



KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press



District tries new approach for grade school pick-up

The Colby School District has changed some of its new pick-up and drop-off procedures for grade-school parents. Students, such as those from Shanda Brown's kindergarten class (above), line up against the school. Parents, such as Kristi Khan (left), pull their cars either through the parking lot between Grant and Garfield or through the bus loading zone at the south end of the playground. They were given signs with their child's name to hold up for the staff to see (left). Someone then guides the students to their parents (below), and they move out before the buses arrive. The changes are part of a district effort to accommodate increased traffic after the end of in-town busing.



School staff starts review of programs

By Kevin Bottrell
Colby Free Press
kbottrell@nwkansas.com

Teachers, administrators and staff across the Colby School District have embarked on a massive, year-long process that will tell them how well the schools are doing and what areas need improvement.

The district began a new School Improvement Program cycle this fall year, but they have been planning since May, said Superintendent Terrell Harrison. The program will examine every building and every grade level to see where the school needs to focus.

"The district is very strong academically," Harrison said, adding that there are always weaker areas. The state requires schools to be accredited, she said, and the Colby district uses AdvancED, a private company that Harrison said asks schools to meet higher standards than the state requires.

One of the main areas the district looks at is test results. These can show if there is a particular subject or even certain parts of a subject where students are struggling. They also look at previous years' test data to see if there is a trend. Analyzing test data can help

the district determine whether or not there is a problem with the curriculum or if a particular class of students is struggling.

"To start a new cycle, you look at everything," Harrison said.

Curriculum Director Susan Wieland said the district uses what is called a "Red, White and Blue" evaluation for test results. They compare test results for a particular test, subject and even the individual questions against results from previous years and against the state average. Results that match up get a white marking, scores that exceed the state requirements get a blue marking and scores that are below average are marked in red.

Harrison said the district identifies these areas on the district, building and classroom levels. Teachers and staff also look at discipline, attendance, graduation rates, transitions between grade levels and other areas to get a more complete picture of how well each school is doing.

Harrison said teachers are included in the decision-making process, which helps them be more invested when using whatever new procedures are developed.

See "SCHOOL," Page 3

Offices, banks closed for holiday

By Kevin Bottrell
Colby Free Press
kbottrell@nwkansas.com

Kids and adults across the United States will be enjoying a well-earned day off on Monday in celebration of Labor Day.

City offices will be closed for the holiday. There will be no city trash pickup. Residents on the Monday route will have their trash picked up on Tuesday instead.

The Thomas County courthouse and office complex will be closed and the county transportation van will not be running. The county landfill will close at noon on Saturday and reopen on Tuesday.

There will be no school Monday, but most area schools will have events that day. The Colby High School junior varsity football team will play in St. Francis at 5:30 p.m. The Brewster High junior varsity play a home game

against Wheatland/Grinnell, also at 5:30. Golden Plains School will kick off Homecoming week with a bonfire, jersey auction and hot dog feed at 7 p.m. at the football field in Rexford. Heartland Christian School has no events planned.

There will be no classes at Colby Community College and college offices will be closed.

Banks will be closed, including the branch of Farmer's and Merchant's Bank in Dillon's. Dillon's, however, will be open regular hours.

The Colby Free Press will not issue a paper on Monday. The office will reopen on Tuesday, and the next paper will be on Wednesday. Ad deadlines for next week's issues and for the Country Advocate will not change.

The National Weather Service is predicting good barbecuing weather, with highs in the 80s all weekend.

Former rivals for the Republican nomination to join forces

TOPEKA (AP) — One-time rivals Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh and Sen. Sam Brownback announced Thursday they will work together on Brownback's bid to be the next Kansas governor.

At an event at Republican party headquarters, Brownback introduced Thornburgh as a campaign co-chairman, praising him for his dedication to the party and

the state. The secretary announced earlier this year that he was dropping his own campaign for governor.

"This party's coming together, and it's for the good of Kansas, it's for the good of the party, and it's for the good of our future," said Brownback, known as a fiscal and social conservative.

He is leaving his seat in the U.S. Sen-

ate to run for the open governor's post. Thornburgh is not seeking re-election as secretary of state.

"It's not the opportunity that I thought I was going to have this year, but I'm OK with that," Thornburgh said. "I'm thrilled to be here today."

Democratic Gov. Mark Parkinson, who took over when Kathleen Sebelius re-

signed in April to become U.S. secretary of health and human services, has said he will not seek re-election in 2010 either, leaving Brownback as the only prominent candidate.

Kenny Johnston, executive director of the Kansas Democratic Party, dismissed Thursday's announcement, saying an endorsement from Thornburgh doesn't

change Brownback's image. Brownback has been opposed to abortion, stem cell research, closing the detention center at Guantanamo Bay and President Barack Obama's efforts to reform health care, he noted.

"Sen. Brownback is trying to reinvent

See "BROWNBACK," Page 3

Briefly

Dance set for tonight

A singles and couples dance is planned from 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. tonight at the Colby Community Building. Music will be provided by the Calhouns. For information, call Lue Duffey at 855-2341.

Coaches offer coffee, talk

Join the Colby High School football staff for "Coffee with the Coaches" at 9 a.m. Saturday and every Saturday after home and away football games at the Sports Shoppe, Fourth Street and Franklin Avenue. For information, call Eagles' Coach Chris Gardener at 460-1390.

Softball tourney Saturday

Sign up now for a softball tournament fund raiser at 9 a.m. Saturday at the Colby Recreation Ball

Fields. Proceeds will go to Colby School District athletics department. There will be a team meeting at 8:15 a.m. Cost will be \$100 per team. To register, call Matt Ludwick at 462-2271.

Food sign up to be next week

Prairie Land Food sign up will be next week at State Farm Insurance, 905 E. Fourth St. Delivery will be Saturday, Sept. 26, at Sacred Heart School, 1150 W. Sixth St. For information, call Gene Griffin at 460-3579.

Car seat safety checks coming

Certified technicians will do free car-seat inspections in the Walmart parking lot from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 12, to kick off National Safety Seat Check Week. An estimated 90 percent of all

children's car seats are used incorrectly and possibly dangerous. Technicians will check for recalls, proper fit for the child and vehicle and correct installation. Safety and other exhibits will be neaby. The event is sponsored by Smart Start Northwest Kansas, which has car seats for families who meet income requirements. For information, call Karen Merryman at 465-9103.

Pets available for adoption

Looking for a pet? Colby Animal Clinic has a 5-year-old female shepherd mix, a neutered male dachshund/yorkie cross — a dorkie — and two white, fluffy kittens available for adoption. The kittens are not yet old enough to take home. Lost or strayed animals are often brought to the clinic. Call or stop by 810 E. Fourth St. All animals have current shots, and costs are minimal. For questions, call 460-8621.

Logo needed for 125th bash

The Prairie Museum of Art and History and the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce are sponsoring a logo contest for Thomas County's 125th Anniversary. Entries should include the theme for the celebration: "The Spirit of the Prairie Lives On." They may be submitted on an 8 1/2-by-11 inch sheet of paper to the museum or the Chamber office by mail or in person by Tuesday, Sept. 15. For information, call the museum at 460-4590 or the Chamber at 460-3401.



8 0 4 8 7 9 1 3 8 9 8 3