

New Wa-Hi communications system brings telephones to classrooms

Coordinated effort saves thousands

Safety, staff relations and parent involvement all received a boost this fall at Walla Walla High School with the upgrade of the school's aging telephone system. Soon all Wa-Hi teachers will have telephones in their classrooms.

"Upgrading the telephone system at Wa-Hi was voted by staff as the number one area of need," Business Manager **Aron Rausch** said. "This upgrade will be a significant improvement in the communications system and will enhance safety and staff morale."

As trenchers and other heavy equipment rumbled across Wa-Hi's grounds earlier this fall during the installation of an efficient irrigation system, the district's Technology Department jumped at the opportunity to provide the long awaited communications upgrade.

"We were able to use the heavy equipment services made available from the irrigation project to install new telephone lines," Technology Director **Janis Barton** said. "Coordinated planning throughout this project saved the district thousands of dollars. By also installing fiber optic lines, we were able to improve Wa-Hi's computer network system at the same time."

Approximately 125 telephones will be installed at Wa-Hi later this month. Each classroom will have a telephone and extension number, and all staff will have voice mail service, and other modern telephone features. Qwest products will be used for the upgrade.

"If something were to happen and I need help immediately, a telephone makes that possible without either leaving my kids or sending a runner to get help. A telephone links my classroom to the outside world!"

Tony Howard - *Wa-Hi Math Teacher*

"In my 18 years at Wa-Hi, one of the biggest hassles has always involved finding a phone from which I can make private phone calls to parents. With the new phone system I will be able to accomplish those calls much more easily from my room. This way I can easily pull up a student's grade on my classroom computer and refer to that as I am talking on the phone."

Marcia Tomlin - *Wa-Hi English Teacher*



Technology Director Janis Barton and Telecommunications Specialist Steve Olsen review upgrade plans for the new Wa-Hi communications system.

Walla Walla Public Schools

364 South Park Street
Walla Walla, WA 99362
509.529.7713 (FAX)
509.527.3000
website: www.wwps.org

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For more information about the school district contact Communications Director Mark Higgins at 509.526.6716 or by e-mail at: mhiggins@wwps.org

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Tuesday, November 5

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WALLA WALLA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Focus on Education

Your School District Newsletter

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Blue Ridge state test scores soar

Decade of School Improvement efforts paying dividends for Eagles

With more than 86 percent of its students receiving free or reduced-priced school meals and nearly 80 percent coming to school as second language learners, many would believe Blue Ridge Elementary has too many challenges for its stu-



Blue Ridge Principal Linda Boggs says teamwork is the key to improvement.

dents to succeed.

Doubters beware! Blue Ridge fourth grade students made double digit gains on the 2002 Washington Assessment of Student Learning test. Blue Ridge math scores jumped 45 percent in just one year.

Principal Linda Boggs say teamwork amongst staff, students, parents and the community is making the difference.

"Collectively, we do what's best for our kids," Boggs said. "Our staff really take ownership in change. Our students aren't just numbers. We know their strengths and weaknesses and continually challenge ourselves to better meet their needs."

See **Eagles Soar** - page 5

Fair tastic Showing



Walla Walla High School junior **Kelsay Pease** was one of the district's top performers at this year's Southeast Washington fair. Kelsay earned Reserve Grand Champion Market lamb and Reserve Grand Wheaties awards.

Kelsay is heavily involved in the Future Farmers of America program and spends hundreds of hours each year working with animals. Money she earns from selling animals is placed in her bank account for college days to come.

District remembers 9-11



Patriotic salute! Green Park Elementary staff and students wave American flags during their 9-11 remembrance ceremony.

See more **9-11** - page 4

Prospect Point bilingual students better equipped to acquire English

Students living in the Prospect Point Elementary School attendance area who are in need of bilingual services won't have to enroll at another school thanks to the establishment of a transitional bilingual program at their home school.

This school year bilingual instruction is offered to students in grades Kindergarten through second grade with a third grade class slated to start next year. English acquisition is the number one goal of Transitional Bilingual instruction.

See **Bilingual Program** - page 7

Our Core Values are more than mere words; they're our business!

