

# La Grande Pride

## Love, Care, Serve



La Grande High School, La Grande Middle School,  
Central Elementary, Greenwood Elementary, Island City Elementary

## REGISTRATION & RESOURCE FAIR

# Welcome new and returning students

By Trish Yerges

The La Grande District wants to make the enrollment process as easy as possible for parents with new students and those re-entering the district schools. To do this, the district hosted a Registration and Resource Fair at the La Grande Middle School on August 11 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The fair was a one-stop shop where school administrators guided parents through the enrollment process and made sure parents had a chance to spend time talking to the various resource vendors on hand that day.

Among those agencies were representatives from the Center for Human Development, from Union County Care, from Advantage Dental, and the SNAP program. These representatives shared information designed to support district families who have children enrolling into school.

If you missed the registration and resource fair, please contact the school where you think your child will attend to learn how to acquire and complete the enrollment forms. Resource information will be given to you and explained at that time.

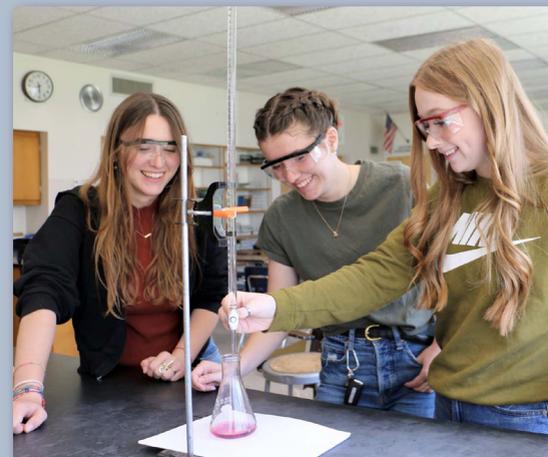
The teachers and administrators are very excited to welcome all new and returning students to the district for the 2022-2023 school year!



La Grande  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

**ENROLL NOW! 541-663-3202**

**ENGAGING ALL LEARNERS**



## FAMILIAR FACES, NEW ROLES

# Two new administrators

By Trish Yerges

The La Grande School District is pleased to announce the filling of two administrative posts, Greenwood School Principal and dean of students at the Central Elementary School.

Jennifer Melendez will begin the school year as principal of Greenwood Elementary School. Many district families will remember her as the assistant principal at Central Elementary last year.

This year, Melendez marks her 17th year in the



field of education, and of those, 16 were spent with the elementary grade levels, a fact that will aid her as Greenwood Elementary School Principal.

Melendez, a native of Caldwell, Idaho, received her education at Eastern Oregon University. After that, she taught classes in Idaho, Oregon and Colorado. In her

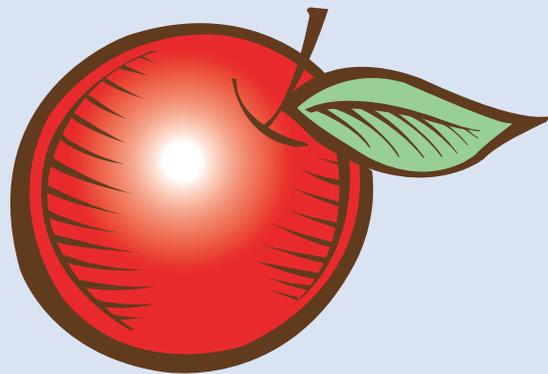
leisure, she loves the outdoors and camping, reading,

sewing and spending time with her husband and their grown children, and their two dogs at home, a shih tzu and a terrier.

She is very happy to serve the district in her new role. "I look forward to meeting the families," she said, "and I would encourage parents to come in and say hello because I would love to get to know everyone."

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# From the Superintendent's Desk ...



George Mendoza

LA GRANDE SCHOOL  
DISTRICT  
SUPERINTENDENT



## Dear Parents, Guardians, and Community Members,

Greetings and welcome to the 2022-2023 school year! My hope is our families, students, and community stakeholders had a great summer. Our school year starts on August 29, 2022! This means get ready for busses, students in classes, and teachers and staff members doing great things to encourage, connect, educate, and support our students. Also, get ready for sports, activities, arts, and more. As an educator, there is nothing like the start of the school year. I see hope, optimism, purpose, passion, the dedication to serve our students energizing our staff and eagerness to hear the sounds of students learning and thriving in our buildings.

