary location for Blue Ridge and preschool families registering students or needing back to school information through the close of business on Monday, August 27. Blue Ridge and the Head Start/ECEAP preschool program will not be open for business on Tuesday, August 28. The telephone number at the Transportation Cooperative is 527-3019.

It's been a busy week cleaning up the school following the fire. Monday, Cascade Fire Sprinklers replaced the impacted fire suppression sprinkler system and made all necessary repairs to ensure the system is functional. Walla Walla Electric tested and reset the fire alarm system and is in the process of inspecting all Blue Ridge smoke detectors. Renovation Specialists began demolition of the damaged structural areas. JRCC of Spokane installed fans to dry out the gym floor. Tuesday, Clean and Home Restoration of Walla Walla is chemically fogging the entire building to remove the smoke smell.

Wednesday morning, Clean and Home Restoration started cleaning and disinfecting the entire building. Renovation Specialists contractors are replacing the damaged portion of the building. Work crews will continue the clean up and repair process as needed to ensure the school is to re-open August 29. Fire officials have determined the cause of the fire was an accident.

First Day of School Tuesday, Sept. 4

- Visit district web site for more information
- Visit schools or school web sites for back-to-school supplies lists

School Board approves budget

Tuesday night, school board members approved the district's 2012-2013 General Fund budget. The General Fund budget is based on revenues of \$60,330,556 and expenditures of \$61,043,956.

The district used nearly \$800,000 of reserves to balance the budget. The General Fund budget maintains a \$6,252,644 unrestricted reserve or 10.2%. School board members thanked Chief Financial Officer Pat Johnston and Superintendent Mick Miller for their work preparing the budget and finding ways to reduce expenditures without compromising programs.

Lehmann to resign from school board

School board member Dr. Jim Lehmann is resigning from the school board. The Sept. 4 school board meeting will be his last day on the school board. Lehmann plans to spend more time with his children and grandchildren on the east coast. He said it has been an honor and privilege to serve on the school board. Superintendent Mick Miller and Board President Max Carrera will develop a plan for finding a replacement. His term runs through 2015

See you at the Fair!

School displays, student work, animals, information and more!

- August 29 through Labor Day Weekend

Personnel Report (from the August 21, 2012 school board meeting)

Employment

(Certificated)

Kasey Hooter, Title I Teacher (.5 FTE) temporary, Blue Ridge

Caroline Lujan, Counselor, Walla Walla High School

Susan McKay, School Psychologist, Special Programs

(Classified)

Danon Griffen, Mechanic, SE Transportation Cooperative

Janet Ihle, Health Clinician, Blue Ridge

Julian Oscanaz, Kitchen Assistant, Pioneer Middle School

Della Rock, Kitchen Assistant, Garrison Middle School

Dilsey Welck, Kitchen Assistant, Prospect Point

Resignation/Retirement

(Certificated)

Laura Grant, Fifth Grade, Berney, 20 years

Elaina Renius, Counselor, Walla Walla High School, 2 years

(Classified)

Simmon Palomino, Para-Educator, Blue Ridge, 5 months

Erika Sayers, Para-Educator, Sharpstein, 2 months

Kelsey Trejo, Para-Educator, Edison, 1.5 years

Vidalia Trejo, Family Advocate, Blue Ridge Head Start/ECEAP, 5 years

Student Health Options seeks center at Blue Ridge

Student Health Options Executive Director Holly Howard reported to school board members Tuesday night her organization is seeking school board approval to expand to Blue Ridge Elementary School.

Currently Student Health Options operates the Student Health Center at Lincoln High School. The Student Health Center at Blue Ridge would operate Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Student Health Center staff would share space with the Blue Ridge Health Clinician who provides service to the school during the morning hours. The school currently does not have coverage in the afternoons. Dr. Alison Kirby, a founding member of Student Health Options who was instrumental in establishing a school-based health center at Lincoln High School, said the program is designed to help support area primary care physicians. She said the Health Center at Blue Ridge will help streamline care, improve local healthcare efficiencies and be a conduit to area medical clinics.

No decision was made Tuesday night. School board members will schedule a work session soon to further study the proposal.

All Staff Back-to-School Meeting

- Thursday, August 30

- Wa-Hi Main Gym

- 8 a.m. (treats and visiting)

- 8:30 a.m. (program begins)

- All staff encouraged to attend

Walla Walla Public Schools expands options for reporting bullying

SafeSchools Alert provides easy access to report an incident

Walla Walla Public Schools is now using *SafeSchools Alert* to report safety concerns. *SafeSchools Alert* is a tip reporting service which allows students, staff, and parents to submit safety concerns to district administration in four different ways:

1. Phone: 1-855-4ALERT1, ext. 1057
2. Text: Text #1057 @tip + your tip to ALERT1 (253781)
3. Email: 1057@alert1.us
4. Web: <http://1057.alert1.us>

Easily report tips on bullying, harassment, drug use, vandalism or any safety issue concern through SafeSchools Alert. When submitting a tip, be sure to use our district's identification code, 1057, in the communication.

