

LOCALNEWS

Board could direct administration to decide reductions

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

The International Falls School Board is expected to consider adopting a resolution that would direct administration to make recommendations for reductions in programs and positions when it meets next week.

Because Monday is Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the board will meet 5 p.m. Tuesday in the cafeteria at Falls High School.

For the last few months, the board has been holding special meetings to brain-

storm ways the district could offset the more than \$480,000 it will lose in state funding with the loss of about 66 students since last spring.

Potential money-saving options gathered and presented to the board by Superintendent Nordy Nelson include retirement incentive packages, reducing staff and eliminating non-revenue athletic teams.

The board is also expected to adopt a weighted-grading policy for high school juniors and seniors.

In October, the board agreed to implement the

grading system to certain classes at the 11th and 12th grade levels beginning second semester. A weighted grading system offers an equal credit for a lower grade in a more difficult class. The system would add 0.5 points to grades A-C.

While some students taking classes through the Post Secondary Enrollment Option Program at Rainy River Community College opposed implementation of the system, administration said it felt it would give students more of an incentive to enroll in a more rigorous class for

a chance to improve grade point averages.

Also Tuesday, the board is expected to make a decision regarding a proposed change to the school's prom policy.

The school's current policy allows students in other schools who are juniors or seniors in high school to attend the FHS prom. Cory Netland, who serves as the board's student representative, in November, proposed the board allow students who are out of high school to attend prom if they are up to age 19.

The board is also expected Tuesday to elect officers to

serve as chairperson, vice-chairperson, clerk and treasurer as well as designate representatives of board committees.

The board will consider the following items on its personnel agenda:

- Recognize van drivers for boys swimming.
- Approve the hire of Shannon Keeney as an educational support professional.
- Approve the hire of Paul Hjelle as the head boys track coach for the 2014 season.
- Approve the hire of Dan Zika as the assistant boys track coach for the 2014 sea-

son.

- Approve the hire of Sheryl Hendrickson as the assistant girls track coach for the 2014 season.
- Approve the hire of Kevin Gordon as the head girls softball coach for the 2014 season.
- Approve the hire of Katie Hamers as the assistant girls softball coach for the 2014 season.
- Approve the hire of Trever Estabrooks as a full-time custodian.
- Approve the hire of Jake Ruelle as a full-time equivalent custodian.

DISTRICT COURT

The following people have been sentenced for aggravated misdemeanor or felony crimes in Koochiching County District Court. This information is provided to The Journal by court staff.

Tyler J. Englund, 19, International Falls, was sentenced Jan. 3 for felony receiving stolen property. He was given a stay of imposition of sentence and placed on supervised probation for five years. He was ordered to pay \$200 in fine and fees and may not use alcohol or enter bars or liquor stores. He must submit to random testing.

Eli C. Evenson, 32, Bemidji, was sentenced Jan. 6 for gross misdemeanor fifth-degree criminal sexual conduct — non consensual contact. He was given a stay of adjudication of sentence and placed on supervised probation for five years. He must pay \$150 in fees and follow the recommendation of a psychosexual evaluation.

He must follow the recommendations of a chemical dependency assessment and may not use drugs or alcohol. He must submit to random searches and tests. He may not have contact with the victim until a counselor deems it appropriate.

Jason Wilkinson, 39, Big Falls, was sentenced Jan. 6 for gross misdemeanor malicious punishment of a child. He was ordered to serve one year in jail and pay \$3,150 in fine and fees. The jail time and all but \$200 was stayed on court conditions and he was placed on 18 months supervised probation. He was ordered to follow the recommendations of a chemical assessment and may not use drugs or alcohol or enter places where they are served or sold. He must submit to random tests and searches and may not leave Minnesota without court approval. He must follow the recommendations of a domestic abuse evaluation.

Dill sets bonding priorities for session

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

With the Minnesota Legislature set to consider a bonding bill in its 2014 session, Rep. David Dill, DFL-Crane Lake, Wednesday detailed his priorities when the House considered its bill.

