

ADE DAILY NEWS CLIPS

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Education Notebook (Arkansas Democrat-Gazette)

Sell vacant school, district leaders say

Leaders of the Pulaski County Special School District have recommended that the vacant Oak Grove High School be sold to a church organization for use as a community center.

Superintendent Jerry Guess said he will recommend the district accept an offer of \$99,000 for the land, contingent on the district retaining school bus parking rights on the property as well as access to the sewer treatment system that is on the high school land but also serves the still operating Oak Grove Elementary School.

The offer is from ThatChurch.com and its senior pastor Scott Harness, who attended Oak Grove area schools, Guess said.

The recommendation is subject to approval from Arkansas Education Commissioner Tom Kimbrell, who has served as the district's school board ever since the district was taken over by the state in 2011 for financial mismanagement and overspending.

Cleveland to take school-district job

Jared Cleveland, assistant commissioner for fiscal and administrative services in the Arkansas Department of Education for the past year, is leaving the state agency for a job in the Springdale School District.

Cleveland will become the deputy superintendent for personnel in the Northwest Arkansas school system in July. He is a former superintendent in the Lavaca and Magazine districts.

His replacement at the Education Department has not been selected, said Phyllis Stewart, the department's chief of staff.

PE instructor wins top eSTEM honor

Jhnecia Howard, a physical education teacher at eSTEM Public Charter Middle School for three years, was named the recipient of the 2013 Vicki Saviers eSTEM Educator of the Year award at the school's third annual eSTEM Soiree fundraising event.

Howard played a large role in building the school's athletics and physical activity departments. And in her first year as coach, the high school girls basketball team made it to the final four in the competition for the state 3A championship.

Alyson Shilling was named the eSTEM Elementary School Teacher of the Year. Denies Matlock, a seventh-grade English teacher was named Middle School Teacher of the Year, and La-Trecia Smith, a 10th-grade English teacher, was named the school's High School Teacher of the Year for 2013.

Glenview teacher wins NLR award

Natalie Rhodes-Warren, a kindergarten teacher at Glenview Elementary School and a graduate of North Little Rock High School, was recently named the 2013-2014 North Little Rock Teacher of the Year.

A teacher in the system for nine years, Rhodes-Warren earned a bachelor's degree in early childhood education from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and has two master's degrees, one in teaching and one in educational leadership, from Harding University.

"I am living my dream as a teacher in the North Little Rock School District," said Rhodes-Warren. She said that her philosophy of education is, "Never let it rest until your good is better and your better is best."

\$7.4 million raised for Catholic High

Catholic High School for Boys in Little Rock has raised \$7.4 million toward its capital campaign goal of \$15 million.

The 83-year-old school is in the midst of the renovations financed by the funds. The school renovated its cafeteria, gymnasium and athletic field in the past year. The next round of renovations - to be done this summer - include the replacement of all the windows, the reconfiguration of the lobby and the completion of the track around the new football field. Future plans include renovating the library, the auditorium and all classrooms.

Of the money raised to date, \$3.87 million is from alumni contributions and, of that amount, \$2.6 million comes from just five classes. The Class of 1986 has donated the most, \$1,512,500, followed by the Class of 1980, which has donated \$451,500, followed by the Class of 1991, with total donations of \$227,150. The classes of 1973 and 1987 round out the top five.

"We are truly humbled by the generosity our alumni have shown," said Monsignor Lawrence Frederick, rector at the 700-student Catholic High School. "Through their financial support, these men are giving future generations a true Catholic High experience; ensuring they will get the same quality education that has been instilled in men over the last 80 years."

More information about the capital campaign is available from Anne Carter at acarter@lrchs.org or by calling 664-4625.

Barbaree, Reed hired as principals in Lonoke (Lonoke Democrat)

The Lonoke School Board unanimously voted to hire a new elementary and primary School principal Monday night during the board meeting at the LHS library.

Jennifer Barbaree is the new Lonoke Elementary School principal. Barbaree replaces Holly Dewey, who will become the new primary school media specialist next year.

According to Lonoke Superintendent Suzanne Bailey, Dewey requested the transfer.

“She wanted a new challenge,” Bailey said. “We are all really excited about her new adventure.”

The board approved Dewey’s transfer to primary school media specialist during the meeting.

Barbaree is currently an administrator at Edgewood Elementary School in the Watson Chapel School District. She has been in education for 10 years. Her husband Brandon is the new football coach at Carlisle High School. They have three children.

