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Tenino School Board meeting held at Parkside

K-2 grade school reports to board on its programs

By Dan Fisher
 News Editor

Three Parkside Elementary School students – Benson McGill, Torrent Welch and Paitynn Martello – led the flag salute that opened the April 27 business meeting of the Tenino School Board in the Parkside gym, and also took part in the school’s report to the board.

But before Parkside Principal Brock Williams introduced his school’s report to the board, Tenino High School junior Naveah Vasquez stepped up to address the group.

Vasquez, vice president of the THS Future Farmers of America chapter, spoke not about the difficulties she had encountered during her life – problems with math and isolation in school, her parents’ separation when she was 11 and her mother’s later diagnosis with a serious illness before moving to Tenino when Naveah was in the eighth grade.

She described her first impression as the family drove along Tenino’s main street for the first time.

“I thought it looked like it would make a good home, but not for me,” she said, adding that she expected indifference and rejection from teachers and fellow students. But, she said, she found the opposite.

In an emotional and heartfelt address, Vasquez told of how her teachers provided understanding and support to help her with her learning problems and how she slowly learned to come out of her shell and become more outgoing. She closed her talk by thanking the board, the principals, teachers and educational assistants for all their help.

Williams came next, and began his presentation by naming Tenino Mayor Dave Watterson as the school’s Community Partner, telling how Watterson brings 72 food bags from Lacey every week to the Tenino primary school so students don’t have to try to learn while they’re hungry.

“I don’t really do this for recognition,” said Watterson. “I just pick up the bags and bring them here.”

Williams then turned the presentation over to his school leadership team members, each of whom gave their own segment of the presentation.

The first section was Attendance, where it was shown that the school attendance increased from 63.8 percent during the 2022-23 school year to 81 percent for 2024-25, and detailed the methods used to make the increase possible.

In reading, student improvement in the iReady reading assessment were noted and they were helped by a series of “ROYO” (Read On Your Own) books were a key factor. The presenter said giving books to all students as their own helped promote the school’s reading culture, noting that the average student takes home about 16 books a year, and some take home as many as 50.

The teacher giving the math report said Parkside is expected to reach 80 percent of students working at grade level or above by the end of this school year.

“Students are working together to solve some math problems,” the teacher said. “They’re also using math vocabulary.”

The next presenter, Mrs. Zahm, described an outdoors appreciation program in use at Parkside involving National Parks and funded by Donors Choose and the Olympia-Tumwater Foundation, in which students study the national parks, fill out National Parks Passports and send them in for Junior Park Ranger stickers, and other special studies supported by the program encouraging student interest in what the parks have to offer.

“By the end of the year, our room will have a tree and other decorations to make it look like the great outdoors,” Mrs. Zahm said. “It’s been a fun endeavor with the kiddos.”

The next presenter described how Parkside students were ingrained with the “Four C’s” – Community, Care, Collaboration and Celebration – during activities held during every school day.

Williams then closed the presentation, telling the board “we cannot do what we do without your support and the support of the taxpayers. We’re going to hit it out of the park.”

Student Board Representatives Dean Baynes and Presley Jones then gave their report, with



Photo by Dan Fisher

Parkside Elementary School students Torrent Welch, Benson McGill and Paitynn Mortello lead the flag salute to start the April 27 Tenino School Board meeting.

Baynes announcing the THS Rocket League team had won the state competition held the previous week and Jones informing them that the Tenino Prom will be held May 23 in Chehalis.

Superintendent Clint Endicott reported that THS will play host to a meeting of the State School Directors Association this Thursday, and a part of the Parkside roof and the entire Beaver Stadium roof had been repaired and replaced, and that the district will hold an All-Staff Day in May.

Assistant Superintendent Amanda Jewell gave the Student Services report, telling of a STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) mobile display with eight stations providing different STEM career experiences for students, is currently available next to the middle school.

Jamie Black rounded out the reports with the fiscal report.

“We are continuing to make progress on the 2026-27 budget,” Black said.

The meeting concluded with a public comment from parent Rainer Summers, who voiced support for a coaching candidate.