Our district's theme for this upcoming year is "Trust, Engagement, Belonging." These are all fundamental values and needs that are important to a thriving society. Our goal as a district will be to maintain, build upon or re-build trust, through engagement opportunities with all stakeholders. We also need to create a sense of belonging for all students, staff and families that we serve. We have far more in common when we focus on students and invest in their best future.

From a safety perspective, I expect this year to start similarly to how we ended our last school year as it relates to COVID procedures and operations – with fewer rules and requirements and more local control and decision making. I am thankful we are now in this place; however, please know we have a COVID management plan in place that we will need to follow. We will continue

to sanitize and disinfect, increase fresh airflow through our HVAC systems, and have requirements related to keeping sick children at home. To learn more about our COVID Safety Plan please visit [lagrandesd.org/covidmanagement](http://lagrandesd.org/covidmanagement) or come visit our schools and hear more from our exceptional staff.

As you prepare for the new school year, I encourage you to visit our website at [lagrandesd.org](http://lagrandesd.org) for important information about open house dates, enrollment, academic calendars, and a variety of other information. Our district website is an excellent resource to stay up to date on all the latest LGSD news and information. We also offer a free mobile app available for download on both the iTunes® and Google Play® app stores. Simply search for "La Grande School District."

Thank you entrusting your child's education to the La Grande School District. We will do our best every day to provide them with a high quality education.

**Our Mission:** Empower La Grande's learners to learn, staff to thrive, and our community to prosper.

**Our Vision:** Preparing all La Grande students for their brightest future!

Best wishes,  
George Mendoza

This publication serves as a platform to keep our community informed and connected to the school district. We appreciate your involvement and support. Should you wish to contact me, my phone number is 541-663-3201; email: [george.mendoza@lagrandesd.org](mailto:george.mendoza@lagrandesd.org).

VOLUNTEER AT SCHOOL

# Engaging Families at School

By Trish Yerges

In the past two years, the pandemic created obstacles to school volunteerism, but now that many of those constraints are lifted, the district is free again to actively pursue its goal of increasing family engagement in schools. In this process, the district will be looking for more engagement opportunities across all demographics in our school district.

The district administrators recognize that the past two years have been very hard on families as far as being connected with their child's school because of State mandates and different rules at different times.

"To combat that this year, we're really going out of our way to engage families as much as we can so that they can have a positive experience and feel connected with schools," Carpenter said. "We are also going to be looking for ways to engage them and help to provide them with different opportunities to volunteer and be part of our school to support kids."

Among the school opportunities to think about now are elementary school engagement, such as supporting intervention groups and/or different classrooms. If you visit with the teachers there, they are interested in having a parent come in and provide support to that classroom. Others may need parents to come in as a lunch buddy and be a positive contact for a student, helping students with social skills or just be there as a mentor or grandma or grandpa.

"With athletics, we're always looking for help to work a ticket

booth or help with fundraising to meet the needs of those athletes," he said. "People can also meet with building principals, if there's a specific school they want to volunteer at, and talk about what kind of volunteer work they would like to do and how that would fit into that school's program."

If a person wishes to volunteer on committees, there are the local school parent-teacher organizations, which are pretty strong at the elementary schools and La Grande Middle School. That's a leadership group that tries to support students and help allocate some funds for special projects identified by the school and parents.

"There are also some district-level committees that adults can participate in, such as our adoption committee or student health advisory council," Carpenter suggested.

Volunteers are not required to have a special educational background to qualify for volunteerism at school, but they will go through the customary background check and fingerprinting requirements. There are vaccination requirements for all adults interacting with kids, but there is also an opt-out form for that. There is currently no mask requirement.

If you're interested in volunteering, please call the school's principal or Scott Carpenter at 541-975-3210. Staying connected with the district schools can be rewarding and purposeful for the volunteer and a positive support to the students.