The school board also hired a new primary school principal. Rebecca Reed, a kindergarten teacher in the Des Arc School District, was hired to replace Ross Moore, who is retiring at the end of the school year. Reed received her Education Leadership degree from Arkansas State University in December. She is married to Sgt. 1st Class John Reed of Hazen. They have four children, all of which will attend the district this fall. Reed has been in education for seven years.

High school employees and students of the month were recognized by high school principal Phynaus Wilson. Licensed staff member of the month was Tonya Beeler, 11th and 12th grade English teacher. Classified staff member of the month was secretary Barbara Evans, who was not present during the meeting.

Male student of the month was senior Dustyn Perkins and the female student of the month was junior Grace Lassett.

Student leadership presentations were made to the board. According to Bailey, this leadership team consists of 24 students in fourth through 12th grade who were selected through interviews and select criteria requirements. Students participating are required to attend a monthly meeting. Bailey said these students are the “voice” for their peers. She added that the presentations given are just proposals and nothing has been implemented at this time.

The first presentation was given by Jamie Bryant. Bryant’s vision was to have an emergency team, which would offer a familiar face to students or faculty members during their time of need. This team would offer support to them in the event of an illness, death or catastrophic event. She suggested member of the team consist of those on the leadership team. Bryant said students would contribute \$5 per month, or what they can afford to give. This money would go toward the purchase of items such as

cards. Bryant said she would oversee the team until she graduates, at that time the president of the leadership team would be appointed to her position.

Kyra Ellison and John Tyler Lloyd presented their idea of a fitness day. The suggested time, location and date of the event would be from 5:30 a.m. until noon on Sept. 7 or 14 on the football field. Activities such as a 5K run, jazzercise, face painting, Zumba, bounce houses and field activities would be available to the public for a small fee. The event would be open to the community and students to participate in an effort to raise money for projects in the community.

Tory Potter and Shakey Gomillion presented their idea for a interaction care group to help students in making decisions on what they would like to do in the future. The group would hold meetings for students so that guest speakers with similar interests or career fields could talk with students. It would also help keep more young adults off of the streets and help them in choosing a career.

Theresa Greer suggested the school start a clothes closet. She said the closet would be a place to store food, supplies, clothes, toiletries and other items for low income students to offer them a better chance to excel in school. Fundraiser and drives would be held to stock the closet. Greer said at the end of the year, a yard sale would be held to clean out the closet and raise money for next year.

Chandler Elmore presented his idea of having AP and ACT test practices. Elmore said although students know the information for the tests, they are often set up for failure because of the tests time limit and format. He said he believes repetition is key to helping students excel at these tests and by having practice AP and ACT testing in the classroom, the district would see an increase in scores. Elmore said students would have to buy into the program, but believes the program is "a gateway to their success."

Olivia Dodson suggested having a free throw contest. She said this would get implemented after semester testing, to give students something fun to do after their hard work. Dodson said the event would also be open for anyone in the public to participate. The free throw contest would cost \$2 for admission and \$5. Winners in each category would receive a cash prize of \$25 for first place, \$10 for second place and \$5 for third place.

Tonya Weaver, Paula Russell, Tim Scarborough and Doug Bost updated the board on their recent out of state professional development.

A new HVAC upgrade is scheduled to be completed at the primary school by the summer of 2014. The board approved to enter into and proceed with the agreement between the Division of Public School Academic Facilities and Transportation. The \$2 million project will cost the district \$810,504.28.

Students will see an increase in breakfast and lunch prices this fall. Current breakfast rates are \$0.75 for primary and elementary students, \$1 for middle and high school students and \$1.25 for adults. Lunch rates are \$1.60 for primary and elementary students, \$1.85 for middle and high school students and \$3 for adults. Two options were presented to the board, one being a small increase to the rates and the second a slightly higher increase which would make the prices uniform among each school. The board unanimously approved the second option, which will be \$1.25 for student breakfast and \$2 for an adult breakfast. New lunch rates will be \$2 for students and \$3 for adults. The district's for service budget deficit at the end of April was \$71,783.75.