“Dave Montgomery has stepped down as Tenino High School’s girls’ soccer coach,” Summer said. “Trevor Petbrandt has worked as Dave’s assistant and has experience coaching a men’s pro team. His experience and familiarity with the THS program would make him an excellent candidate to be the next girls’ soccer coach at THS”

Injury crash at Maytown rest area

A 42-year-old Rochester woman, Stephanie C. Taft, was injured when the 2008 Honda Civic she was driving left the road on southbound Interstate 5 at about 5:17 p.m. April 22.

Taft’s vehicle was in lane four of four and left the roadway at milepost 95, striking the left-hand barrier. It then crossed all lanes and left the roadway to the right, striking the right-hand guardrail before taking the exit to

the Maytown Rest Area. It then left the roadway to the right and came to rest against a tree.

Taft was transported to St. Peter’s Hospital in Olympia and the Honda suffered reportable damage. The roadway was blocked for two hours and 38 minutes.

Cause of the crash was still under investigation when the incident was reported April 22. It is unknown if alcohol or drugs were involved.

Lane closures on Nisqually River Bridge this weekend

DUPONT –Travelers will see weekend daytime lane closures on southbound Interstate 5 approaching the Nisqually River Bridge. From 6 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 2, and Sunday, May 3, southbound I-5 will be reduced to two lanes.

What’s happening

The lane closure creates a work zone for Washington State Department of Transportation maintenance crews to clean the bridge. Crews use a specialized under bridge inspection truck to clean above and below the bridge deck. The work is performed

during daylight hours for safety.

Travelers may see congestion approaching the work zone, especially during late morning hours.

This work was originally scheduled in March and was rescheduled due to spring storms.

Cleaning bridges improves the efficiency of WSDOT’s bridge inspection program and helps prevent deterioration.

Whenever near work zones please:

- Slow down – drive the posted speeds, they’re there for everyone’s safety.

- Be kind – workers are out there helping to keep everyone safe and improve the roadways.

- Pay attention – both to workers directing traffic and to fellow travelers.

- Stay calm – expect delays, leave early or take alternate routes if possible.

Travelers are encouraged to sign up for email updates about work on state roads and facilities in Thurston County. Real-time travel information is available from the WSDOT app and statewide travel map.

Prep Sports Calendar

<p>Thursday, April 30 Fastpitch Rochester at Tenino, 4 pm Track Tenino at Onalaska, 3:30 pm Boys Soccer Montesano at Rochester, 7 pm Tenino at Elma, 7 pm</p> <p>Friday, May 1 Baseball Tenino at Hoquiam, 4 pm Montesano at Rochester, 4:30 pm Fastpitch Rochester at Onalaska, 4 pm Tenino at Castle Rock, 4:30 pm</p> <p>Saturday, May 2 Track Tenino at Shelton Invite, TBA</p>	<p>Monday, May 4 Boys Soccer Ilwaco at Tenino, 6 pm Rochester at Raymond-South Bend, 7 pm</p> <p>Tuesday, May 5 Baseball Tenino at Adna, 3 pm Rainier at Rochester, 4:30 pm Fastpitch Tenino at Rainier, 4 pm Track 1B/2B/1A meet at Tenino, 3:30 pm</p> <p>Wednesday, May 6 Boys Soccer Hoquiam at Tenino, 6 pm</p>
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Be alert to fraud after storms and flooding

CAMP MURRAY, Wash. – Con artists and criminals may try to obtain money or steal personal information through fraud or identity theft after a disaster. In some cases, thieves try to apply for FEMA assistance using names, addresses and Social Security numbers they have stolen from people affected by the disaster.

If a FEMA housing inspector contacts you and you did not submit a FEMA application, your information may have been used

without your knowledge to create a FEMA application. If this happens, please inform the inspector that you did not apply for FEMA assistance so they can submit a request to stop further processing of the application.

Scams

Never trust anyone asking for money in exchange for disaster aid or promising grants in return for large deposits. FEMA and local disaster workers do not charge for assistance, inspections or application help.

Don’t give your banking information to a person claiming to be a FEMA housing inspector. FEMA inspectors are never authorized to collect your personal financial information.

If you have knowledge of fraud, waste or abuse of FEMA funds, you can report these tips – 24 hours a day, seven days a week – to the FEMA Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721. You can also email StopFEMA-Fraud@fema.dhs.gov to report a tip.