

weather report

65°

at noon



Today

• Sunset, 6:00 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 5:46 a.m.  
• Sunset, 6:01 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 49 degrees  
• Humidity 41 percent  
• Sky sunny  
• Winds north 10 mph  
• Barometer 30.08 inches and steady  
• Record High 80° (1945)  
• Record Low 7° (1952)

Last 24 Hours\*

High 63°  
Low 38°  
Precipitation trace

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Partly cloudy with areas of fog, 20 percent chance of thunderstorms, low 40, southwest wind 5-15 mph. Tomorrow: Partly sunny, 30 percent chance of rain turning to snow late, high mid 60s, low 30, northeast wind 15-25 mph.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: chance of rain or snow, high 40. Sunday: dry, high 60s, low 30-35. Monday: chance of rain, high 60s to lower 70s, low 30-35. (National Weather Service)  
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.  
\* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

Building a team



Austin Avelar kicked a soccer ball Tuesday evening during practice at North Elementary School, while Matthew Barker (second from left) and other teammates watched. Avelar plays on the first and second grade

team whose coaches are Marci Peden and Chandra Ruhs. Teams began practice this week for the program which is organized by the Goodland Activities Center. Photo by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

Annual contract talk starts

Teachers skeptical of board suggestions

By Rachel Miscal

The Goodland Daily News

The Goodland School Board and the teachers' union have started round one of annual contract negotiations, exchanging lists of items each side would like included in the 2001-2002 agreement.

Heads of the negotiating teams say there is at least one item they agree on — increasing the number of years of experience new teachers get paid for from 15 to 21 — but they have some talking to do about others.

The teachers say they are apprehensive about the board's suggestion to eliminate one step in the salary scale, freezing pay for those who have reached that level and encouraging staff to get master's degrees to increase pay. They say they also want to discuss a paragraph the board wants to add saying the district can offer signing bonuses to draw in new teachers.

Among other things, the teachers are asking the district to increase pay for salaried staff, unused sick leave and out-of-class duties and to reduce the staff's work load by cutting class size and hiring more teacher aides. While the teachers say they will tell the board how much they want pay increased at the first negotiating session, the board said it doesn't have a position without details.

Mary Porterfield, National Education Association of Goodland president and head of the teachers' five-person team, said the two sides held an informal meeting on Monday, scheduling the first official session at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, April 11.

Porterfield, who has been on the team for several years, said both sides will spend a majority of the meeting trying to get the other side to understand their position. She said the group can get caught up on words or phrases.

"Sometimes it's hard," she said, "finding the right words to make sure we know what someone means."

Superintendent Marvin Selby, a member of the board's four-person team, said negotiations have gone relatively smooth for the past few years, with the sides coming to an agreement within three or four meetings. He said he hopes it will be the same this year.

The teachers' negotiating items include the district paying for part or all of employees' dental plans, lifting the cap on the number of professional development hours a teacher can use each year to move up on the salary scale, making sure everyone gets paid for out-of-class duties and changing the technology training requirement.

Porterfield said the team also wants to talk about training teachers on how to deal with disruptive students and finding ways to make students feel safe and comfortable in school.

"I'm not sure writing something in the contract is a solution," she said, "we just want to start talking about it."

The board's negotiating items include deleting wording in last year's contract that implies any teacher can take another teacher's unused sick leave, adding a paragraph saying the district will pay \$40 a day for three unused personal days each year, adding words to clarify that staff can only take bereavement leave immediately after a death and for no more than five days and giving a \$1,000 bonus to teachers with National Board certification.

The certification bonus would be given annually for up to 10 years, Selby said, noting that if Gov. Bill Graves' current education plan becomes law this year, the district will no longer offer the bonuses because the state will



M. Porterfield



Marvin Selby

Board decides to hire manager for remodeling

By Rachel Miscal

The Goodland Daily News

The Goodland School Board decided Monday to hire a project manager to take bids and oversee work on the construction of three new high school science classrooms.

At the regular meeting, the board also reviewed options for rearranging high school classes to accommodate a math and a special education class, which will both lose rooms with the remodeling.

Members decided last week to spend up to \$800,000 building three science classrooms on the high school's second floor and remodeling two other rooms across the hall. The district wants to start construction when school ends and finish it by the time school starts again.

The board has the option of either hiring a general contractor or a project manager, Superintendent Marvin Selby said, noting that the district will have

more control over contractors and construction work with a project manager.

A project manager will work with the district, Selby said, while a general contractor typically makes all of the construction and contracting decisions with little input.

He said the board hired a project manager to oversee the Max Jones Fieldhouse addition, a \$1 million project finished last year, and the cost was similar.

Members gave Selby permission to seek bids from project managers.

After meeting with teachers earlier that day, Harvey Swager, high school principal, gave members 10 options for rearranging class schedules to make room for the two classes that will lose rooms in the remodeling.

The board had originally talked about building classrooms in the high school vocal room, which would be moved downstairs to the band room, but decided against it after hearing

complaints.

Members said they favored the options of either rearranging foreign language classes or allowing the vocal and band rooms, which are usually empty, to be used as regular classrooms for part of the school day. Members said they would leave the decision up to Swager.

In other business, the board:

• Held a two and a half hour closed

session to evaluate each of the district's five principals, coming out to extend each principals' contract for two years.

• Heard Khrista Claassen, Sherman County's parent educator, report on the Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center's Parents as Teachers Program, which the district pays \$6,285 for each year.

• Approved paying \$19,468 in bills.

City to seed area at airport

By Janet Craft

The Goodland Daily News

After much discussion, the Goodland City Commission decided Monday to hire a Goodland man to seed 87 acres of city property near the airport.