2022/2023 School Calendar  
*Revised June 8, 2022*

29	First Day of School K - 7 & 9 (August 29)	<b>August 2022</b>							<b>September 2022</b>						
30	First Day of School Grades 8, 10-12 (Aug. 30)	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	One hr. late start - Professional Development		1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	
	No School - K - 12 Conference	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	No School - Holiday, Teacher Workday, or Professional Development	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
		21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
		28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	

<b>October 2022</b>							<b>November 2022</b>							<b>December 2022</b>						
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						1			1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31
30	31																			

<b>January 2023</b>							<b>February 2023</b>							<b>March 2023</b>						
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1	2	3	4	5	6	7				25	2	3	4				1	2	3	4
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
29	30	31					26	27	28					26	27	28	29	30	31	

<b>April 2023</b>							<b>May 2023</b>							<b>June 2023</b>						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
						1		1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3
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30																				

**End of Quarter** ○

Quarter 1 (40 Days) Ends October 25, 2022

Quarter 2 (45 Days) Ends January 25, 2023

Quarter 3 (40 Days) Ends March 24, 2023

Quarter 4 (45 Days) Ends June 7, 2023

**High School Graduation - June 3, 2023**

**LAST DAY FOR ALL STUDENTS - JUNE 7, 2023**

**Conference Schedule**

October 27 - Morning, Afternoon and Evening Conferences

October 28 - Morning Conferences only

January 26 - Evening Conferences only

January 27 - Morning Conferences for K-12

April 13 - Evening Conferences only

April 14 - Morning Conferences only

Board Approved 6/8/22

## BOND TIMELINE

# Upgrading school facilities

By Trish Yerges

The La Grande School District has some exciting facilities projects in the works, all funded through the passage of Bond Measure #31-105 and a matching grant from the Oregon School Capital Improvement Matching (OSCIM) program, totaling \$8.845 million.

As a result, the district has moved forward with two major projects: the replacement of the Annex Building located at the La Grande Middle School, and the relocation of the maintenance, grounds and facilities operation into a newly purchased building better suited for the needs of the department.

“I am very pleased that we are able to keep improving our facilities in support of student, staff, family and community success,” stated Superintendent George Mendoza. “A thriving community has strong schools, health care systems, public safety and businesses. When we can make things better for our community, it is good for our students and our best future as a community.”

Supervising the many details of this two-fold project is Joseph Waite, maintenance and facilities director for the La Grande School District.

Regarding the Annex Building project at the La Grande Middle School, Waite said, “Currently, we have our request for proposals sent out and advertised to the public,” he said, “and we’re looking to hire a design-build contractor, whether that’s a contractor that has both architectural and construction management capabilities or a partnership between two entities.”

Those proposals are due on

August 30, after which the district will evaluate them. Depending on what comes in, Waite said they will interview the top candidates. Then a recommendation will be made to the La Grande School District Board to move forward with the contract. Likely, this will happen at the September board meeting or the September work session later in the month.

“Once we get the entity under contract, there is a 420-day design and construction timeline to get us a new building,” he said. “Our hope is that, starting this fall, we’ll work through the design phase up until the January-February timeframe. Then at that time, we’ll go out to bid for the construction. We’re looking to get started as early as possible, pending weather. As soon as the Middle School can hold their physical education class outside on a regular basis, then we can start construction.”

The construction site will be located at 1108 Fourth Street at the La Grande Middle School campus.

The conceptual design drawing shows a single story, pre-engineered structure, multi-use facility. It will be utilized for academic classes, including STEM classes, physical education and health classes.

It will also be used for athletics, equipped with two full-sized basketball courts that can be converted into four sport courts. Two drop-down dividers will make the space friendly for softball and baseball pitching and hitting practices. In addition to serving as an athletics area, the space can be used for community events.

The district is very pleased to announce that they have purchased the former La Grande Light Truck building at 1805 Adams Street for \$795,000. Waite said the new site is more of a warehouse facility than the Annex has been because the Annex is an old educational building with classrooms, whereas the new site is more efficient and set up for vehicle maintenance with large bays and many other spaces for development. The newly purchased building will require some renovations to fully meet the district’s needs, and that work should be completed by December so at that time the maintenance department can gradually start moving its



