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Voters may get to decide 'suitability'

By Kevin Bottrell

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Superintendent Terrel Harrison told the Colby School Board the state association is urging members to hold public meetings on the "suitable education" issue the Legislature is dealing with, but she doesn't think that will stir up much interest.

The board held two "informational" meetings on school finance at Colby High School last year, she said. One was poorly attended; the other drew a larger audience. Harrison said at a board meeting Monday she would rather write a column for the *Colby Free Press* and send information home to parents.

Since the legislative session began in January, she said, lawmakers have been debating what the phrase "suitable education" means in the Kansas Constitution. The Kansas Association of School Boards' current concern is with HCR 5010. This "concurrent resolution," proposing an amendment to the state Constitution, was passed with a favorable recommendation by the House Education Committee on Tuesday.

The amendment would change Article 6, Section 6 of the Constitution to say, "The Legislature

shall make suitable provision for the finance of the educational interests of the state in an amount to be determined by the Legislature." The resolution removes language that says it must do so in "an equitable manner."

The current language has allowed the Kansas Supreme Court to direct the Legislature to increase school funding by billions after a lawsuit a few years ago.

If passed by the Legislature, the amendment would go to voters in the next general election.

That's not the only thing going on at the Statehouse that has schools worried. Harrison said budget cuts in the governor's recent executive order, meant to get the Legislature moving on adjusting this year's budget, cut about \$22 off base state aid per student.

She said the governor didn't make all the cuts he had been proposing, just enough to balance the budget for the current 2011 fiscal year, which ends in June. This still leaves a deficit for next year which the Legislature must deal with.

Harrison said the district is expecting more cuts – as much as \$75 – off base state aid, but the Legislature has yet to decide on a budget for the fiscal year starting July 1.

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From the inside out



KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

Colby Grade School second graders threw their hands in the air during a song at their music program, "From the Inside Out," on Tuesday. The students sang five songs that included solos and speaking parts.

Testing on the floor



KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

A pair of shoppers examined a riding mower at the Schertz Mower Sales booth at the Oakley Chamber of Commerce's Consumer Home and Garden Show last weekend. The show included vendors like Schertz, who came from Winona, alongside vendors like Oakley Implement.

Ten Colby High students qualify for forensics nationals

Ten Colby High School students qualified for a national forensics tournament at the Kansas Catholic Forensics League – Salina Diocese qualifier here last weekend.

The team placed third behind Republic County and Salina Central high schools out of 13 in the tournament. All of Colby's competitors made it to semifinals and all but two made it to the finals Saturday afternoon.

Individual placings that qualified for the national tournament:

Duo Interpretation: Christina Ostmeyer and Madison Tubbs, third.

Oral Interpretation of Literature: Gabby Browne, second.

Original Oratory: Bailey Koerperich, sixth.

Dramatic Performance: Shelby Terrell, fifth; Cameron McLaughlin, sixth.

Oral Declamation: Victoria Rall, fifth.
Extemporaneous Speaking: Michael Tubbs, fifth.

Top Six in Lincoln-Douglas: Blake McNinch and Tomi Miller.

The national tournament will be in Washington over Memorial Day weekend in May. Students who choose to go pay their own way with help from team fund-raising efforts.

Several students placed but did not qualify for nationals, including Jared Nally, who got eighth in extemporaneous speaking and Ostmeyer, who placed seventh in oral interpretation of literature.

Madi Gawith and Blake McNinch competed in duo interpretation but did not place, said coach Nancy Rundel. Colton Rundel competed in the Lincoln-Douglas debate but did not place.

Colby woman reappointed to board

Sheila Frahm of Colby has been reappointed to the Kansas Postsecondary Technical Education Authority by the state Board of Regents.

The authority was created by the Kansas Legislature in 2007 to coordinate statewide planning for technical education under the regents.

Frahm was appointed to the authority when it was formed to represent the state's community colleges. This is her second three-year appointment.

A Fort Hays State University graduate, she has served in many civic roles, including terms on the Colby School Board, the state Board of Education and three in the Kansas Senate.

In 1996, while serving as lieutenant governor under Gov. Bill Graves, Frahm was appointed to the U.S. Senate to fill a vacancy caused by the resignation of Sen. Bob Dole. She lost a bid for re-election to Sam Brownback, now Kansas governor.

She served as executive director of the Kansas Association of Community College Trustees from 1997 to 2009.

"I am pleased to have been re-appointed," Frahm said. "Career technical education plays a vital role in developing the highly skilled and educated workforce necessary for the Kansas economy."

Briefly

Take a life-saving class in April

The Northwest Kansas Red Cross will offer a cardiopulmonary resuscitation class from 6 to 10 p.m. Monday and Tuesday, April 11 and 12, at the Thomas County office complex. The class is open to the public, but people must register with director Sherry White at 462-7161 by Friday.

Chickenpox shots available

The Thomas County Health Department will be offering chickenpox vaccinations for \$14 until the end of June for anyone ages 1 to 18. The department says anyone who did not have chickenpox after age 1 should get two doses. For information or to make an appointment, call 460-4596.

High school having book fair

Colby High School is holding a Scholastic Book

Fair from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. through Friday at the school library. The fair has books for all ages, along with refreshments. For information, call Camille Giersch at 460-5300.

Carnival is Friday at Rexford

The annual Junior Class Carnival at Golden Plains High School in Rexford will be from 7 to 10 p.m. Friday, with games including Plinko, the spinning wheel, a fish pond, cake walk, duck pond, jail, basketball, football throw, marriage booth, bingo and many more, plus a concession stand in the commons. For information, call class president Kalyn Weber at (785) 687-3265.

School to hold open house

Heartland Christian School will have a preschool and kindergarten open house from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Fri-

day. All parents of children who will be kindergartners next year – or age 3 or 4 and ready for preschool – are invited, along with their children. Hands-on activities in the classroom will be followed by a parent information meeting in the Heartland library. For information, call the school at 460-6419.

Church offers sausage, pancakes

The Colby Berean Church will hold a pancake and sausage feed from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday at the Veterans of Foreign Wars hall. Donations will help the church youth group pay for a mission trip to Peru. For information, call 443-1994 or 462-9665.

Group plans candidate forum

The Colby Community College Faculty Alliance will hold a candidate forum for Board of Trustees candidates at 7 p.m. Tuesday in the Cultural Arts

Center on campus. Questions for the candidates may be e-mailed to bob.selby@colbycc.edu or deb.bickner@colbycc.edu.

Preschool enrollment Tuesday

Puddle Duck Preschool will have an enrollment open house for the 2011-2012 school year from 4 to 6 p.m. Tuesday at the school, 520 W. Fifth St. The school is open to all children 3 to 5. For information, call teacher Amy Jennings at 460-2603.



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