

LOCALNEWS

Board favors early-out schedule

Action allows for staff to better analyze data

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

The bell at International Falls schools could be ringing one hour earlier – or later – once a week when school starts in the fall.

The Falls School Board Monday, on a 5-1 vote, agreed to have a early-out or late start once a week to allow for staff to analyze data relating to academics, behavior and curriculum. Board Chairman Gordy Dault opposed the action.

Falls and West End Elementary principal Melissa Tate requested board members consider early outs once a week, explaining it mimics a schedule adopted by many schools in the state – including districts in neighboring counties.

“It would be every Wednesday of the week,” she said, adding it would allow all staff members one hour to meet. It would add up to 36 hours each school year.

Elementary-level students would dismiss at 2:30 p.m. and high school students at 2:45 p.m. The early dismissal, Tate explained, would provide a structured time for teachers to review data in a group setting.

“Every teacher reviews data of course, but we’re not doing it in a systematic fashion,” she said. “I need time to come together with my teachers and for them

to come together to talk about kids in a small setting...to be more purposeful with our instruction. We are not taking advantage of data we have at our finger tips.”

Having the time to collaborate and have discussions with colleagues about students centered around data is very valuable for teachers, Tate continued. Other districts with an early-out schedule have said it helps both struggling and accelerated students.

Board member Darrell “Boxer” Wagner agreed with Tate’s plan.

“Data is useless if you don’t have time to look at it,” he said.

Board member Dena Wenberg said it might be difficult to have an early-out option for students who are in after-school sports.

“Parents aren’t going to want to, or be able to, bring their kid back at 3:30,” she said.

Kevin Grover, who will replace Nurdy Nelson as superintendent July 1, suggested the board consider a late start once a week instead.

“I like the suggestion of meeting in the morning,” board member Michelle Hebner said. “You don’t have to worry about the student who needs something at the end of the day.”

The board is expected to decide which route to take during a special meeting next Tuesday after consulting with Jeff Veeder, the district’s maintenance and transportation director.

Falls honors Flag Day with ceremony

Members of the local Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2948 honored Flag Day on Saturday by holding a ceremony to dispose of flags that could no longer be used.

Local Boy Scout Troop 150 assisted in the ceremony and the collection of the old flags as well. Assistant Scout Master Michael Hedtke said the flag collection project served as scout Cooper Hedtke’s Eagle Scout project.

The scouts collected over 100 flags for the ceremony, Michael said, and the collection extended all the way to Littlefork. The VFW post holds a flag retirement ceremony every year on Flag Day, he said, and invites the Boy Scouts because they help collect the old flags to be retired.



STAFF PHOTOS BY SPENSER BICKETT

VFW member Brian Briggs helps dispose of out-of-service flags Saturday by burning them.



VFW member Wayne Sampson disposes of a flag Saturday at a ceremony at the VFW Post 2948 in the Falls.



VFW member Brian Briggs accepts an old flag during a ceremony for disposing old flags at the VFW Saturday.



VFW members Wayne Sampson, left, and Brian Briggs, properly dispose of old flags.



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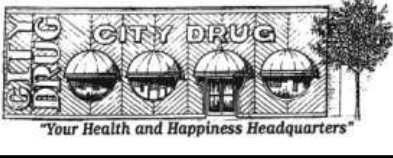
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Most hearing aids now exchange data from ear to ear. If the wind is buffeting one side, the microphone could be turned off and the hearing aid can get sound input from the non-buffed side. A phone can be answered and sound can also be sent to the ear on the other side. The hearing aids can use the 4 microphones to determine the direction of the speech signal and both hearing aids can be coordinated to enhance the reception of the targeted speech.

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