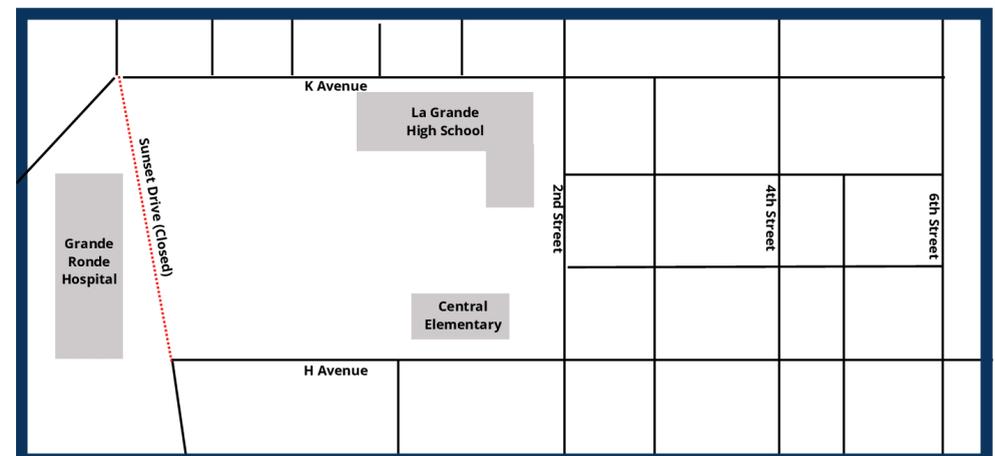
equipment and operation into it. “Our goal is, by spring break, to have everything moved over to the new site and start operating from there after that point in time,” Waite said.

After the Annex building and the maintenance building at the La Grande Middle School campus are emptied, those structures will be razed to make room for the new multi-purpose, pre-engineered building. The Annex, which had a gym on the second story, will be replaced with the new building.

## REMINDER



Sunset Drive will be closed this school year for the expansion of Grande Ronde Hospital. Please allow extra time for the drop off and pick up of your students to allow for new traffic patterns.



## SUMMER FACILITY PROJECTS

# Ongoing projects around the district

By Trish Yerges

The La Grande School District has made a commitment to its voters to continually improve the district's facilities and to maintain its buildings and properties for the benefit of their students and the community. To that end, the district has made great strides to upgrade its facilities responsibly over the past seven years especially.

Maintenance and Facilities Director, Joseph Waite, announced that "the district has been awarded a seismic grant of \$2.5 million for seismically strengthening the La Grande High School auditorium." He added that the recent upgrade with the bond and with safety in mind, the district wants to protect both the occupants and the building as best as possible.

The other benefit of this grant is that it will allow the district to get the auditorium roof replaced. "All the other areas in the district have been reroofed within the last ten years," Waite said.

Waite is currently drafting up a request for proposal for architectural and building services and that will go out to the public later in August. From there, the process involves a customary evaluation and recommendation to the district board.

"The difference with the seismic project, is that it will later go out to bid for a construction management general contractor as the design develops at the architectural firm," he said. "It's likely that both projects will happen concurrently."

There are companies in our area that could handle and perform well with this scope, he added, but being a public entity, the district has to put it out to anyone and everyone. If more

time is needed to capture additional bids on this project, the district will take the time to select the best firm that will fit its needs.

The district has completed seismic reinforcement work before on the high school gymnasium and on Greenwood Elementary School in 2018, and that cost about \$3 million total between the two buildings.

Similar to the high school gymnasium, the proposed auditorium work will have to meet the district's specific request that the work aesthetically blends in with the rest of the building.

### Completed Summer Projects

"We replaced the carpet in the main office at the high school, and we installed toilet partition doors throughout the district," Waite said. "We added additional security cameras to the middle school, inside and out, and we recoated the track."

The district also poured new concrete in the entryway and inner courtyard at Island City Elementary, and at the high school, they renovated the old automotive shop and made it into a horticulture lab. That work involved removing the automotive equipment and putting down an epoxy flooring. In addition to this, the stairwells were repainted at the middle school.

### Ongoing Projects

At the middle school, the district is remodeling the kitchen, work that is funded by an equipment grant for \$5,000. The food manager, Heather Torres, and Michelle Glover, the district's business manager applied for that grant for a new refrigerator, so the room was rearranged to make room for that.

Besides this, there were some

repairs that had to be done. "The culinary arts ceiling was damaged and those ceiling tiles were replaced," Waite said.

Also, when doing some renovation work on the Odyssey Center, the crew noticed some damage under the building that needed to be addressed. "We replaced some of the piers that the building sits on," Waite said. "The piers had picked up some moisture from underneath the building and were starting to rot out, so the maintenance crew also worked on the drainage outside the building to prevent that from happening again."

Another project involved the security camera software, which was being changed to a new system. The old system was failing and the district could not get any support to fix it.

