

# School policies accepted

## Board still working on cell-phone rules

The Oberlin School Board accepted new board policies on first reading at a meeting last Monday, but there is one on cell phone use that needs to be written and read to members — as soon as they can agree on what it should say.

Not all of the board members and administrators see eye to eye on what the cell phone policy should be.

The district has 10 phones, one each for Superintendent Kelly Glodt, Principals Charles Haag and Duane Dorhsorst, Outdoor Maintenance Director Terry Ream, Transportation Supervisor Brian Simonsson and Technology Coordinator Jess Randel, plus a few old bag phones. There will be one more cell phone added to the plan for Plant Facilities Director Kenny Black.

It costs the district a total of \$180 a month for the existing phones, of which 70 percent or \$126, is paid by a federal e-rate program. E-rate is a government subsidy based on the number of students getting free and reduced-price meals in the district. The district pays \$54 a month, adding Mr. Black.

Board Member Barb Olson, who serves on the policy committee, said there is no question about who should have cell phones. She said Mr. Simonsson handles the accounts and does a great job with them.

There are some questions about the policy, though, and it isn't written yet, she said.

Mr. Glodt said one argument is that people who have a cell phone for the school district shouldn't need to carry two phones, one for school and one for their personal use. The phones have about 3,000 night and weekend minutes and 300 peak minutes, he said. If a user goes over the minutes, he said, they should pay for the overage out of their own pocket. He said he didn't see any reason why those people can't use some of the night and weekend minutes to make personal calls, since most go unused anyway.

Mrs. Olson said the auditor has said he will look for overages, and people can't use public money for private phone calls.

The phones could be made a fringe benefit, said Board President Dwayne Jackson. Mr. Glodt said that may not work because some people don't want it to look like they are making more salary with the cell phone being a fringe benefit, even though it isn't actually money they receive.

That way, said Mrs. Olson, business calls would have to be logged. Besides, employees might not want everyone in the district knowing their personal cell phone number.

The board didn't make any decisions. Before a cell phone policy is adopted, it will have to be read twice during board meetings.

The board reviewed the other policies on student self medication, district credit cards and other areas. Mrs. Olson said changes had been proposed based on changes in state law, including student self medication, and a typographical error.

Anyone, said Mr. Glodt, is welcome to come read through the old and new policies at the district office.

# Taco feed is tonight

The Sunflower Cinema board is sponsoring a taco dinner from 5:30 to 7 p.m. tonight at the Golden Age Center to raise money for the theater. Donations will be taken.



**AT THE HOSPITAL,** Scott Miller (above) painted at the ball fields during a Decatur Community Junior/Senior High service day last Thursday. So many students were gone that classes were cancelled. — Herald staff photos by Kim Davis

# Students enjoy helping around the town

Around 60 students from the junior high and high school spread out around town Thursday doing service projects for businesses and organizations.

Principal Charles Haag said the music students went to competition in Colby that day and the junior high had a track meet. With so many kids gone, he said, they decided to use the day to let those who didn't go on the trips do some projects.

With only 12 junior high students left, he

added, they didn't think classes were going to be too productive.

Students helped out at the Last Indian Raid Museum, the horse arena and crow's nest at the fairground, the ball fields, Decatur County Good Samaritan Center, the golf course and Sappa Park. Some stayed at the school, helping to clean and paint.

Mr. Haag said the school has received some nice comments from business people.

The day was well received, he said, and the

kids felt good about what they accomplished.

He said he isn't sure if they will do the same thing next year. First, Mr. Haag said, he wants to talk with the teachers and see what they think.

The students left the school around 9:45 a.m. and returned around 2:30 p.m. The cooks made sack lunches, which were delivered to the students at their service area.

The staff, said Mr. Haag, did a good job, too, and he appreciates all they did for the day.

# Support and supplies needed for drive

Only a week and half remains for the Northwest Kansas Family Shelter's drive for supplies during Child Abuse and Sexual Assault Month.

The Decatur County Stand Against Violence Task Force is ask-

ing people to help bring in supplies and show support for the shelter during April. Drop-off boxes are at Raye's Grocery, the second floor of the courthouse and at churches.

The shelter provides a place

where abuse victims can go to get back on their feet. Often they have kids with them.

Items the shelter needs includes toilet paper, tissues, paper towels, laundry supplies, copy paper, baby

and child items, \$10 phone and gift cards and any other nonperishable items which would help a family.

For information, call Peg Smith at 475-2996 or Pastor Charlotte Strecker-Baseler at 475-2053.

# Oberlin Area Band sets first concert

The Oberlin Area Band will hold its first concert at 7:30 p.m. Monday, May 2, in the Morgan Theater at The Gateway.

Under the direction of Neal Russell, former Decatur Community High School band teacher, the 14-member group plans to play around eight tunes with a feature solo by Joan Glading on the alto saxophone.

Mr. Russell said the band started in November after some people approached him about the idea. The

group is for anyone 18 and over who is out of high school and plays an instrument.

Some of the people in the band, he said, he taught while they were in high school.

The band gets together on Monday evenings to practice. They played at the Seeds of Hope Telethon in February, but this is their first concert.

There is no admission fee for the show, but donations will be accepted.

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# Teacher request denied

The Oberlin School Board denied a request last Monday for early retirement from Spanish teacher Maria Sanden.

Mrs. Sanden, who teaches Spanish, has asked for early retirement two times now, and each one has been denied.

If the board approved the request, said Superintendent Kelly Glodt, it would cost 95 percent of the average salary for the last three years, paid until a certain age. It would cost the district just over \$10,000 the next two years.

Mr. Glodt said Mrs. Sanden had renewed her request for early retirement some time ago. The board said then that they would consider it if the district could afford it. Mrs. Sanden, said Mr. Glodt, deserves early retirement as much or maybe more than anyone else in the district.

The only way to grant early retirement, he added, is to reduce the Spanish program. There are good numbers in the program, he said, with a little over 50 kids from the high school in it.

Board President Dwayne Jackson said he appreciates what Mrs. Sanden has done for the district and for the Spanish program. Mrs. Sanden does deserve early retirement, he said, but with the finances in the district the way they are, the board would take some heat from the public if it hired another teacher and paid the old one not to work.

The decision has nothing to do with Mrs. Sanden's performance, said Mr. Jackson.

A teacher has to be eligible for Kansas Public Employee Retirement System in order to apply for early retirement. That requires a combination of age and years of experience equal to 85.

The district has three people on early retirement now, including former teachers Carol Morford and Sharon Addlemann and Gordon Matson, the former high school principal. Last year, the district paid \$32,276 for the three and this year \$25,223. Next year it will less, said Mr. Glodt. The three of them were approved before the cutbacks.

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