



# Battle Ground Public Schools

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## BG Board, Briefly

Special education, 1855 Indian treaty, new high school credit policy get attention



**History whiz kids honored:** The Battle Ground School Board at its Oct. 24 meeting congratulated young historians Jessi Shelton, center, and Mercedes McLeod and Pleasant Valley Middle School history teacher Rene Soohoo. A proud PVM Principal Ward Holcomb introduced them and told of the girls' high ranking in the 2011 National History Day competition last June when they were Soohoo's

students. Now freshmen at Prairie High, Jessi and Mercedes were presented with certificates of achievement by Board members Steve Pagel, John Idsinga, Monty Anderson, Ken Root and Mavis Nickels. Partly visible in photo are Pagel, left, and Idsinga. Jessi and Mercedes were fourth in the nation from among 91 entries with two or more students in grades 6 – 8. They had produced a 10-minute video, “The Treaty of Neah Bay 1855: Created by Diplomacy, Destroyed by Debate.” They also were judged best in Washington state in their category.

## Another route to high school credit

The Board heard on first reading a proposed new district policy, No 2409, “Credit for Competency/Proficiency.” It would expand the opportunity for high school students, including incoming freshmen, to take rigorous examinations in certain subjects and, if they pass, receive credit for the course without taking it. Bruce Kelley, the district’s director of assessment and research, said the exams probably will be offered in about eight subjects.

Kelley later said the tests, like “challenge exams” in college will be “very difficult -- not easy to pass for someone who has not taken the course.” He said they will be developed at the district level and probably offered in August.

Information presented to the Board cited state law and said, “This new policy and procedure encourage the process for awarding credits for competency/proficiency. This also provides more flexibility for students and acknowledges prior knowledge and skill.”

## In other business . . .

**Consent agenda** – The Consent Agenda, approved 5-0, included October enrollment figures for this year and 2010:

<b>School Year</b>	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>
Total head count	12,724	13,399
Full-time equivalent	12,010.85	12,500.84

**Special Education overview:** In the Board work session that preceded the regular meeting, Jane Mercier, director of special education, and Ellen Wiessner, assistant director, briefed the Board on the district’s special education program. As of last spring, 1,656 children and young adults received services from the school district’s Special Education Department as it strives to meet their unique needs. The total as of last spring comprised 38 who were 2 or younger, 121 who were ages 3 to 5 and

1,497 from kindergarten to 21. The district’s special education responsibilities are covered by the federal “Individuals with Disabilities Education Act” (IDEA).

**Energy conservation project bonds:** MaryBeth Lynn, assistant superintendent for finance and school operations, briefed the Board on plans to seek buyers for \$867,245 in limited general obligation bonds to finish payment for energy conservation measures now being implemented. Those include new, low-energy lights throughout the district and low-flow bathroom fixtures. Overall cost of the project is \$1,997,462. A state Department of Commerce grant is paying \$850,000 of that and Clark Public Utilities incentives will cover \$280,000. Lynn told the Board that repayment of the bonds will be realized by energy savings generated by the completed project.

**Next School Board regular meeting:** Monday, Nov. 14. Workshop, 3 p.m., regular meeting, 4:30 p.m., Room 26, Building C, Lewisville Campus, 406 NW 6th Ave.



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