To provide safe entrance and exit from the north end of Greenwood Elementary School's gym, some old stairs are being replaced with new concrete stairs and an ADA ramp.

"At Central, LHS, and Island City, we're replacing batteries for our backup lighting systems," he said.

Other project news involves the LHS wood shop, which received a Career-Technology-Engineering (CTE) grant to purchase a new computer numerical control machine (CNC) for the students to carve signs from wood. The old CNC machine is being transferred to the middle school so the students there can learn on that machine as well.

One other project that is noteworthy is that the high school and middle school have both installed vape sensors in the restrooms that will alert administration if kids are smoking or vaping in the restrooms. Vaping in the restrooms will now be sharply reduced because of

this technology.

In addition to these main projects, there are all the customary maintenance work going on, like floor washing and waxing, classroom repainting, refinishing gym floors, and shampooing carpets. The district would like to give a big shout out to the hard-working maintenance crew that maintains a safe, healthy, and clean learning environment for the students.

*Register your student to ride the bus!*



Registration form at  
[www.lagrandesd.org/bus](http://www.lagrandesd.org/bus)

MID-COLUMBIA  
BUS COMPANY, INC.

## Faces

*continued from page 1*

Starting this school year, Sam Fiorito will act as dean of students at Central Elementary School, transferring from LMS, where he just completed his seventh year teaching sixth grade students.

"My role is to assist the principal and all the staff, providing the support where they need it," Fiorito said. "Also, I will have the main role in discipline for the school and being there to provide good systems and processes for all the students. I will make it a priority to engage students in extracurricular activities and anything they could be a part of that will help them be successful."

"I'm grateful to be part of the Central building," he said. "I'm family-oriented and have an open door policy. I want to understand the community better, and I want to serve in my position as best as possible."



## SUMMER LEARNING REPORT

## Camps, Jump Start and Freshman Academy

By Trish Yerges

This summer provided some great learning experiences for our district students through a wide variety of summer camps, the Jump Start program and the Freshman Academy.

Tory Weimer, fifth grade teacher at Island City Elementary, served as the summer camp coordinator for the second consecutive year, and he said the operation went smoothly. The equipment was delivered efficiently where it needed to be, the paperwork came in as it should, and the communication between the district, the Parks and Recreation personnel and the camp leaders was really smooth and efficient, he said.

“A lot of the science and arts camps had extremely long wait lists, but that spoke to the popularity of it,” he said.

There were actually a number of very popular camps, including the woodturning camp and the cutting board camp, both led by Darren Hendrickson. “His two camps filled up and had waiting lists of 17 for one camp and 12 students for the other camp,” Weimer said. “That was a popular camp for seventh through twelfth graders.”

There were also middle school and high school Sound Tech 101 camps led by Stacy Shown. “The middle school had nine participants and the high school had three participants.”

At the elementary grade level, there were reading and STEM camps, which were enjoyed by students. There was also the K-2 poetry camp that had 20 participating students led by Stacy Shown. “She also taught the theater camp for the middle school and that camp had 20 participants, a full class,” Weimer added. “The Science and nature camps were really popular at all grade levels.”

The football camps were among the last of the camps for the summer program. Looking forward, Weimer said that he won’t know until later if the State of Oregon will fund camps again next summer, the way they have been, but if so, he would like to be involved in it again.

Superintendent George Mendoza shared that he was very pleased that LGSD school was able to carry out a summer camp and learning program that served students with summer opportunities. “We are thankful to our staff for being so invested in children that they were willing to give their time to provide summer learning opportunities.”

*Jump Start Program*

For the past two years, State funding has

been appropriated to initiate the Jump Start program at Island City Elementary School and the La Grande Middle School. It basically introduces kids in early August to the school environment in advance of the new school year, and it prepares their minds for learning.

At the La Grande Middle School, Principal Chris Wagner welcomed a good number



**Duante races to base during the Jump Start summer learning program.**

of student participants to the Jump Start program from Mondays through Thursdays, August 1 – 18. “We had just about 46 incoming sixth graders, who are brand new to the school; 20 incoming seventh graders and 20 incoming eighth graders that wanted to get a jump start to the new school year,” he said.