Quality Integrity Accountability Respect Courtesy



Rich Carter
Superintendent

Student achievement district's top priority

This is a pivotal year for us and the time to move forward is now. Our school board and community have high expectations, and tough state and federal mandates have forever changed public education.

The call for higher student achievement is swift, and success will require hard work and commitment from every staff member and administrator. Continuing support and involvement of the community are also essential as we strive to improve student achievement.

I'm challenging myself to find new ways to educate and serving notice I expect the same of my administrators and staff. I need risk takers in our schools who are willing to challenge the status quo and step up with new ideas to lead our district through education reform.

Change will continue to be the "norm" in Walla Walla if we are to succeed. We have an aging staff as witnessed by 11 administrative changes in just two years. Many of our teachers are also wrapping up successful careers and moving into retirement. It will take a team effort with leadership coming from our veteran staff for successful change. I'm confident we have the team here in Walla Walla to get the job done. Walla Walla Public Schools staff members are trained, skilled and prepared to improve student achievement. With your continued support, we expect to achieve even more this year.

2002-2003 District Goals

- Support staff with resources and training necessary to improve student achievement
- Reallocate district resources to better meet Education Reform goals
- Comply with state and federal legislation (Including *No Child Left Behind Act*)
- Get more students involved in extracurricular activities and positive school functions
- Develop plan to support Community Facilities Task Force Committee findings (including *studying plan for new support services facility*)
- Recruit and retain highly skilled staff
- Maintain 3 to 5 percent cash reserve

Elementary and Secondary Education Act - No Child Left Behind Act

States have 12 years for all students to be proficient

On January 8, 2002, President Bush signed into law the *No Child Left Behind Act*. With this act comes increased federal involvement in public education at the state and local level.

Major elements of the act

- Adequate yearly progress
- States must define adequate yearly progress
- States have 12 years for all students to be proficient
- States set starting point at the level of the lowest-achieving demographic group or the lowest achieving schools in the state, whichever is higher
- Goals must be raised annually in equal increments
- Two year increments can be used to measure success at meeting goals
- Subsequent bars must be raised at least once every three years
- May use a three-year average of assessment performance

Now online! *No Child Left Behind Act*
www.k12.wa.us

What if your school fails?

- If a school fails to meet performance objectives for two consecutive years, then it must receive technical assistance from the district to help it improve, and its students will have the option to transfer to another public school in the district.
- In the third consecutive year of failure, technical assistance to the school and public school choice will continue. In addition, students will have the option of using their share of Title I (the largest federal education program, provides aid to low-income schools) funds to pay for tutoring and other supplemental educational services.
- In the fourth consecutive year of failure, technical assistance, public school choice and supplemental services will continue, but the failing school must also change its staffing or make another fundamental change.
- In the fifth consecutive year of failure, the governance of the failing school must be changed - for example, by converting it to a charter school, turning it over to a private management company, or having the state take it over.

Finding time for teachers to collaborate key to improved student achievement

Teachers, parents, administrators and business leaders are meeting this school year to develop a plan which will offer K-12 educators consistent time to develop strategies for improving student achievement.

The establishment this fall of the Professional Development and Collaboration committee forms a team to work collectively on developing the most effective plan for the district and community.

"With tough legislative requirements to improve student achievement in place, we must find ways now to give our teachers adequate time to refine their skills do the job," Assistant Superintendent **Dr. Judy Reault** said.

Teachers during collaboration time conduct team and department meetings, attend in-service training sessions, receive technology training and meet with teachers from different grade levels and schools.

The plan that is proposed must meet the state requirement for contact time between teachers and students. After school activities and programs will also be considered throughout the process according to Reault.

"With tough legislative requirements to improve student achievement in place, we must find ways now to give our teachers adequate time to refine their skills do the job,"

Dr. Judy Reault, Assistant Superintendent

"I'm confident this group will work hard to develop a plan that is best suited for our students, staff and community," Reault said. "We received valuable input last spring and will use those resources during this important process."

A plan is expected to go before the school board for approval next spring. For more information on progress being made by the Professional Development and Collaboration committee progress, please visit Curriculum and Instruction area on the district website: www.wwps.org

BILINGUAL PROGRAM continued from page 1

Prospect Point joins Green Park and Blue Ridge as elementary schools which offer Transitional Bilingual Instruction as a means to full oral fluency and literacy in English.

