

Four-day week reduces expenditures; may add benefits

By Linda Schneider
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With state and federal money for schools on the decline, more and more public schools may be making the move to a four-day school week, primarily to reduce expenditures, though surveys have shown other benefits as well.

In 1996, facing a budget deficit because of declining enrollment, the Cheylin School District decided to go to a four-day week. The district now is in its 14th year on the schedule and not even considering going back to a five-day week.

"It was started to save the school money," said Superintendent Bruce Bolen, "and it's still working very effectively."

During the years leading up to the decision, programs had to be cut, transportation routes eliminated, food service hours reduced and several staff and faculty members let go or positions combined to reduce the deficit as enrollment continued to decline.

An investigation into the pros and cons of the four-day week began with a committee of teachers who had been working on "block" scheduling, which involves longer classes every other day. Then, with school board members, the committee made several trips to eastern Colorado schools that were already using the four-day week and found it to be a positive. The board agreed to give the schedule a two-year trial.

At the end of that period, the board surveyed Cheylin staff, students and parents, asking them to make the comparisons between a five-day and four-day weeks. The results were positive in every area

of student and staff activities, from achievement levels to behavior.

In the first semester, the junior high and high school honor roll and honorable mention roll increased as much as 30 percent in 1996-1997 school year. Academic ineligibility for activities decreased from 25 students in 1994-1995, to just 12 in 1996-1997.

In the same first semester, behavior referrals dropped from 69 to eight, and suspensions from 13 to zero. Absences and tardiness dropped over 50 percent, with perfect attendance increased by 10 percent.

With 31 less transportation days, the savings for the first trial year totaled \$21,649 in operating costs, driver's salaries saved and fuel (at 90 cents per gallon). Six years later in 2002, former Superintendent Dave Zumbahlen said the four-day week saved the school about \$50,000 a year in heating, air conditioning and transportation.

It has been 13 years since Cheylin school district implemented the four-day week, and student and teaching staff have settled into their routines. For parents, there will always be advantages and disadvantages.

For Darci Schields and her family, it has been a good experience. Her husband, Kale, the sixth grade teacher at Cheylin, has Fridays off. It gives them more family time, she said.

"In Colby, our son Austin went to a five-day school," said Mrs. Schields. "Now as a freshman, he enjoys the extra day to catch up on homework or just having the time off for personal reasons."

However, some parents continue to have their children attend

a five-day school. The reasons are numerous, but many are based on having more student-to-teacher interaction with the extra day.

"We like that our kids have more academic reinforcement with the five-day week," said Tabetha Ketzner, whose children attend school St. Francis Elementary and High School.

Mrs. Ketzner added that she and her husband Noel are both working parents and the five-day school week is good for them. They like having their kids home earlier in the afternoon, and sports practice is not over as late.

Bolen, the Cheylin superintendent, said that at Stanton County High School, where he came from, school officials were beginning to discuss a four-day week.

He said the business community in Johnson had its own issues with the proposed schedule change.

"Local businesses felt with the three-day weekend, families may take their buying power out of the community to a larger city, such as Denver," Bolen said.

That argument hasn't stopped many districts from trying the shorter schedule, however, Dexter School District in Cowley County has been a four-day week since 1981 and Deerfield of Kearny and Haviland of Kiowa counties have been added to the list just this year.

In 1997, the Weskan School in Wallace County gradually adopted the four-day week by having a test run in the second half of the year, beginning in January 1998. The district had classes from 7:50 a.m. to 3:50 p.m. Monday through Thursday, making the decision at the end of the school year.

Candy Cox, Weskan district clerk, said that when the time to make the decision arrived, everyone expressed confidence the schedule would work. Not only did the four-day week cut back on spending, it helped teachers with class planning.

"Our teachers love the four-day week," she said. "It gives them an opportunity to catch up on classroom assignments and plan the next week's schedule. It also gave teachers that extra day for some quiet time to get important grading done."

One disadvantage, Cox said, was having activity day on Tuesday. That reduced the school week to 3 1/2 days with many students off to games and such. However, she continued, even five-day schools have to contend with such issues.

A more recent convert to the four-day week, now in their third year, the Healy School in Lane County did investigate how school spending would be affected, but their main goal was to improve attendance.

Mary York, Healy counselor, said the decision to use the four-day format included what the parents thought. The administration held a meeting with parents and teachers to get ideas and feedback.

The consensus of the parents was there would be more time for personal business like doctor appointments and family events, she said. For the teachers, the concern was making up teacher and student time, especially with the elementary students.

To help students who may need additional tutoring, Friday was

designated as remediating time for those students who felt they were having trouble keeping up. This optional program is in the morning from 9 a.m. to noon. It has proven to be effective.

"The students know the four-day format lets them know a break is coming and they have less stress," said Ms. York, "but the school is still open the same eight hours."

Classroom time has changed a bit, and in the beginning, it was a challenge for the teachers to make new schedules. York added that the four-day week has been good draw for teachers, who like the format.