The Jump Start program included math, English and an elective time that they participated in, which ran 9 a.m. to noon. The teachers designed things to be more project based versus paper or book studies. Students enrolled received breakfast and lunch and enjoyed about three hours of activity-based projects led by their teachers.

“They are focusing on hitting foundational concepts at each one of those grade levels in those areas, and then there’s the elective area where the teachers were asked to do some activity-based projects involving science, technology, engineering and math focuses,” Wagner said.

Wagner was very pleased with the good turn-out of students for the program, and the teachers were excited to see everyone.

The school will call parents in early June to give them an opportunity to enroll their children. Some children who are recommended to the Jump Start program by their teachers will be given the first opportunity to enroll, and after that, a general invitation is extended to the rest of the student body.

“This is just a good example of the district doing everything it can to support our students and community, and fill any needs that arise as

we see them,” Wagner concluded.

Jump Start for the elementary grade levels also went very well. Principal Brett Smith of Island City Elementary said, “We’re pretty excited about it. It’s the first time we combined all the schools with students from Central, Greenwood and Island City, attending at Island City Elementary.”

The turnout was very good with 165 students the first week of August and two teachers per grade level. Buses were arranged for kids who needed to attend, and kids received breakfast and lunch.

“It seemed like a mini school running here,” Smith said, “and the teachers had a lot of great activities going on. We dusted off the cobwebs with math facts, reading skills, physical education, and then we had give-away gifts at the end for kids attending.”

From August 1 – 18, teachers from every elementary school, plus para-professionals and administrators from each school building were present so that the kids saw familiar faces in the hallways at Jump Start. “We had a good kindergarten group--actually our largest group, and we also had students attending all the way to fifth grade,” he added.

Smith said the real emphasis for fourth and fifth graders was their math skills, working on addition, subtraction and the multiplication tables. Teachers used games and other activities to reinforce all those skills in the students. They also covered basic reading skills appropriate to each grade, and older students received a chance to read with an adult and dive into the facts of what they read.

“I’m grateful to the families for prioritizing this so their kids could attend,” Smith said. “I know, sometimes in the summer, that’s hard to do, but it’s going to be of great value to the kids on that first day of school. They’ll be going into school feeling a little more ready. I’m also grateful to our elementary staff that stepped up to organize and focus on this. It’s been a great thing for the kids and a value to the community.”

*Freshman Academy*

The Freshman Academy was held August 1-19, running Mondays through Thursdays at La Grande High School. This was its second year and three certified teachers ran the program for the 40 student participants. It was designed to help students make their transition to their freshman year this fall an easier one through advanced introductions and immersion into some career pathway classes.

At the Freshman Academy, the students were introduced to the La Grande High School



**Zion Devore and Anne Sweet at Adam Slippy’s welding camp.**

campus, and they met some of their teachers as well as fellow classmates.

“Ideally, there are several goals involved with the Freshman Academy,” said LHS Assistant Principal Eric Freeman. “We want to provide a broad overview of some different programs and pathways the high school has to offer the students. In doing so, the students are involved with a variety of activities and different curriculums.”

As a few examples, Freeman pointed out that students might explore some classes in math, English, or STEM subjects like programming and coding, an introduction to Spanish vocabulary and foods, and they might try culinary arts. “We offer hospitality and tourism, manufacturing, and medical pathways,” he said. “We wanted to give them some ideas on what they could do at high school and the classes they could take.”

As a bonus, when a student attends ten out of the twelve class days at the academy, they qualify to earn one elective credit toward their graduation requirements. Walking into their freshman year with an elective credit already in hand, can mean greater student success in the freshman year.

“In prior years, of the students who earned an elective credit in the Freshman Academy, 87.5 percent of them were on track at the end of the first quarter in their freshman year,” Freeman said.

Consequently, Freeman has been thinking about how this program might be expanded next year to benefit even more kids.

“This year we targeted it as a freshman academy,” Freeman said, “but I would consider offering a similar program to some of our sophomores, who might be in need of getting off to a good start or maybe they want to make up an elective credit.”

Freeman is confident that those participating in the Freshman Academy receive awesome learning opportunities and a jump start to student success in their freshman year at La Grande High School. If you have questions on if next year’s academy would benefit your child, please contact Mr. Freeman’s office for details.

# EMERGENCY OPERATION PLAN UPDATE

## Handling Covid moving forward

By Trish Yerges

The La Grande School District has updated its Emergency Operation Plan to reflect the current guidelines for dealing with cases of COVID throughout the 2022-2023 school year.