"Research is clear that non-English speaking students who gain a strong foundation in their native language acquire a second language more easily," Transitional Bilingual coordinator **Cindy Gregoire** said.

Fifteen years ago the district served 51 students who needed assistance learning English. Last year the number climbed to over 600.

"With this steady increase and crowded biilingual classrooms at the other elementaries, district adminis-

trators decided it was time to allow Prospect Point students to attend their home school," Gregoire said.

Reading, math, social studies and health curriculum used in the bilingual classrooms is the same as that used in the English-only classrooms except that it is published and taught in Spanish. Science can be taught in either language.

According to 2nd grade teacher Siomara Garcia, the identical curriculum has made it easier to collaborate with other second grade teachers at Prospect Point

Special education and other special services are also available in Spanish.

Garrison assistant principal new Safe Schools coordinator

Garrison Middle School Assistant Principal **Gary Weitz** now plays a greater role in keeping staff and students safe as he assumes command of the district's Safe Schools program.

Now in his second year with the district, long-time educator Weitz says he welcomes his new challenge.

"I feel very honored to be trusted with this position. I will continue to be proactive in pursuing comprehensive building plans and unifying the district with terminology and procedure," Weitz said.

The Safe Schools program meets regularly each school year to discuss safety issues and plan training opportunities. Law enforcement and fire officials, mental health representatives, parents, and district staff are active participants in the program.

Weitz will be responsible for facilitating meetings, seeking safe schools grant funding, reporting to the school board, and planning crisis training sessions.

Last year Safe Schools committee members conducted training on earthquake preparedness and dealing with the grieving process often associated with tragedy.

Goal six of the district's Strategic Plan is centered around providing a safe and drug free learning environment for staff, students and guests.



Gary Weitz



Prospect Point Transitional Bilingual teacher **Siomara Garcia** helps one of her second grade students learn English.

All bilingual students are taught entirely in English at the start of their fourth grade school year.

9-11 RESPECT • HONOR • HOPE

Walla Walla Public Schools take a Moment of Silence

As I visited various schools, I watched caring and compassionate adults in our schools use this moment in time to come together and teach our youth about tragedy and about compassion for their fellow Americans. Our kids today learned that we have everyday heroes amongst us and to not take life for granted but cherish our families, our friends, our communities, and our country.

Superintendent Rich Carter

Reflecting on the one year anniversary of 9-11

Proud to be Americans

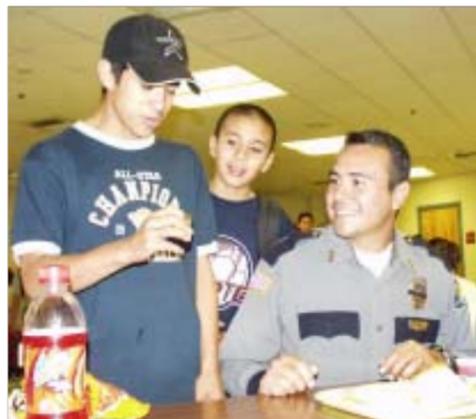


Patriotic signs were on display throughout our schools on 9-11



Plant Facilities Secretary **Jeanette Wright** (L) and Plant Facilities Student Secretary **Crystal Arriola** (Wa-Hi Senior) designed a 9-11 remembrance display for their breakroom.

Honoring our Heroes



City of Walla Walla Police Officer **Sol Reyna** "talks shop" with Garrison Middle School students over lunch as part of the school's 9-11 remembrance assembly. Mayor **Jerry Cummins** and firefighter **Bob Yancey** were also special guests at the ceremony.

Pioneer Middle School student shows her maturity

"Students did a great job being respectful and commemorating September 11. Some students shared some very interesting poems over the intercom. September 11 was an example of how strong and supportive our country is. It's terrible it took something like this to bring the United States together."



Maeve McClellan - 8th Grade

Students discover a new world of math

New K-12 math curriculum challenges students to make learning discoveries

Now fully immersed in the world of high stakes testing and tough state and federal legislation demanding more accountability, Walla Walla Public Schools has taken a bold step to improve student achievement by adopting a new K-12 math curriculum.