City Manager Ron Pickman said the city received bids from Mike Cochran of Goodland for \$795 and the Dickhut Seed Company of Scott City for \$2,441. Pickman said he didn't know

why there was such a big difference in the bids.

He said Fred Wedel of the Sherman County Natural Resources Conservation Service office recommended the city spray with weed killer in early spring and then seed with a grass mixture, laying oats for ground cover.

Pickman said including the weed

See SEED, Page 3

Everyone is a no-show for helper's meeting

By Janet Craft

The Goodland Daily News

Eric Depperschmidt, constituent services representative for Congressman Jerry Moran, was in Goodland for an hour Wednesday to listen to problems or answer questions, but no one showed up.

Depperschmidt, who works in the Hays office, said sometimes people come to talk to him and sometimes they don't. When he stopped here last year, he said, there was a small crowd. He was available to talk with Sherman County residents in the commissioner's room at the courthouse, but instead spent the hour talking to a reporter.

He said before coming to Goodland Wednesday, he had made stops in WaKeeney, Gove, Oakley and Sharon Springs.

Depperschmidt, who grew up on a farm and used to be in the military, said he has worked for Congressman Moran for two years, dealing mostly with agricultural and military issues, as those are subjects he knows most about.

Depperschmidt said Moran's representatives make these county visits once a year, usually in the spring.

He said his job is to help constituents

and keep Congressman Moran updated on the people he's representing in Washington.

Depperschmidt said he or someone in his office can also help people when dealing with the Immigration and Naturalization Service or the Internal Revenue Service.

"(We) take some frustration out of the whole system and carry it on our shoulders," he said.

Depperschmidt said Moran believes that they're here for the constituents and wouldn't be in office or have jobs without them.

When Congressman Moran is in Washington, Depperschmidt said, he attends meetings on his behalf.

There are two constituent representatives in the office at Hays and two in the Hutchinson office. Kirk Johnson, district director, is also in Hutchinson.

Each year, Depperschmidt visits 26 counties in the 1st District, which are basically the ones in northwest Kansas.

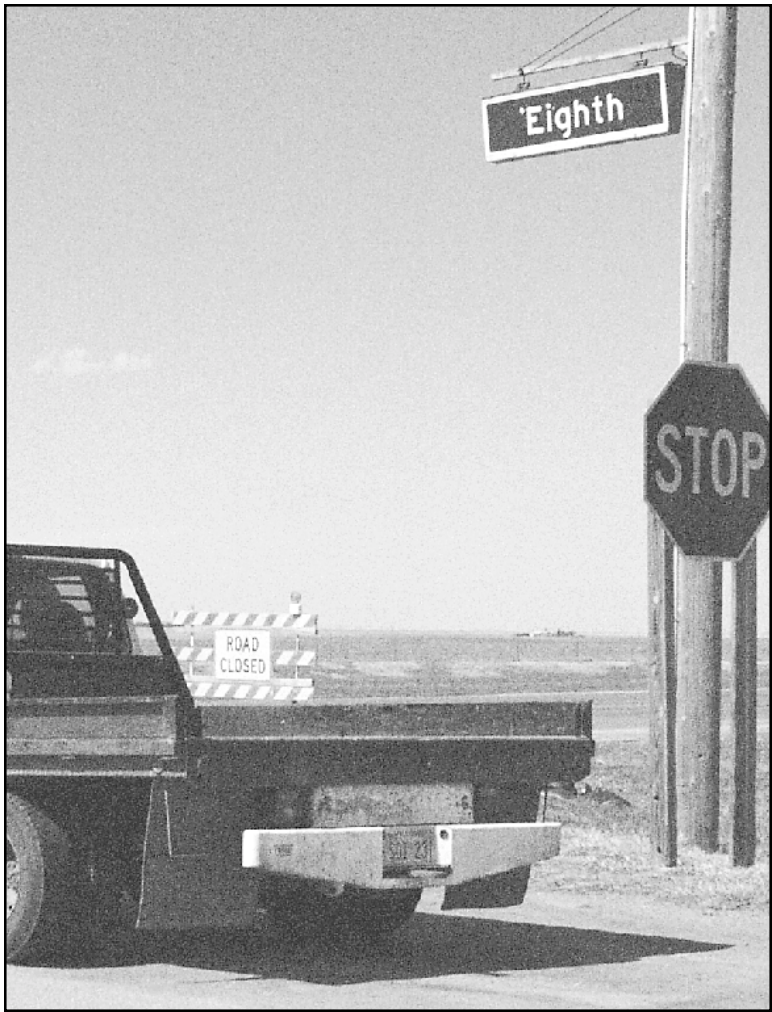
He said Congress convenes during the summer and that's when the congressman makes tours and holds town hall meetings.

Depperschmidt was to make stops in St. Francis, Atwood, Colby, Oberlin and Hoxie today.



Depperschmidt

It's closed



Drivers today found road closed signs on the northbound side of K-27, with more expected to go up for southbound traffic. The highway is to be closed until November. Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Daily News

afternoon wire

Late news from the Associated Press

1 p.m.

House passes education bill

TOPEKA, Kan. — The House tentatively approved a bipartisan \$29.4 million plan today to make certain that children can read, write and do math by the end of third grade.

By a 93-14 vote — 18 members did not participate — House members sent the bill to final action Friday. House leaders called the margin of approval "encouraging."

"It was an extremely strong vote," said House Speaker Kent Glasscock, R-Manhattan. "If we can sustain that vote overnight, it would send a positive note to the Senate."

At the heart of the package is the goal that 90 percent of all third graders achieve a proficiency in reading, writing and math.

The bill — nicknamed "Tools for Tots" and "Skills for Success" — was not without opposition.