Assistant Superintendent Scott Carpenter, who is involved in creating the Emergency Operation Plan for the district, has updated the plan to provide appropriate responses to any cases of COVID among the student population.

“First, if you suspect you have COVID, get tested,” Carpenter said. “We have test kits that we can help students with or they can see their medical provider or contact the Center for Human Development to get tested. Then call the school if you have a positive response to the test.”

Parents can find the COVID Response Plan at the district’s website ([lagrandesd.org/covidmanagement](http://lagrandesd.org/covidmanagement)) and read the protocols that schools will follow in response to a COVID outbreak.

There are three different tiers to the district’s response plan that the State requires. The first is the Emergency Operation Plan, which is a macro plan for how the district responds to emergencies. This plan was developed over the course of multiple years, and the first version came out in 2020. A second subsequent version came out in 2021, which continues to be the district’s up-to-date plan.

“Below that, we have a Communicable Disease Plan, and

we updated that this past July by looking at updated Center for Disease Control guidelines and protocols and incorporating their new guidelines into that document,” he added.

Lastly, current State guidelines require a School Management Plan, and that will be completed prior to the deadline of August 26.

“That plan is reviewed by our medical committee, including members from the Grande Ronde Hospital, the Center for Human Development, the local public health department, our school nurses and other team members, who are very familiar with the medical protocols and medical science,” Carpenter said.

The district’s goal this year is to have in-person school every day on site and make school as normal as possible.

Administration is looking forward to offering students opportunities in extracurricular activities and sports, involvement in Career-Technology-Engineering programs and internships and just experiencing a regular school day. Carpenter said that they want the kids to enjoy their experiences at school.

“If there are spikes in COVID, we will respond throughout the year as they arise,” he advised. “We have a committee and medical team to review those circumstances and determine when we need to increase our mitigations. We will always do the least impact for the best results.”

Of course, families will be advised throughout the school

year if circumstances call for more guarded measures at school. “The Superintendent and I are planning on various public releases to keep people updated like we did last year,” he said. “We will do Town Hall virtual meetings and then load them onto the website as a resource.”

School health is a shared responsibility, but often the first line of defense starts at home with observant parents. Are you trying to determine if your child is too sick to come to school? Then visit the district’s website at [lagrandesd.org/covidmanagement](http://lagrandesd.org/covidmanagement). Click on the icon called “Is my

child too sick for school?”

This same webpage will have contact information for all of the school nurses under the icon, “Counseling Resources”. Of course, parents may always contact their child’s school principal for fast responses about your child’s sickness and whether your child should stay home.



### Updated COVID Isolation and Quarantine Guidelines

<i>When should my student stay home?</i>	
Student experiencing 1 or more primary symptoms for COVID – Confirmed or Unconfirmed Case <b>(Individual is SICK)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 days isolation from symptoms onset</li> <li>• 24 hours fever-free and symptoms improving</li> </ul>
Confirmed Positive Case – Positive Test <b>(Individual is SICK)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 days isolation from symptoms onset</li> <li>• 24 hours fever-free and symptoms improving</li> </ul>
Close Contact to a positive case at home or school or community <b>AND</b> experiencing no primary symptoms <b>(Individual is NOT SICK)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No quarantine required</li> </ul>
<b>Important Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student/Staff are required to “stay home if they are sick” under these new guidelines.</li> <li>• Previous exposures/illness or vaccination status do not alter or adjust requirements above.</li> <li>• With new highly transmissible variants it is highly likely individuals will get reinfected periodically regardless of prior exposures or vaccination.</li> </ul>	
<i>What are considered primary symptoms?</i>	
<b>Primary Symptoms for COVID-19 Variants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temp of 100.4F degrees of higher</li> <li>• Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing</li> <li>• Persistent, irregular, or uncontrollable cough</li> <li>• New loss of taste or smell</li> </ul>
<b>Definition of “Up to Date” Vaccination Status</b>  For more information on booster timelines, see: <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth 5–50 years are recommended to <b>receive all recommended vaccine doses, including a booster.</b></li> <li>• Individuals 50 years and older OR some people 12 years and older who are moderately or severely immunocompromised are recommended to <b>receive all recommended vaccine doses, including 2 boosters.</b></li> </ul>
<i>How should my student access learning when they are home sick?</i>	
<b>Learning During the Required COVID Isolation Period (5 days)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact your student’s teacher by phone or email.</li> <li>• Get connected to the teacher’s classroom updates.</li> <li>• Get connected to the teacher’s Google Classroom.</li> <li>• Complete assigned coursework and activities.</li> <li>• Turn in all completed coursework via Google Classroom, when student returns, or within the school absence policy timeline (max. 5 additional days after illness.)</li> </ul>