Connected Mathematics Project, a curriculum strategy which challenges students to make discoveries on their own through problem solving and investigations, was adopted by school



Garrison Middle School math teacher **Kristen Harvey** says the district's new math curriculum helps students retain more information.

board members last school year and is now being taught in classrooms throughout the district.

Connected Mathematics Project (CMP) challenges students to conduct investigations to solve problems. By using manipulatives, graphs, graphing calculators, and a variety of tools, they discover the answers. Students are also expected to explain their answers in writing and through presentations to the class.

"It is a completely different style of teaching and learning than the old style," Garrison Middle School math teacher **Kristen Harvey** said. "The old style would find teachers lecturing on the board and then showing students how to solve a certain type of problem. Students would practice and be assigned 20 similar problems for homework. We have known for decades that this style doesn't work. Kids retain the information just long enough for the test, then forget it."

Learning materials supporting the new curriculum are also different. Smaller textbooks complete with full color graphics are designed to peak interest. According to Harvey, the new curriculum is already spurring positive changes.

"We piloted this program last year for a couple of months. At first, the kids were resistant, as we all are with change," Harvey said. "I was amazed that six months after the pilot, kids were still using sophisticated mathematical language and explanations. I'd never had such a large group of students retain that much information before."

EAGLES SOAR continued from page 1

The system is working. Behavior incidents are down, parent involvement up and staff morale is at an all time high.

"We down play the outcome and up play the process," Boggs said when asked about this year's soaring WASL test scores. "We care about each student's progress. Some may be below the mark now, but if they are continuously making progress, we know they will eventually be high school graduates, and ultimately, lifelong learners."

Blue Ridge also collectively agreed a few years ago to add 20 minutes to the school day. School now starts at 7:55 a.m. instead of 8:15 p.m.

According to Boggs her staff pushed for lengthening the day. Staff members kept telling her the kids are already here. The extended day allows Blue Ridge staff to put more concentrated time in reading and math.

Those who may have questioned whether Blue Ridge is a good school better reevaluate as the Eagles are soaring to new to heights.

Blue Ridge - Soaring WASL Test Scores

4th grade	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	01-02
Reading	15.8	32.0	28.2	33.3	33.3	53.5 (up 20.2%)
Math	5.3	6.0	12.8	19.6	14.0	59.1 (up 45.1%)
Writing	10.5	10.0	15.4	11.8	22.9	25.0 (up 2.1%)
Listening	49.1	56.0	56.4	47.1	38.0	63.6 (up 25.6%)

Keys to School Improvement

- Staff commitment to change
- Reallocation of existing resources
- Research-based instruction
- Individual learning plans for students not working to expectations
- Analysis of assessment data
- Restructuring staff collaboration time

Facilities Task Force submits final report and recommendations to school board

Charged with assisting the district in maintaining its long-range facilities management plan, the *Community Facilities Task Force* completed its most recent work in the form of a detailed report highlighting its recommendations to the school board.

Superintendent **Rich Carter** reconvened the *Community Facilities Task Force* last school year to help the district remain proactive with its facility needs.

After six meetings and site visits to each of the district's 12 facilities to assess current needs, the group's recommendations were incorporated in a comprehensive "Ten Year Facility Plan."

Dan Reid of Opp & Seibold Construction served as co-chair for the committee.

"I'm proud of the committee's work and believe the facilities plan will provide the school district with an excellent tool as it

works with the community to maintain its facilities."

The *Community Facilities Task Force* was originally established in 1995. The Building Facilities Study Committee in the early 1980s helped the district assess its facilities needs.

The *Community Facilities Task Force* consists of 18 members including; community members, parents, school volunteers, city leaders and district staff. Nine of the original committee members returned to serve again this year.

The *Community Facilities Task Force* also recommends that an ongoing building advisory committee be appointed. Berney Principal **David Talley** also served as co-chair for the committee.



Dan Reid
Co-Chair

District reviews support services facility

Community facilities task force study recommends replacing aging facility

For decades the corner of Park and Crescent Streets served as a marketplace for Walla Walla community members to buy groceries. In more recent years, the light blue cinder block building located at 325 Park South Street has served as the headquarters for the district's support services facilities: maintenance, transportation, warehouse, print shop and food services.