Every tip SafeSchools Alert receives about Walla Walla Public Schools is immediately logged in the system and the administration is notified so that they can investigate and take appropriate action. Tips may also be submitted anonymously. Additional information and Walla Walla Public School bullying reporting forms are available on the district web site at: www.wwps.org

School Stories

Donations and volunteers needed for annual Big Blue Weekend event

Walla Walla High School staff and student leaders are gearing up for Big Blue Weekend on October 12-14. More than 450 Wa-Hi Students and staff will travel to Antelope, OR to build connections, listen to inspirational speakers and have fun. This program is specifically targeted to encourage freshman and students who need extra support to attend. There are several ways for staff, parents and community members to help us make this a great experience for Wa-Hi students.

Donated items needed:

- a coat or thick sweatshirt
- a small suitcase or zippered bag

If you would like to donate items, please contact Melito Ramirez at 509-526-8638 or mramirez@wwps.org.

Work crew members and chaperones are also needed. Work crew members work behind the scenes to prepare and serve meals. It's hard but rewarding work. Chaperones sleep in cabins with 10-14 students and are members (not leaders) of small student groups that meet approximately four times throughout the weekend. Contact Carina Stillman at cstillman@wwps.org or 527-3020 ext. 4693.

If you can't participate, but would like to donate to Big Blue Weekend or sponsor a \$60 Student Scholarship, please send your check to the ASB Office and mark it BBW or BBW Scholarship. Last year 75 scholarships were provided thanks to the generosity of district staff and community members.

Free car wash to help fund student trip to Europe

Several Pioneer, Garrison and Walla Walla High School students and their families are planning a trip to Dublin and London next June for an Educational Tour. Students are organizing a FREE Car Wash this Sunday at O'Reilly's Auto Parts on 9th Street from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Donations are accepted. All funds received will help defer trip expenses. Parent Kathryn Southwick Hess is helping organize the trip.

Opportunity Program returns to Walla Walla Public Schools to help students earn a high school diploma

Walla Walla Public Schools has re-established an off-site alternative learning program to offer area high school students more choices for earning credits en route to graduation and is targeting 5th and 6th year seniors, credit deficient students and students in need of a flexible schedule.

The Opportunity Program is a contract-based program which offers students more flexibility to meet their scheduling needs, a chance to work one-on-one with a teacher for a portion of the week and an off-site location. Opportunity students work at their own pace and on subject areas related to their specific academic needs. Contract-based programming is also used at Walla Walla High School and Lincoln High School for credit retrieval.

This community-based, off-site program is being operated in the Walla Walla Public Schools district office at 364 S. Park St. Former Opportunity Program teachers Tom Porter and Jerry Quaresma are serving as the program teachers and student advisors.

“It is our intention to keep students in the Walla Walla School District connected with public school education and to reconnect those students who have previously dropped out or have not been successful,” Porter said. “Course content and graduation requirements are aligned with Walla Walla High School.”

Opportunity Program begins the first day of school – Tuesday, Sept. 4. For more information, contact at Tom Porter – tporter@wwps.org / 509.526.6785

Community Stories

Public invited to workshops on Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival application process

Catholic Charities Workshop

- Tuesday, Sept. 18
- 7 p.m.
- St. Patrick Church
- Greg Cunningham

One America Workshop

- Sunday, August 26
- 1 p.m.
- St. Patrick Church
- Jazmin Santacurz

District supports school documentation process for newly authorized immigration rule change

Per the recent immigration rule change on childhood arrivals authorized by President Obama, Walla Walla Public Schools will provide school record documentation for those who meet the qualifications. See qualifications below.

Those who qualify and are Walla Walla High School graduates or attendees are asked to visit Walla Walla High School (800 Abbott Road) to obtain the necessary documentation regarding their school enrollment. All other individuals needing support documentation are asked to visit the district office (364 S. Park St.) and ask for Veronica Esparza.

Area organizations and businesses offer generous school supplies donation

This week, the Rotary Club of Walla Walla, Washington State Penitentiary Employees Union and Walgreens donated school supplies to district students. Backpacks, paper, pens and other much needed school supplies were donated as part of the gift. The school supplies will be distributed throughout the district to students in need. Walla Walla Public Schools thanks these organizations and businesses for their continued support and belief in provided quality educational programs for area students.

Staff get first workout free at Cardio Strength Bootcamp

Walla Walla High School teachers and fitness experts Marc Yonts and Scott Tibbling are gearing up for another round of their Cardio Strength Bootcamp program. The first workout is free for Walla Walla Public Schools staff. The class schedule is Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 5:45 to 6:20 a.m. at Sharpstein Elementary. Yonts says approximately 75 percent of the 60 to 70 participants are school district employees. Community members are also invited to join. See more information online at www.cardiostrengthbootcamp.com

Documentary teaches parents and children how to make healthier food choices

Walla Walla Catholic Schools is teaming with The Mom's Network in a film series for the community. The first film will be the documentary "Super Size Me". It will be shown 7 p.m. Sept 12 in the DeSales High School gymnasium.

This 2004 documentary film explores the fast food industry's corporate influence and how it encourages poor nutrition for its own profit.

The goal of the series is to help parents and children make better and healthier choices in their daily lives. Films will be presented at no cost to viewers and will include a panel of local experts to lead and direct after-viewing discussions.

Also, organizers will provide resource lists and guides so that the audience can walk away with practical alternatives and changes they can begin to enact immediately.

For information on future films in the series, visit www.thewwcs.com or www.themomsnetworkww.com