"Proponents of the shorter school week — which typically has longer daily hours to make up

for the lost day — say it not only saves on fuel and energy costs but also often leads to lower rates of absenteeism, and in some cases, better student performance," writes Sara Wing in a report for the George Lucas Educational Foundation. "Schools can also put the money they save toward programs and staff that might otherwise be cut."

According to figures from the Lucas Foundation, 100 school districts in 16 states have the four-day school week, and with the economic situation as it is, there may be more. For more about four-day school week and to participate in a poll, go to the foundation website www.edutopia.org/poll-four-day-school-week.

Obituaries

Robert "Bob" Dean Yost
Dec. 23, 1927 - Sept. 23, 2009

Robert Dean Yost was born Dec. 23, 1927, at a farm home near Culbertson, Neb., the only son of Ed and Matilda Yost. He died Sept. 23, 2009, at DePaul Health Center in St. Louis, Mo.



Yost

Bob attended country school through the eighth grade at Sunny Ridge, approximately 4 miles south of St. Francis, Kan. The family then moved to a ranch 13 miles north of Haigler, Neb., where Bob attended high school for three years. He graduated from Campion Academy in Loveland, Colo.

He returned to meet the love of his life, Arnita Himberg. Bob and Arnita were married May 29, 1949. Two sons were born to this union, Steven Dean and David Wayne. They ranched until 1955, when the family moved to a farm near Loveland, Colo. During the time in Loveland, they farmed, fed cattle, had a home construction business, and raised bluegrass sod.

In 1967, the family returned to the ranch and later that year, purchased a farm machinery business in St. Francis. He served as mayor of St. Francis from 1971 to 1975. During his tenure as mayor the statue in Sawhill Park was dedicated. Another source of pride during that time was the citywide celebration honoring astronaut Ron Evans, a native of St. Francis.

V. L. "Lew" Patten
July 12, 1911 - Sept. 26, 2009

V. L. "Lew" Patten, 98, longtime Brewster, Kan., resident, died Saturday, Sept. 26, 2009, at Prairie Senior Living Complex in Colby.

He was born July 12, 1911, on the family homestead located on the Republican River northwest of Bird City, in Cheyenne County. He was the second of 14 children born to Emmett and Mary Ellen (Garner) Patten. He attended South Fork Rural School and also Bird City High School.

On March 3, 1934, he and Letha Wilma Duncan were married at Goodland, and they began their life together farming in the Brewster area.

The couple was very active in the community. Lewis was elected as Barrett Township Trustee in 1946, also serving as clerk. He served on the Garden Plains School Board and the Colby Cemetery Board. Lewis and Letha enjoyed going to the Tri-State Antique Engine and Thresher Show at Bird City to watch the old threshing machines and tractors powered by steam engines. They spent the days renewing old friendships from many years past and visiting with all the "old timers."

Preceding him in death were his wife of 69 years, Letha Patten, who died March 24, 2003; twin daughters; one granddaughter, Julie Owens; one great-grandson Austin Golemboski; his parents; three brothers Roy, Robert, and Leonard Patten; and four sisters Norma Gilland, Silvia Woodard, Minnie Clapper, and Eva Bishop.

cis. NASA invited Bob and Arnita to tour its facilities in Houston, Texas, which was an honor to the family.

The boys joined the family business and the ranching enterprise and as business grew, the Ford car dealership was added in 1982. When the four grandchildren came, Shelly, Tina, Jason and Jon were truly the light of his life. He enjoyed watching them grow into the special adults they became. His six great-grandchildren were a special blessing to him as he always asked how they were doing and his change pocket was always empty after visiting them. Even with no words said, Bob encouraged hard work in others and took pride in their accomplishments.

The main commitments of Bob's life were his belief in Christ and his church, his wife and family and his business enterprise.

Bob and Arnita celebrated their 60th anniversary on May 29, 2009, with family members present.

Bob never knew a stranger. Funeral services were held Monday, Sept. 28, at the Methodist Church in St. Francis. Officiant was Pastor Jerry Nowack.

Honorary pallbearers were Don Marshall, Chuck Pettjean, Elton Keller, Bob Kleunder and Roger O'Hare. Casket bearers were Justin Haislip, Larry Finley, Tim Trumbo, Jeff Raile, Chris Brace, Dennis Krien, George Harper, Steve Confer and Tim Stimbirt. Burial was in the St. Francis Cemetery. Arrangements were by Knodel Funeral Home, St. Francis.