This once vibrant grocery store's better days are behind it as time is running out on its functional usage, according to a report from the *Community Facilities Task Force*.

"It is recommended that the district begin the process of major renovation or reconstruction of these facilities," the report states. "Relocation of the facility to another site should be considered, as the existing land site is restrictive."

The district is reviewing its support services facilities to best determine an approach to meeting recommendations of the *Community Facilities Task Force*. Limited funding sources continue to be a major factor in this process.

"The current condition of this facility presents a safety hazard to the employees as well as gross inadequacies of space for all of these essential functions, making it both inefficient and not cost effective to operate."

Community Facilities Task Force



Leaking roofs, cramped spaces and poor heating systems make these vital work spaces inefficient to operate.

Community Facilities Task Force

Recommendations

- Survey community regarding Wa-Hi campus upgrades and future facility needs
- Survey community about building a new gym at Pioneer Middle School
- Appoint a facilities advisory committee to review the proposed Wa-Hi sports complex
- Renovate or replace the Support Services Facility

Remodel/Replacement Projects

- Edison Elementary School
- Paine Campus
Secondary Alternative Learning Center

These two schools have needs that must be addressed if the district intends to continue using Edison as a neighborhood school and Paine as an alternative education facility.

"The condition of many of the district's older facilities makes it difficult for faculty and students to perform to the best of their abilities."

Community Facilities Task Force

Very Important Project

(should be completed within three years)

- Upgrade HVAC in Wa-Hi's five original buildings

PLEASE NOTE

The *Community Facilities Task Force* recommends the district continues to designate 2% of its general fund budget for facilities repairs and projects.

2002 WASL writing scores up across district

WASL test score gains not fast enough to meet established state accountability goals

Results of the Spring 2002 Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) tests indicate Walla Walla Public Schools students are making positive strides, but much work still remains for the district to meet tough Education Reform goals.



Judy Reault

The WASL measures student achievement of the state's rigorous academic standards in reading, writing, mathematics and other core subjects.

Fourth grade students made gains in two of the assessment areas (*writing and math*); seventh grade students showed gains in reading, writing and math; and tenth grade students made significant gains in writing only.

"With four to six years of WASL test scores to study, we now can look at groups of students and program changes and innovations to begin to determine what may have made a positive difference and what may still be needed," Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instructions **Dr. Judy Reault** said. "In spite of some lower scores in some areas, we believe our plan for improvement is taking us in the right direction."

Steps taken to improve achievement

- Hiring of veteran administrator **Len Taruscio** to analyze scores, work one-on-one with principals and assessment specialists, and manage assessment program
- Adoption of **new math curriculum**. Approximately 80% of Washington state districts using similar proven program
- Alignment of curriculum with **Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs)**
- Implementation and management of annual **school improvement plans** (focused on Essential Academic Learning Requirements)
- Hiring of **Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSA)** to serve students struggling in math and reading
- Continuation of **professional development** for teachers in instructional strategies and curriculum development

Washington Assessment of Student Learning Scores

Grade 4 Spring 2002
(Percentages listed reflect students meeting or exceeding the standards)

Subject	District	State
Mathematics	40.9%	51.8%
Reading	59.9%	65.6%
Writing	39.4%	49.5%
Listening	66.3%	66.6%

Grade 7 Spring 2002
(Percentages listed reflect students meeting or exceeding the standards)

Subject	District	State
Mathematics	23%	30.4%
Reading	45.2%	44.5%
Writing	61.6%	53%
Listening	83.3%	83.6%

Grade 10 Spring 2002
(Percentages listed reflect students meeting or exceeding the standards)

Subject	District	State
Mathematics	32.9%	37.3%
Reading	56.6%	59.2%
Writing	50.3%	54.3%
Listening	80.4%	81.8%

Growth Trends

- Number of students not meeting standards in any of the four content areas went **down** in Spring 2002
- More students taking Spring 2002 WASL test met at least **three of four** standards (44% at 10th grade)
- Writing scores went up across the district in Spring 2002

PLEASE NOTE

Go to the *Schools* button on the district website for a complete listing of Walla Walla Public Schools WASL test results.

www.wwps.org