

West Central elementary qualifies for 'Safe Harbor'

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West Central Community School District Principal/Superintendent Stuart Fuhs informed the school board that the elementary school would not be identified as a School in Need of Assistance (SINA) based on this year's standardized test scores. A provision called "Safe Harbor" forgives schools who may have lower test scores that would otherwise fall short of Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) due to one or more underperforming subgroups.

In order to qualify for "Safe Harbor," a school must show that those subgroups are making improvements each year and must score well on standardized tests on the whole as a school. The subgroups considered for "Safe Harbor" are defined by race, language, poverty level, and disability.

"This is good news,

as there was some concern that we might be identified when we saw our test scores this spring. Neither the elementary nor the secondary schools will be identified as SINA," stated Fuhs.

Elementary Principal Cathy Timmerman added, "We are one of very few districts that have not been identified. The future may hold some changes in legislation in this area, so we will have to see what happens from this point."

In other business, Fuhs notified the board that he would be meeting with representatives from Central Elkader and Starport school districts to discuss the possibility of a joint agreement regarding the teacher leadership and compensation system. The system, which is an attempt to reward effective teachers with leadership opportunities and higher pay, is

being put in place by the Iowa Department of Education. The eventual goal is to have all schools in Iowa voluntarily participating in the program by the 2016-17 school year.

"This looks like it could be an expensive proposition, especially for smaller, rural schools. I will be talking with these school districts about partnering in some way so that our districts can participate in the program, but keep costs lower at the same time," explained Fuhs.

The administrator also told the board that he had been discussing the implementation of more college credit courses in the area of industrial arts with West Central industrial arts teacher Ryan Burgin. The school has a piece of equipment that requires a specific electrical hookup. Fuhs is planning to have a new electrical panel put in by the crew that is already working at the building. The new

panel would allow the equipment to be used and potentially enhance the industrial arts program, providing an opportunity for postsecondary credit.

The board also heard a report from activities director Randy Fink regarding the end of the softball season and plans for youth and high school football camp, as well as marching band camp.

In other action, the board tabled a decision regarding the \$1,000 fee for membership in the Rural School Advocates of Iowa group, approved the first reading of board policy series 600, approved the Junior/Senior High School Activity Handbook for 2014-15, and approved a milk bid from Prairie Farms for 2014-15.

Finally, the board approved meeting dates for the 2014-15 school year, changing the August meeting date from Monday, Aug. 11 to Wednesday, Aug. 20.

Potential sale of Hawkeye underway

By Mike Van Sickle

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North Fayette's Board of Directors on Monday reviewed a possible timeline for the sale of the former Hawkeye Elementary.

Superintendent Duane Willhite suggested posting on Wednesday, July 30, the resolution to propose a sale of the property (exclusive of two storage sheds). The board would then be asked to pass the resolution at its regular Monday, Aug. 11, meeting and release the request for proposals (RFP) for bids.

According to the tentative schedule, the bid deadline would be set for noon on Monday, Oct. 6, with the final bidding between the top three bidders taking place on Thursday, Oct. 9. The board's review of the final proposal and public hearing to approve the sale of the property would then be held on Monday, Oct. 13.

Following further discussion, including setting a minimum bid related to the appraised value of the property, the board approved the RFP.

The school last held elementary classes at the Hawkeye school in May 2013. Hawkeye Development Corporation had originally asked in spring 2014 the school district's interest in selling the property.

Later, Willhite ac-

knowledged that due to the recent heavy rainfalls, the Kaleidoscope Kids Childcare Center construction project, along with the parking lot renovations at the high school and West Union Elementary, are behind schedule. At the same time, renovations at the Fayette office remain on schedule.

Registration and handbooks

Patrons can expect registration materials for the 2014-2015 school year to be mailed out on Friday, July 25.

Willhite said he believed registration will operate more smoothly this year with additional staff participation, more hours designated for registration, and the online registration fee being waived beginning July 25 and into August.

The registration schedule is as follows:

Monday, Aug.

- North Fayette Valley High School library: noon to 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Aug.

- North Fayette Valley High School library: 1 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Wednesday, Aug. 6 - North Fayette Valley Middle School gym: noon to 7 p.m.

Thursday, Aug.

- North Fayette Valley Middle School gym: 1 a.m. to 5 p.m.

While approving changes to the North Fayette Valley/North Fayette Elementary handbooks, school officials wish to make parents of elementary students aware that due to safety concerns, flip-flops are no longer allowed in school. A footwear must have a strap in the back to make sure it stays secure to the foot at all times.

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On June 2, 2014 a fundraiser for Joe Kasei for Supervisor advertisement was distributed that did not state who paid for it. The advertisement was paid for by Joe Kasei for Supervisor.



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