Public Notices

Hearing on petition set for final settlement

Published in The Saint Francis Herald, St. Francis, Kansas, Thursdays, September 24, October 1, October 8, 2009. (39-41)
IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF CHEYENNE COUNTY, KANSAS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
ROGER DALE PINNELL, DECEASED

CASE NO. 2009 PR 11

NOTICE OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR FINAL SETTLEMENT

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED:

On September 17, 2009, a Petition was filed in this court by Ruth Figg Metz, executrix of the will of Roger Dale Pinnell, deceased, praying for a final settlement of the estate, approval of her acts, proceedings and accounts as executrix, allowance of attorney fees and expenses, and assignment to the devisee and legatee entitled to the estate in accordance with the will of Roger Dale Pinnell, deceased. You are hereby required to file your written defenses thereto on or before the 20th day of October, 2009, at 10:30 A.M. on said day, in said court, in the city of St. Francis, in Cheyenne County, State of Kansas, at which time and place said cause will be heard. Should you fail therein, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon said petition.

Ruth Figg Metz, Petitioner
12311 Danny Drive,
Austin, TX 78759

Michael V. Foust #07507
126 W. 11th Street
Goodland, KS 67735
(785) 899 5687
Attorney for Petitioner

Notice of Sheriff Sale to be held on Oct. 15

Published in The Saint Francis Herald, St. Francis, Kansas, Thursdays, September 24, October 1 and October 8, 2009. (39-41)
IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF CHEYENNE COUNTY, KANSAS

MICHAEL MCGILVRAY,

Plaintiff

vs

Case No. 08-CV-14

CONNIE G. MILLER n/k/a
CONNIE G. ROONEY, and
FIRST NATIONAL BANK, a
Kansas banking corporation;
and BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS OF CHEYENNE
COUNTY, KANSAS,

Defendants)

PUBLIC NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

By virtue of an Order of Sale issued to me out of the District Court of Cheyenne County, Kansas, in the above-entitled action, I will on the 15th day of October, 2009, at 10:00 o'clock A.M., of said day, at the front door of the Courthouse in the City of St. Francis, County of Cheyenne, and the State of Kansas, offer at Public Sale and sell to the highest bidder for cash in hand, all the following-described real estate, to-wit:
Lots Twenty-three (23) and Twenty-four (24), Block Twenty-eight (28), in the Original Town of Bird City, Cheyenne County, Kansas, according to the recorded plat thereof.

The above-described real estate and property is taken as the property of Connie G. Miller n/k/a Connie G. Rooney, defendant, as described by said Order of Sale to be sold and will be sold without Appraisalment to satisfy said Order of Sale.

Craig Van Allen
Cheyenne County Sheriff

Jerry D. Fairbanks
General Counsel
First National Bank
202 E. 11th - P.O. Box 570
Goodland, KS 67735
785-890-2000

Petition filed in court in the Cram estate

Published in The Saint Francis Herald, St. Francis, Kansas, Thursdays, September 24, October 1 and October 8, 2009

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF CHEYENNE COUNTY, KANSAS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF

RONALD K. CRAM, a/k/a KENNETH CRAM,
DECEASED.

CASE NO. 09-PR-08

PURSUANT TO K.S.A. CHAPTER 59

NOTICE OF HEARING

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED:

You are hereby notified that a petition was filed in this Court by James D. Leach, duly appointed, qualified and acting Executor of the Estate of Ronald K. Cram, deceased, praying Petitioner's acts be approved; account be settled and allowed; the heirs be determined; the Will be construed and the Estate be assigned to the persons entitled thereto; the Court find the allowances requested for attorneys' fees and expenses should be paid by the Kenneth and Beulah Cram Family Trust dated August 6, 1996; the costs be determined and ordered paid; the administration of the Estate be closed; upon the filing of receipts the Petitioner be finally discharged as the Executor of the Estate of Ronald K. Cram, deceased, and the Petitioner be released from further liability.

You are required to file your written defenses thereto on or before October 20, 2009, at 10:00 A.M. in the District Court, St. Francis, Cheyenne County, Kansas, at which time and place the cause will be heard. Should you fail therein, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon the petition.

James D. Leach, Executor

JAMES M. MILLIKEN, CHARTERED
James M. Milliken, #7001
101 W. Washington Street, P.O. Box 627
St. Francis, Kansas 67756
(785) 332-2101
Attorney for Executor

Notice of annual membership meeting

Published in The Saint Francis Herald, St. Francis, Kansas, and the Bird City Times, Bird City, Kansas, Thursdays, October 1, and October 8, 2009. (40-41)

Notice of Annual Membership Meeting

Cheyenne County Development Corporation will hold its Annual Meeting on Thursday, October 15, 2009, at Noon at the St. Francis Public Library on 121 N. Scott, St. Francis, KS. All Cheyenne County registered voters are members and are invited to attend.

Statement published of nondiscrimination

Published in The Saint Francis Herald, St. Francis, Kansas, and the Bird City Times, Bird City, Kansas, Thursday, October 1, 2009.
STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Prairie Land Electric Cooperative, Inc. is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provide that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or handicap shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is Allan Miller, General Manager. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint with this organization; or the Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250; or the Administrator, Rural Utilities Service, Washington, D.C. 20250. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the fullest extent possible.

By shopping the money-saving advertisements in the Bird City Times, you will save more than the weekly price of the newspaper.