After returning to the regular meeting at 9:13 p.m. following executive session, four retirements were approved by the board. Linda Browning will be retiring as Elementary Computer Lab teacher. She has been with the district 17 years. Kindergarten teacher Phyllis Munnerlyn retires after 30 years in district. Susan Howell is retiring as the Elementary Media Specialist. She has been with the district 19 years. Primary Media Specialist Becky Perkins is retiring after 12 years in district.

Also during the meeting, the board unanimously voted to:

- Accept the resignation of Keith Lynn Holt as bus driver and Audrey Mitchell as preschool teacher.
- Extend the contracts of licensed staff as presented
- Extend the contracts of classified staff as presented.
- Partially non-renew Sandra Stout contract from 205 days, equivalent to 10 months and reduce it to 190 days, equivalent to nine months
- Not hire any additional dual employees to not create any additional overtime unless an emergency
- Continue with Thomas Bowden for school photography services
- Stay with OrthoSurgeons for an athletic trainer for students
- Approve the licensed indexes and other duty stipends, which will remain the same.
- Approve the classified personnel salary schedule as presented.

The next regular scheduled meeting will be at 6 p.m. June 24 in the administration building.

Fort Smith, Van Buren, Alma Schools Offer Summer Meal Programs (Southwest Times Record, Fort Smith)

The Fort Smith and Van Buren school districts continue their free-for-children summer meals programs this year, and Alma School District begins an innovative, new summer meal program for children.

Last summer, the Fort Smith district served “a bit more than 50,000” meals, said Zena Featherston Marshall, the district’s communication and community partnership director.

Last summer, the Van Buren district served more than 10,000 meals to children and adults, said Shari Ross, the district’s administrative assistant.

The program’s intent is “to ensure that children and adults continue to receive nutritious meals during long school vacations when they do not have access to school breakfast and lunch,” Ross said.

Alma Program

Alma School District Child Nutrition Director Debbie Stewart said besides the summer meals served children each year at the middle school in association with Camp Airedale, the school will try a mobile sack lunch service in conjunction with the Airedale Book Express.

Stewart said students who go to the bookmobile to check out a book will be served a free sack lunch containing a sandwich, vegetables, fruit and milk. That program will be held each Wednesday through June and July.

The Airedale Book Express will stop at the Graphic Store at 9:30 a.m.; the Youth Ranch at 9:45 a.m.; Rudy Store at 10:40 a.m.; Alma Garden Apartments at 11:20 a.m.; Alma Fire Station No. 3 on Collum Lane West at 12:30 p.m.; Harris Addition at 1:15 p.m.; Dyer City Hall at 2 p.m.; and Alma Boys and Girls Club at 2:45 p.m.

The annual Camp Airedale program at Alma Middle School operates Monday through Thursday, June 3-20, and will serve breakfast and lunch free to children, Stewart said. Breakfast is served at 9 a.m., and lunch is served at noon, she said.

“We need it because we have students who will be with us for several hours during the day,” Stewart said.

Last year the program served 7,100 meals, Stewart said.

Both Alma programs are funded through the USDA Seamless Summer Program that is an extension of the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs, Stewart said.

Fort Smith Program

While breakfast and lunch are free to children ages 1 through 18, the Fort Smith program charges a nominal fee to adults wishing to participate. Parents will pay \$2 for their breakfast meal and \$3.25 for lunch.

The Fort Smith district’s program serves the meals on weekdays from June 3 through Aug. 2, except on the July 4 holiday.

Breakfast is served from 7:45-8:30 a.m. at Howard, Pike, Morrison, Sunnymede and Spradling elementary schools.

Lunch is served from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Ballman, Carnall, Morrison, Spradling, Trusty, Barling, Howard, Pike and Sunnymede elementary schools.

The Fort Smith program is funded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Summer Meals Program, according to district information.

Van Buren Program

While free for children up to age 18, adults who participate in Van Buren's summer meals program will pay nominal fees for their meals. Adult breakfasts cost \$2.50 and adult lunches cost \$3.50, Ross said.

The meals will be offered at Van Buren's King Elementary School on weekdays from June 4 through July 26, except for the July 4 holiday. Breakfast will be served from 7:30-8:30 a.m., and lunch will be served from 11 a.m. to noon.

The Van Buren program is funded through the Department of Human Service's Summer Feeding Program, Ross said.

According to USDA Food and Nutrition Service data, in fiscal 2011 about 137.4 million meals were served nationwide through the Summer Food Service Program. Of those, 1.64 million were served in Arkansas and 1.08 million in Oklahoma.