

West Schools Rearranged: saves teaching positions, maximizes resources

For close to 50 years, generations of Newport children have been educated within the walls of Yaquina View Elementary. Yet, the decision to close the school and reconfigure the West Area's remaining schools has been met with apparent overall acceptance and understanding by parents, students, and the community.

MANY REASONS BEHIND PLAN: As explained by Newport High School Principal Jon Zagel, a "perfect storm" of conditions led the five West Area principals to develop the idea of reconfiguring Newport area schools, including the closure of one of the city's two elementary schools. Those conditions include a decade-long decline in student enrollment (22 percent drop since June 1999), rising operating costs, and greatly reduced state funding as a result of both decreased student enrollment and a depressed state economy.

Zagel said the closure feels like a loss in the family – his mother taught at Yaquina View for 25 years – but it is fiscally responsible and uses the school district's resources in the best way for maximum student benefit.

In June, the Lincoln County School District Board of Directors adopted a budget for the 2009/2010 school year that included a reduction of 20.05 full-time equivalent (FTE) teaching positions for the four West Area schools. By reconfiguring the schools, the area is able to restore 4.4 teaching positions and keep class sizes at reasonable levels.

At a community meeting held June 30, Zagel empha-

sized that all five West Area administrators conceived the idea and worked out its details. Their priority, he said, was "to do what is best for students by keeping as many teachers possible in the classroom."

BENEFITS OF PLAN: Along with helping to reduce class sizes and save four teaching positions, other benefits are:

- Saving \$375,000 annually to put back into the classroom (this savings comes from eliminating duplicated administrative and staff positions at Yaquina View Elementary and savings in utility costs);
- Adding back more music and physical education classes throughout all grades;
- Reinstating one teacher to Isaac Newton Magnet School, giving a student to teacher ratio of 33 to 1;
- Reinstating drama class at the high school;
- Creating more elective classes for grades 7-12; and
- Accelerating the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program application process.

DECIDING WHICH SCHOOL TO CLOSE: Among the reasons the principals gave for proposing



AS THE NAME SUGGESTS, YAQUINA VIEW ELEMENTARY overlooks Yaquina Bay. Situated on a south-facing hillside two blocks above the bay front, it was built in 1961. Under the school restructuring plan, the property won't be sold anytime soon – and it won't be empty! Several programs will be housed there during the coming school year, including Newport High School's alternative school known as Carolyn Brown School, the early intervention program for special needs preschool children, and some district support services, including the district nurse's office. The NHS softball team will continue to play and practice on the ballfield, and the gym will be available for school sports and activities.

that Yaquina View Elementary School be closed rather than Sam Case Elementary School are:

- Sam Case School has a capacity of 625, compared to Yaquina View's capacity of 500;
- The Early Childhood Center at Sam Case provides four additional classroom spaces;
- The Yaquina View choir room is not large enough to hold a full class (it is about half the size of a regular classroom);
- Closing Sam Case would mean a large number of students could potentially be crossing Hwy. 20 to Yaquina View;
- The Sam Case playground is laid out for better supervision, with students more visible from any given point on the playground;
- The Yaquina View school office is far removed from most of the classrooms, while the Sam Case school office is more centrally located; and
- In order to have enough classrooms to house all students in grades K-3 at Yaquina View, the computer lab would need to be closed, while at Sam Case, there is enough classroom space to keep the computer lab intact.

Comments and concerns voiced by the public at the community meeting have been compiled into a document, along with responses from the school district. This document is available at the school district's website: www.lincoln.k12.or.us. Also available there is a link to an 11-minute video by West Area principals explaining the reconfiguration and its impact on students.

QUICK ACTION: The plan to reconfigure schools and close one elementary came quickly, but the neces-

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Letter from Your Superintendent



Dear Lincoln County School District Residents:

We are busily planning, moving, painting, and generally getting ready to start the 2009-10 school year. As you have probably heard and will read in this issue, our district will look different this year with the biggest changes in the west area. These changes are intended to maximize student learning and minimize reductions to the classroom.

