

New program to help parents in school district

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the program and parents with Internet access will be able to get that information.

He said administrators in the Clay Center district, the first Kansas schools to use PowerSchool, said the program works on IBM or Macintosh computers, teachers like it and more parents are starting to use it.

Mull said Steve Raymer, North Elementary principal, talked with teach-

ers in Wyoming schools who use PowerSchool.

"They said 'If they tried to take it away, we would revolt,'" Mull told the board.

Selby said the total cost of PowerSchool is \$30,000, including a 7-day training course for staff, a server to run the computer network and technical support.

Member Ron Schilling said the program won't help parents if teachers don't update assignments, attendance

and grades every day.

Mull said it will be the principals' job to set a deadline and make sure teachers meet it.

"It shouldn't be a problem," he said.

Dick Short, board president, said parents will only have access to their own children's information.

Later in the meeting, members approved buying 18 personal computers, 68 Macintosh computers, a server, three laser printers and three mobile lab stations, which will each include 10

wireless Macintosh laptop computers.

Each of the district's 86 teachers will get a new computer this summer and North, Grant and the high school will each get one of the three portable lab stations.

Karla Murray, the district's technology coordinator, had asked the board to upgrade teachers' computers at an earlier meeting, but members put off a decision until they knew how much money the state would give schools next year.

Lawmakers finally approved a \$20 increase in base state aid per student.

Murray said she asked teachers what type of computer they would like, and 18 opted for Microsoft-based computers while 68 wanted Macintoshes.

After looking at bids Murray gathered, the board voted to pay \$15,066 this year to National Computer Resource of Wichita, the low bidder, for the 18 personal computers.

Members also agreed to pay Apple \$130,000 over the next three years for

the Macintoshes, printers and portable stations.

Selby said the lease agreement features a 2.9 percent interest rate and says the district can buy the equipment at the end of the three years for \$1.

He said the computers will be installed this summer.

The new computers will put teachers in good shape for at least the next four years, Murray said, adding that the old computers lasted for about eight.

School board accepts resignations and hires three

The Goodland School Board on Monday accepted resignations from three teachers and a secretary and hired two cheerleading coaches and a new industrial technology teacher. The board received resignations from Ben Holman, a high school social studies teacher; Michael Nelson, an elementary school teacher; Jami Bergman, an at-risk tutor in the district's drop-out recovery program; and Shannon

Simpson, a high school secretary.

Members approved hiring Shelly Angelos as cheerleading advisor and Sabrina Twombly as her assistant. Neither are teachers. They also hired Matt Micek of Atwood as industrial technology teacher at the high school and junior high.

In other business, the board:

- Presented Bryce Bahe, a recent Goodland High School graduate, with

a yellow cord for having a grade point average above 3.5. President Dick Short said the district accidentally forgot to recognize Bahe as an honor student during graduation last month.

Bahe said he will attend Minnesota State University, where he will wrestle.

- Paid \$122,400 in monthly bills.
- Approved staff and student handbooks for the district's five schools after looking over the books and dis-

cussing them with principals.

- Heard from member Mike Campbell, district representative on the Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center board, that the board is leasing new cars for the center, plans to hire a new assistant director and approved a new interactive television system.
- Approved a Professional Development Council report from Jim Mull,

Grant Junior High principal and council representative. The council keeps track of teacher training hours and how teachers apply information they've learned in the classroom.

• Heard from member Ron Schilling, district representative on the Northwest Kansas Technical College board, who said the college's graduation ceremony was a success. He said the college has hit hard times as it will receive

about \$150,000 less from the state this year and enrollment is down 19 percent.

- Reappointed Schilling to serve on the college board for another year.
- Approved the health insurance committee's recommendation to stay with the Blue Cross-Blue Shield plan. Superintendent Marvin Selby said there was a small rate increase this year, but it was much less than last year.

Wind-driven wildfire threatens southwest Denver

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flames and homes in Douglas County, one of the fastest-growing areas in the county.

Firefighters also were trying to defend houses threatened by the blaze on its southeast side in Teller County, where 400 people were evacuated Tuesday. More evacuations were ordered in the Tarryall area in Park County, on the fire's northwestern edges.

About 5,430 people had been evacu-

ated since the fire started Saturday, fire information officer Barb Masinton said today.

"We're still dealing with a wind-driven fire, and some terrain issues," she said. "The winds are switching around."

Among the evacuees was Dave Pierce, who left his home Sunday and moved his wife and their two dogs to a Red Cross shelter.

"All I want to do is go home, get a shower and go to work," Pierce said today.

The blaze, which was sparked by a campfire in the Pike National Forest, was within seven miles of Roxborough, a small town on the far southwest edge of the metro area.

It was one of at least eight fires in Colorado, including a 10,600-acre blaze that destroyed 28 homes near Glenwood Springs, about 150 miles west of Denver.

About 540 people were working on the fire, and 800 more firefighters were requested.

The Federal Emergency Manage-

ment Agency has approved 11 grants for Colorado fires this year, the latest one on Tuesday for an 8,300-acre fire near Durango.