## REVITALIZATION GRANT

## LHS Home Construction Program gets \$515,000

By Trish Yerges

The La Grande School District is pleased to announce that the district was recently approved for a revitalization grant award in the amount of \$515,000 that will be spent as seed money for the new Construction III home building class through the Career Technology and Engineering (CTE) program at LHS.

Superintendent George Mendoza stated, "We applied for a grant with the help of field representative, Jessica Keys, from the office of U. S. Senator Jeff Merkley."

The district worked through Senator Merkley's office to ask for one-time funds. "We wanted to get a congressionally directed spending bill, and we needed to apply for that," Mendoza explained.

In addition to this, the district spent time working with the City of La Grande to have them write letters of support, and they also held discussions with GTC Construction, City of La Grande, Grande Ronde Hospital and Union County Commissioner Paul Anderes about what could be done together to improve housing in the community.

"During the last year and a half, the district purchased two lots of land to be able to build a house. The high school began implementing curriculum for our Construction I and Con-

struction II as well as started to implement home and landscape design courses as part of our CTE programs," he said.

After revamping the curriculum and addressing staffing need the district also started to partner with other organizations so that they could move forward with their home construction and trades program goals.

"When it came to the congressional directive spending, the district applied for a grant of \$515,000 so that we could have the seed money so we could buy the materials, pay for the first year of the teacher and start moving forward with building our first Tiger Home," he went on to say.

The district's goal is to address housing needs in the community because the lack of housing is currently a barrier to people wanting to move into and work in La Grande.

"There are people from EOU that want to purchase homes, and there aren't any available---same thing with Grande Ronde Hospital and for our district employees when they are moving here," Mendoza explained. "So there are issues with housing, and we want to address that."

However, the primary purpose of the Home Construction Class is to create a pathway program so students are able to develop trade skills and become the future general and sub-

contractors working in La Grande.

"Then when we have more needs for housing, we have people to carry out those trades in our community or region," he said. "If you're going to have great jobs and a great economy, you also have to have housing, and we wanted to start moving in the direction of starting to design and build affordable homes and then teach our students important trade skills."

The first Tiger Home floor plan is likely going to be a two story, two resident townhouse structure with three bedrooms, two baths, a living room and family room and hopefully a two-car garage.

"If we could build two townhouses to start things out, we'd like to partner with Grande Ronde Hospital. That's their biggest need. They would like to purchase homes from us if they can, and (preferably) have them close to the hospital," Mendoza said.

The district's first choice of home is to build a wood constructed townhouse, and when the district chooses a contractor to work with, that contractor might have their own townhouse designs that can be used or edited for the district's needs. Other options to a townhouse would be a duplex or an affordable single-family home. Those decisions will be made later when the district starts working with a general contractor.



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Students participating in the construction classes will earn CTE elective credits, and if they work their way through the three consecutive construction classes, they can earn a pathway certificate in the trades as well. "Usually those are three or more elective credits earned," Mendoza said.

The Construction I class covers an introduction to woods, cutting, simple designs and building projects. The Construction II class would be more project based and understanding more about electrical, plumbing, dry walling and other finish trade work. Darren Henrickson is currently the teacher of those classes. Rhonda Calhoun also teaches a course in design. These classes can enroll between 20 and 30 students each.

Lastly, Construction III would involve the actual building of a Tiger Home project, and the district is looking this fall for a teacher for that class. Preferably, the teacher will be certified as a teacher and as a general contractor. The teacher will supervise the students' learning and work as well as plan and organize the construction from skilled sub-contractors. If student interest in this class is greater than expected, the class may be divided into A and B sections so that proper supervision and safety is assured on the building site while students handle electric tools and machinery.

"This is starting to move us to a pipeline experience that helps us create a more skilled labor force and address the housing needs in our community. This will be important to us," Mendoza concluded.



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