It is very easy to get caught up in what we've lost and to lose sight of all we have and all we can do. We are blessed with so many wonderful teachers, administrators and support staff who give their all to help our students learn. I know our staff, combined with many caring community members and businesses, will continue to

provide the best we can for our students. Though this year's financial picture continues to change – and may again if some of the latest legislation approved in the last session is rejected by voters – we are planning with sustainability in mind. It is a challenging time, but we have an opportunity to join together and show our students our commitment to their success.

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. We welcome your comments and ideas. As always, please feel free to contact me by email (tom.rinearson@lincoln.k12.or.us) or phone (541-265-4403).

Sincerely,

Tom Rinearson, Superintendent

Lincoln County Schools
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TEACHER MATT LOVE...

Inspiring Students and Colleagues to be Better Writers

As with many forms of artistic expression, creative writing can be an intensely personal undertaking. Yet, a Newport High School teacher inspires students, fellow educators, and community members – indeed, writers from across the state of Oregon – to express themselves through the written word, and to share their work with others.

Entering his sixth year with Lincoln County School District, Matt Love's professional life centers on writing literacy.

Love teaches English and journalism and is advisor to the NHS student newspaper and student literary publication (similar roles he held for two years with Taft High School in Lincoln City). He coordinates LCSD's writing improvement initiative. He promotes writing through his volunteer work with the local nonprofit literary arts organization, Writers on the Edge. He is owner and publisher of Nestucca Spit Press, an independent press that exclusively publishes books about Oregon. He is an author, editor, blogger, and regular contributor to regional magazines. If it involves writing, authors, learning, or most anything Oregon ... chances are that Matt Love is involved.

As hectic as this may all seem, Love sees his various pursuits as complementary. "My books, teaching, the [school] newspaper, they are all seamless," he says.

While this may make a fulfilling life for Love, more important (in the context of the school district and our community) is the impact he makes on students and his colleagues. Here are a few examples:

LITERARY REVIEW: Under Love's guidance, students in the NHS creative writing class this past spring designed and produced a 160-page literary review with more than 150 student and staff poems, memoirs, short stories, other non-fiction pieces, photographs, illustrations, and a CD of musical and spoken word performances. The student editors received an incredible number of submissions to consider – more than 400! – so were able to cull the very best for inclusion. Love wrote grants to fund part of the publication, and received private donations to cover the rest of the printing expense. Proceeds from sales of this year's literary publication (entitled, "Not Gonna Make It" and available at many local bookstores) will go toward expenses for next year's book.

BOOK DEBUT: In February, Love organized a field trip for 40 of his students to Powell's Books in Portland to attend a rollout celebration for his book, "Citadel of the Spirit: Oregon's Sesquicentennial Anthology." Commem-

orating the 150th anniversary of Oregon's statehood, this 500-page anthology contains 63 original essays by many of the state's foremost writers as well as excerpts from documents related to Oregon history. During the event, several pieces were read aloud and some of the contributing authors introduced.

"This was a huge event for Matt, but also an incredible experience for our students," says Tiana Tucker, fellow English teacher at Newport High. "A couple of students had never been to Portland, and most had never been to Powell's. I loved having the students see their teacher in a totally different professional role than the one they see him in every day."

One of the students who attended was Miri Goldade – not just for the learning experience, but because she was among the honored guest authors. "One of her pieces is included in the anthology, and she stood among some renowned Oregon writers at this event," Tucker recalls.

WRITING IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE: For the past three years, Love has coordinated a \$135,000 grant from Portland State University dedicated to improv-

"LCSD students are the best of my career. Some of them are so accomplished that they teach me how to write."

ing LCSD's student writing achievement by improving the quality of writing instruction. This has included a series of week-long writing workshops led by visiting professional writers for several hundred of the district's high school students. Through professional summer workshops and follow-up training sessions through the school year, several dozen teachers have learned how to be better-engaged teachers of writing.