Rep. Dill's list of projects includes six projects in District 3A. Those projects are:

- \$2.5 million for structural improvements and upgrades at Itasca Community College, Mesabi Range Community and Technical College and Virginia and Vermilion Community College.
- \$3.3 million for classroom renovations and additional lab space at Itasca Community College, Rainy River Community College and Vermilion Community College, installation of a biomass heating system at Itasca Community College, and design for campus

rightsizing at Hibbing Community College.

■ \$3 million for the renovation of the terminal building and other improvements at the International Falls-Koochiching County international airport.

■ \$1 million for the renovation of the International Wolf Center in Ely.

■ \$8.6 million to acquire land and predesign, design, construct, furnish and equip sanitary sewage treatment facilities in Koochiching County, and the Crane Lake Water and Sanitary District in St. Louis County for the purpose of cleaning the waters flowing into the Voyageurs National Park, the United States' only water-based national park, and



Rep. David Dill

the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness areas.

■ \$1.1 million for the acquisition by the Lake Superior-Poplar River Water District of property and to design and construct an infrastructure to transport and treat water from Lake Superior through the Poplar River Valley, which will serve domestic, irrigation, commercial, stock watering and industrial water users.

Regarding the bonding requests for higher education facilities in the district, Dill said, "Every time northeastern Minnesota experiences a downturn and folks become unemployed, there is an immediate need for retraining. Maintaining our higher ed facilities is paramount to keeping young people and returnees ready to be placed in the work force."

Dill has been pushing for years for improvements to Koochiching County sewer

treatment facilities and the Crane Lake Water and Sanitary District. He is hoping to have a friendly ear this year.

"For decades I've worked in conjunction with local leaders around Voyageurs National Park to maintain water quality for future generations," Dill said. "The Koochiching County sewer extension to Rainy Lake will assure clean water and provide for new economic development."

In his bonding proposal, Gov. Mark Dayton asked for \$2 million for the Falls International Airport.

"I'm glad that the governor sees the value in this project," said Dill. "The International Falls airport is an integral part of northeastern-north central Minnesota's economy and infrastructure. With the new security requirements and bigger planes, it's time to update the terminal to modern standards."

Introducing the new

RAINY LAKE RURAL HEALTH CLINIC

Opening Monday, February 3, 2014

HOURS OF OPERATION:

Monday - Friday

8:00 am - 4:30 pm

Full clinic services available at RLMC Hospital Campus

Please call 218-283-5503 to schedule an appointment with Nancy Burmeister, FNP-BC

SAME DAY APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE

Payment Options:

- All insurance accepted
- Sliding fee program for self-pay patients
- Community Care program
- Cash, check, and credit card

Rainy Lake
RURAL HEALTH CLINIC

1400 Highway 71
International Falls, MN

Are you losing your current Medicare Health Plan??

Do you need HELP Choosing a Health Plan with MNSure??

Call Cheryl Miller Let her help you compare all your options...

Miller
Insurance and Business Services

1831 2nd Ave.
International Falls, MN
Phone 218-283-4735
Cell 218-240-4735
Email miller@mymillerins.com

Miller Insurance is your local PreferredOne, Medica & Ucare Insurance Authorized Agent

I WANT YOUR
Unwanted or broken gold & silver jewelry.
Come on in and see Rob today!

BORDERLAND
Jewelry

283-4701 324 3rd St., Int'l Falls
Celebrating 30 Years!

Bee Informed
ifallsjournal.com

The Family of Randy "Buck" Splett

We would like to Thank everyone for their kindness during and after Randy's illness. Special Thanks to **Pastor Andy Berry** for the support and encouragement through this difficult time, to **Dr. Havens** for all your excellent care and concerns.

To the **Hospice Nurse's**

To **Art & Linda Boelk** for all your visits and encouraging words. And to everyone else who showed concern, and stopped by for visits during this difficult time.

Many Thanks,
Wendy Splett, Gary & Rickie Splett and
Our extended Families.