On Tuesday, shifting wind helped clear a dense, smoky haze that had blanketed Denver for three days.

"I don't know of another situation where we've had this much smoke emission that you could associate with a single fire," said Steven Arnold of the state Health Department air pollution control division.

Investigators continued to search for

the owner of a vehicle seen near the illegal campfire believed to have started the fire Saturday near Lake George, about 60 miles southwest of Denver.

Fires are banned in national forests and most counties because of Colorado's drought.

The Pike National Forest has been closed to the public.

Near Glenwood Springs, lower temperatures and lighter wind helped quell the fire there and thousands of people were allowed to return home — with a warning that they should be prepared

to flee at a moment's notice.

The fire had grown to some 10,600 acres. Containment was still estimated at 5 percent, said Betsy Friesen, fire information volunteer.

Elsewhere:

- California firefighters worked in steep, rugged terrain near the Oregon line to combat a 600-acre wildfire that threatened homes and animals Tuesday.
- New Mexico firefighters battling flames on 96,000 acres were helped by calmer wind and rising humidity.

Twelve killed in ongoing violence between Israelis and Palestinians

By the Associated Press INTERNATIONAL

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip — Israeli troops shot and killed five armed Palestinians and a 9-year-old boy in separate incidents near a Jewish settlement, while a Palestinian suicide bomber blew up a fast food restaurant in a Mediterranean resort town, killing a 15-year-old Israeli girl.

The violence Tuesday — in all 11 Palestinians and an Israeli died in several incidents — came as Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon left Washington after talks with President Bush and Congressional leaders. Bush pleased Israelis and angered Palestinians by criticizing Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian government.

Just before midnight Tuesday, troops fired on seven armed Palestinians who approached the road leading to the Jewish settlement of Netzarim in Gaza, killing four, the army said. There was no exchange of fire, but the army said it found explosives and assault rifles on the bodies. Israel Radio reported a fifth attacker later died of his wounds.

An army commander in the area, Col. Yoel Strick, told Israel Radio that the attack was unusual due to the large number of attackers and their use of military techniques in approaching the area.

In a joint statement, a number of Palestinian militias in Gaza took responsibility for the attack and said five of their fighters were killed.

Earlier Tuesday, in the same area, 9-year-old Palestinian Hussein Mitwi was killed in his home, a thatched hut, in what his mother said was unpro-

around the world

oked Israeli shooting. An Israeli army watchtower is about 200 yards from the hut, which is part of a Bedouin encampment.

NEW DELHI, India — Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, meeting today with Indian officials, said constructive steps were being taken to avert war between India and Pakistan.

"I must say the leadership here in India has demonstrated their concern and interest in seeing that things are resolved in an appropriate way," Rumsfeld said after a meeting with Defense Minister George Fernandes.

"We feel there are steps being taken which are constructive," he said.

Neither Rumsfeld nor Fernandes disclosed specifics of their meetings

statements made afterward. They did not take questions.

On Tuesday, Rumsfeld said he had some ideas for easing tensions between the two nuclear-armed neighbors and offered a mildly upbeat assessment of prospects for avoiding war.

"I cannot say I see a trend line that it's getting better or worse," he told reporters traveling with him.

"Both sides have been saying things that are helpful and behaving in a responsible way," he said. He added, however, that intelligence indicators, which he did not describe, showed virtually no improvement in the military standoff over the disputed Kashmir region.

Rumsfeld, who said he considers

himself a friend of the leaders of both India and Pakistan, was scheduled to conclude a full day of New Delhi meetings Wednesday with a session at the residence of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

NATIONAL

SALT LAKE CITY — A week after the disappearance of 14-year-old Elizabeth Smart from her bedroom, police say they are focusing their investigation on people who live in or have visited her upscale neighborhood.

After days of saying they knew no more than they did on June 5, when the girl was taken at gunpoint from her million-dollar home, police spoke more optimistically Tuesday.

"While we have not located Elizabeth or identified a clear suspect, we have made progress," police Chief Rick Dinse said. He said investigators "have some analysis of what this sus-

pect is like."

"My caution to this suspect, if he is listening: We are going to get you. And if you've got Elizabeth, you better release her now," he said, adding that they believe the kidnapper is still in the area and may have already been questioned by investigators.

Police have interviewed hundreds of people and received 6,000 leads, of which 600 were deemed worthy of following up. Half of the 600 leads have been cleared.

Ed Smart, Elizabeth's father, submitted to a polygraph test on Sunday. The test, characterized by police as routine, is being evaluated by the FBI.

Police also re-interviewed 9-year-old Mary Katherine Smart, who had told investigators that a gunman entered the bedroom she shared with her older sister and forced her to go with him. She said he told her that her sister

would be hurt if she told anyone. Police said it was at least two hours before she woke her parents and told them.

"Her story was consistent and we did learn some things about the suspect we didn't know before," Dinse said.

ROSEAU, Minn. — Hundreds of volunteers and National Guard members worked feverishly to protect this town from the rushing waters of the Roseau River as residents braced for even more rain.

The river was expected to crest today in the community of 2,500 people about 10 miles south of Canada.

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The Goodland Daily News