"The philosophy is to train teachers to write, to allow them to become a part of the process rather than just teach the process," Love explains. "When teachers become part of the process, there is a certain vulnerability involved. They develop a love of the subject, and there's no substitute for that in teaching."

To qualify for the grant, LCSD had to show a financial need and a need for writing improvement. "In the



NEWPORT HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER MATT LOVE, right, speaks during the rollout celebration of his newest book, "Citadel of the Spirit: Oregon's Sesquicentennial Anthology." Among the book's contributing authors attending the celebration was **Miri Goldade**, second from left, a 2009 Newport High School graduate.

past, the district emphasized reading, which was reflected in our poor reading scores," Love says. "Now, we've been doing a blast of writing, and should see a real bump in those scores."

STUDENT NEWSPAPER: As journalism teacher and advisor to the "Harbor Light" staff, Love guides students as they sell advertising, write stories, shoot photos, design and layout the pages, distribute the paper, and plan for the next issues. This past school year, the publication was redesigned to have more of a "news magazine" feel, with colorful covers, professionally designed logo and flag, and feature-length articles. With an editorial mission to explore and analyze issues important to Newport High School and the community at large, articles have ranged from an in-depth look at the religions represented in the student population, to the fate of cats and dogs awaiting adoption at the nearby animal shelter. "Harbor Lights" is produced in a spacious classroom filled with new computer equipment, thanks to a \$10,000 grant from the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and another \$5,000 in funding earmarked by NHS Principal Jon Zagal.

In the first "Harbor Light" issue following its redesign, student editor Sam Bouchat wrote, "With all this new equipment, this new look, this new advisor, we find ourselves filled with a new motivation to discover and a stronger goal to inform... [Thanks] to Matt Love, who made the whole process possible and brought a new determination to the team that had otherwise been lacking for too long."

As for his role as teacher and mentor, Love has worked with many students from several other school districts in Oregon, "but the LCSD students I've encountered are the best and hungriest of my career," he says. "As far as their writing goes, some of them are so accomplished that they teach me how to write." ♦

BE INFORMED ABOUT YOUR SCHOOLS!

Parents, Students, Community Members... Did you know that there are several different ways to get information about Lincoln County School District and your neighborhood schools? Check 'em out!

☐ **LCSD WEBSITE:** Go online to www.lincoln.k12.or.us and you'll find an abundance of great information. For instance, on the homepage you can link to recent news releases, the Oregon Department of Education's school report cards, individual school websites, the LCSD budget, and much more.

☐ **SCHOOL NEWSLETTERS:** Ask

your school about their newsletter and how you can "subscribe" to it.

☐ **DISTRICT DIALOG:** Watch your mailbox at home for this community newsletter that is published quarterly. You also can access current and past issues on the LCSD website, in both English and Spanish.

☐ **LCSD TV:** Turn your cable TV to

channel 4 (in south county) or channel 21 (in north county) to see a variety of student produced programs highlighting school district activities.

☐ **LCSD 24-HOUR INFORMATION LINE:** Call 265-4437 anytime to learn about emergency news (such as school closings because of bad weather). ♦

TAKING NOTE

NEWS OF INTEREST
from around the district

Taft Boosters Receive Grant for Traveling AEDs

Pacific Power Foundation awarded a \$3,400 grant to Taft High School 7-12 to purchase two automated external defibrillators (AED) for use by student groups when they travel off campus.

Each LCSD school is equipped with one AED. However, student athletes and other student groups visit schools in other districts that aren't equipped with the portable, life-saving equipment, says LCSD nurse **Julie Turner, RN**.

Young athletes, who often are tall for their age, can be prone to sudden cardiac death due to undiagnosed cardiac arrhythmias. Another risk to football and baseball players is that they can

tively "shock" the victim's heart back into a regular rhythm.

Seeing the need, Turner asked the Booster Club if they could provide funds for "traveling AEDs." **Kathy Joy**, THS Booster Club president and Pacific Power employee, applied for the grant and secured the funds. The money will be used to purchase two AEDs and provide oversight costs for one year.

"Hopefully all Lincoln County booster clubs will be able to follow suit and purchase additional AED units for their schools," says Joy. "The health and safety of our students and school employees is very important."

"One thing I love about this place is the cooperation we have between the district, the school, the booster club and the community," said **Scott Reed**, THS principal. "We appreciate Kathy for doing a great job for our students."

Students Express, Create through Art Education

The Newport Visual Arts Center resonated with the art of Lincoln County students during the 2009 Lincoln County Student Art Show in May.

Submissions came from all schools and represented a delightful variety of art media: ceramics, cast paper, oil pastels, watercolor, poster paints, digital photography, colored pencil,

markers, acrylic paints, pencil, pen and ink, scratch board, mixed media, block prints, fish prints, crayon resist, calligraphy, paper arts, and charcoal. Wind chimes, masks, self-portraits, landscapes, jewelry, dream-catchers, abstracts, Celtic designs, gyotaku, African shields and masks, graphic design, photographs, assemblages, and Greek tessellations were just some of the works of art displayed.

"Through the process of making art, our youth learn to express emotions, concepts and ideas that are not always easy to express in words," says **Sally Houck**, director of the Newport Visual Arts Center. "The

work in this exhibit exemplifies the benefits of art education and reaffirms the need to continue to support the arts in schools and to ad-



PACIFIC POWER REPRESENTATIVE Alan Meyer presents the grant check to THS principal **Scott Reed**, Booster Club president **Kathy Joy** and LCSD nurse **Julie Turner**, holding an AED.

receive tremendous blows to the chest that can precipitate heart arrhythmia. Any trained layman can use an AED to safely and effec-



ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE AWARDS. Catherine Rickbone, OCCA executive director, back row left; and Sally Houck, VAC director, back row right, present Artistic Excellence awards to back row, **Maggie Swanton** and **Phillip Lopez**; and front row from left, **Sophia Berenson**, **Betsy Dollar** and **Ruth Hale**.

vocate for art programs in the schools and in the community."

Awards for Artistic Excellence were presented to several students for their creative efforts. Congratulations to the **HIGH SCHOOL** winners, pictured above, and to the **MIDDLE SCHOOL** recipients: **David Ammon** and **Kaycee Settlement**; and the **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** honorees: **Eva Barton**, **Kai Daniels**, **Joshua Johnson**, **Luke McCarthy**, **Laura McCrum**, **Mason Spradley**, **Fisher Walker** and **Alexis Watson**.

Public Invited to View Teachers' History Projects

In 2006, LCSD received a federal grant to implement the Teaching American History (TAH) Fellowship Project, a unique four-year professional development opportunity for teachers to deepen their understanding of U.S. and Oregon history and enhance their classroom instruction.

In commemoration of Oregon's year-long 150th anniversary celebration, the 15 TAH Fellows will present their history education projects to the community during a special event on **Thursday, Nov. 12, beginning at 6 p.m. at Newport High School**. Their 10 projects include a film documentary on the history of surfing in Lincoln County, a CD of Oregon folk songs, a Siletz tribal history traveling trunk, a

Lewis and Clark traveling trunk, a drama production of the 1925 mob expulsion of Japanese workers from Toledo, a photographic history of Lincoln City schools, and more.

"These teachers have given up a tremendous amount of personal time to research local and Oregon history projects, and this effort will produce spectacular results for all of Lincoln County," says **Matt Love**, TAH program director.

The TAH teachers are: **Valerie Baker**, **Matt Falby**, **Janna Limbert** and **Kimberly Miller** (Lincoln City); **Debby Clark**, **Marnie Cogswell**, **Ruth McDonald** and **Christie Walker** (Newport); **Meg Groat**, **Joe Jordan** and **Dana Spink** (Toledo); **Ronn Russell** and **Libba Sager** (Waldport); and **Sandi LaRouche** and **Doug Schwartz** (Eddyville).

At the November program, the community will get to see part or all of the projects depending on the individual nature of the project. Other projects will be seen in their entirety, such as the documentary, at later dates.

Sam Case School Tops in Attendance Flag Contest

This year's "Capture the Flag" competition among LCSD elementary schools helped to increase school pride and boost student attendance. Each month, the winning school had the honor of displaying the colorful Attendance Flag.

MAY: Oceanlake Elementary in Lincoln City won (93.5% student attendance rate), closely followed by **Crestview Heights** in Waldport (93.1%).

JUNE: Sam Case Elementary in Newport took first (96.05%), and **Crestview** was second (94.61%).

During the school year, three schools had the opportunity to fly the flag over their campus: **Sam Case**, with six first-place wins; **Oceanlake** with three wins; and **Taft Elementary** in Lincoln City with one first-place finish. ♦

YAQUINA VIEW STUDENTS CELEBRATE THEIR WRITING WITH FAMILIES & FRIENDS



A special event held at Newport's Embarcadero Resort in June showcased the work of beginning writers in **Deborah Gwynn's** first/second grade class at Yaquina View Elementary School.

Her students wrote, edited, illustrated, and published their own books filled with their writing from the year. During the Writers Celebration, they read and shared what they had written with family members and other special guests. The project followed a model from educator Darla Wood Walters, esteemed for her insight about what works in teaching writing skills to K-2 students.

In photo at left, Chasity shares her book with Martha Smith, wife of YVE's former principal Kurt Smith. In photo at right, Johnathan reads to his grandfather.

The celebration was made possible by generous support from the YVE Parent Boosters who paid rent for the room at the Embarcadero, which offered a special rate for the school. Balloon decorations were provided courtesy of **Sid Danielson** of LCSD Human Resources, who allowed a parent to take them after the district's annual Recognition Dessert. ♦



West Area Schools continued from Page 1

sity for the change has been months in the making.

For the second half of the last school year, the primary focus of LCSD administrators was continuing to provide a quality education to the county's 5,200 public school students in the midst of deep budget cuts. On June 23, the LCSD School Board adopted a \$70.67 million budget for the 2009/10 school year, representing a \$3.4 million decrease from the prior year's budget. It also meant eliminating approximately 64 teaching, administrative and classified positions throughout the district – or a 13% staff reduction.

Even with this reduced budget, LCSD administrators are preparing to *spend less* than what has been budgeted, so that cash and reserves can be available to help with possible future funding reductions, should the economy fail to recover quickly.

Once the School Board approved the West Area restructuring plan on July 14, LCSD staff began working on moving classrooms, offices, equipment, furnishings and technology, and is scheduled to wrap up by late August. Because of the move, the West Area school calendar has been modified to give teachers three transition days to put their classrooms back in order. This means the first day of school for Newport students has been pushed back by a few days (to Sept. 11, 12 or 14, depending on grade level).

COMMUNITY SUPPORT: Even before the restructuring plan was approved, community members rallied behind the idea. In particular, two local church congregations offered to help move classrooms and offices.

Approximately 50 members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints volunteered their time, muscle and packing skills on July 25 to help with the Newport classroom moves. At the same time, some 30 LDS Church members were at the two Toledo schools, helping to ready

them for the new year. This was done in conjunction with the church's Pioneer Day celebration. Brian Hanna, who is the Newport LDS Church bishop and a NHS teacher, says church members across the state performed service projects in recognition of Oregon's sesquicentennial, as well as the anniversary of the day the first Mormon pioneers entered the Great Salt Lake Valley.

Eric Fritz, youth pastor at Newport Nazarene Church, also organized a group of church members to help with the moving in early August. "We wanted to show support of our community and love for our kids, so we offered what ever was needed – muscle, vehicles, packing, unpacking, whatever is needed."

In addition, a group of 16 teens from Countryside Christian Church in Keiser helped out on Aug. 5.

PRINCIPALS' NEW ASSIGNMENTS: As a result of the reconfiguration, LCSD Superintendent Tom Rinearson announced the following administrative changes for the coming school year:

Marsha Eckelman will be principal of Sam Case Primary School, which will begin serving students in grades K-3. For her past 10 years with LCSD, she has been principal of Newport Middle School.

Kristin Takano Becker will become principal of Newport Intermediate School (grades 4-6) as well as Isaac Newton Magnet School (grades 6-8), both located in the existing middle school building. She has been with LCSD

WEST AREA SCHOOLS TEACHER ALLOCATION

	2008/09	2009/10	Difference *
Sam Case Elementary	20.00	13.60	-6.40
Yaquina View Elementary	15.83	10.00	-5.83
Newport Middle / INMS	17.50	13.00	-4.50
Newport High	21.32	18.00	-3.32
TOTAL	74.65	54.60	-20.05

*Number of Full-Time Equivalent Teaching Positions Eliminated Under Adopted Budget

TEACHER ALLOCATION AFTER REALIGNMENT

Primary School (519 students in grades K-3)	19.60
Intermediate School (478 students in grades 4-6 plus Isaac Newton Magnet School grades 6-8)	16.00
High School Campus (785 students in grades 7-12)	23.40
FTE TEACHING POSITIONS TOTAL	59.00

since 1994, serving as a teacher, Community Resource Liaison, and most recently as principal of Yaquina View Elementary.

Principal **Jon Zagel** and Assistant Principal **Aaron Belloni** will continue at Newport High School (grades 9-12), with the addition of Newport Preparatory Academy (grades 7-8) to the school campus.

"Please join me in congratulating and welcoming these fine principals to their new roles," Rinearson said. "Although our planning and reconfiguration was necessitated by the economic downturn, I know our administrators are excited about improving student achievement in new ways." ♦

Taft Adopts 4.5 Day Week

A significant change is occurring in the school district's North Area this school year, as well: Taft High School 7-12 in Lincoln City will have a shortened school week.

While the plan will save 1.0 FTE teaching position, the main motivation behind the change is to increase student learning, Principal Scott Reed told LCSD School Board members in March, when the plan was first presented.

Class will be in session Monday through Thursday, with each school

day 26 minutes longer. Fridays will be reserved for staff development and student interventions – providing additional instruction and tutoring for students who are struggling in certain subjects.

Students not needing intervention may access additional learning opportunities on Fridays such as internships, on-line, guest lectures, proficiency



based learning and Oregon Coast Community College offerings. Reed reported several successful high schools in Oregon currently use this model. ♦

IMPORTANT DATES

■ BOOSTER BASH VII

Four-person scramble at Olalla Valley Golf Course benefiting LCSD Booster Clubs. Call 265-7505 for all the details!

Noon, Friday, Aug. 28

■ NEW TEACHERS REPORT

Monday, Aug. 31

■ LABOR DAY HOLIDAY

Monday, Sept. 7

■ FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

School is in session! Please be aware of kids and school buses on our roads and in neighborhoods. Depending on school, grade level and whether student is new to the district, the first day of school will be:

Tuesday, Sept. 8 – Wednesday, Sept. 9 – Thursday, Sept. 10 – Friday, Sept. 11 – OR – Monday, Sept. 14



LCSD has five school calendars for different areas and schools. Please contact individual schools for a copy of the school calendar or go online to the LCSD website at:

www.lincoln.k12.or.us

Our 2009 Graduates: What Is In Their Future?

HIGH SCHOOL:	Newport	Taft	Toledo	Waldport
Number of GRADUATES:	149	101	69	52
Number planning to attend 4-YEAR COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY:	52	33	14	10
Number planning to attend COMMUNITY COLLEGE:	56	35	38	18
Number planning to attend TRADE SCHOOL:	12	10	3	0
Number planning to join MILITARY:	1	6	1	1
Number planning to WORK FULL TIME:	11	10	12	23
Amount Awarded in SCHOLARSHIPS:	\$384,510	\$436,510	\$137,813	\$151,500