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Safe campuses = Safe kids

Improvements in school safety remain a focus for new year

By Abigail Allen
Staff Writer

School safety is the focus of three bills the governor signed into law as a result of this legislative session, each focusing on different aspects.

Senate Bill 11 dictates the way school districts plan and train for emergencies as well as creates a Texas Mental Health Consortium. An additional mental health bill adds more mental health training for school staff members. A third got rid of the limit on the number of school staff members who can serve as school marshals.

“They appropriated a little bit of funding to help with some of the things – securing schools and security cameras, and can be used for training and resources,” Aubrey ISD Superintendent David Belding said. “We appreciate any help that the state provides financially to help us fund some of these types of programs.”

Pilot Point ISD Superintendent Dan R. Gist said his district is waiting for more guidance from the state and educational agencies about how the legislation should be implemented.

“There’s such a huge amount of legislation for school districts this time that we’re going to try to implement as quick as we can,” Gist said.

He also said that some of the policies the district already has in place could fulfill the state’s requirements for things like adopting a multi-hazard emergency operations plan and having bleeding control stations.

One of the points that needs further clarification, Gist said, is whether every staff member including substitute teachers, have to be trained on emergency response, as the legislation seems to imply.

“Right now, our defenders are trained, and obviously our nurses are trained for that,” Gist said.

PPISD plans to get new programs and resources for staff and students’ mental and physical well-being going by January 2020, according to a strategic plan update.

Aubrey ISD had a bit of a head start on handling mental health issues before the legislation was passed, Belding said.

“We instituted a protocol for mental health support back in January or February of 2018,” Aubrey ISD Superintendent David Belding said. “And we had staff go through the Mental Health First Aid, and that training was delivered by the Denton County MHMR group and we really appreciated that.”

He also said the district has supplied designations so students know which staff members to speak with for mental health-related concerns.

“Having the student health advisory committee meet specifically on some mental health issues or topics, I think that’s a little bit of a change in it that will provide a good viewpoint,” Belding said.

Aubrey ISD already has a “really robust” emergency management plan in place, he said, so the district should only need to tweak it to fit the new regulations.

The additional training required by the new law will augment the start Aubrey ISD had, Belding said.

“We had already trained our staff on the signs and signals to watch for from our students, and we’re committed to working with parents to advocate on behalf of the children that are in our school district if we think they’re struggling,” Belding said.

Gist said Pilot Point ISD has been working to help counselors focus on interacting with students.

“Right now, the counselors are burdened with other jobs besides talking to those that might need some counseling,” Gist said. “So, with that, we’ve tried to free up our counselors as much as possible to get references from other teachers and other staff to identify those that we feel like are having some social-emotional needs.”

With school safety in mind, Pilot Point ISD implemented the defender program in the 2018-2019 school year, which is similar to the marshal program but works in a slightly different way.

In the marshal program, educators are considered armed security officers and pseudo peace officers, according to schoolsafetycertification.com. In the defender program, educators are allowed to be armed and to defend themselves, their students and other staff members in the case of an active shooter situation.

“We’ve got a set number of firearms on each campus, and we’re satisfied with that right now,” Gist said.

The district had an external safety audit completed in May, Gist said, and the administration is using the feedback it received to make safety improvements. He did not expound upon those improvements in detail.

He said the two student-resource officers will be filled in on the content of the audit.

For now, Aubrey ISD does not plan to adopt the marshal program.

“We, at this point, have really focused on our trained police presence and those officers, those professionals have been trained in tactical responses, and that’s where we’ve opted to go at this point,” Belding said. “And I don’t see that changing in the near future.”

Belding said that school safety bill also allows districts to use some of the funding from it to help hire more trained officers.

“The amount that we’re projected to get wouldn’t cover, even come close to covering, a salary,” Belding said.

“But, again, we’re thankful for the state providing any assistance in this regard because keeping our kids safe is our No. 1 priority.”
Excitement’s in the air

A worker rolls out the green carpet at Pilot Point’s Massey Stadium. The Bearcats will open the 2019 season with a home game on Aug. 30.

By Andres David Lopez
Staff Writer

Completion of stadium turf sets tone for new year

Pilot Point fans have watched the Bearcats play under the Friday night lights at Massey Stadium for more than 40 years, but they will find something new when the 2019 season starts.

The Pilot Point Bearcats and Bridgeport Bulls will play the inaugural game on the stadium’s new artificial turf on Aug. 30.

Pilot Point ISD Superintendent Dan R. Gist said the anticipation that’s building for the coming season is helping to set a positive tone for the 2019-20 school year. Class begins on Aug. 19.

“Us having turf on our football field is just going to bring an air of excitement,” Gist said. “It already has.”

The field renovation was paired with a refurbishment of the track at Massey Stadium. It is one of two major capital projects the Pilot Point ISD could complete by the end of the school year. The Pilot Point ISD Board of Trustees has also approved a design for a 3,000-square-foot band hall addition. The next step is a request for bids.

“And if it comes in where they feel it is too high, we can come back and possibly reduce it,” Gist said.

The plan is for construction to begin in October, according to a timeline provided to the district by Eikon Consulting Group. A ribbon cutting could be held as early as March 16.

The stadium renovation and band hall addition help district athletic and fine arts programs. But teachers across the district also received a boost in the form of pay raises, which were made possible by changes to the state’s education funding formula.

State lawmakers gave local districts the funding and a mandate to provide the raises.

“We’re still working on that as we speak to possibly give more as more information comes out about House Bill 3,” Gist said.

On Aug. 15, the Texas Education Agency will release the 2019 accountability ratings, which are based on an A-F scale, for school districts. Last year, Pilot Point ISD earned a C.

“They did change the criteria last year and ended up scoring us lower than what we had been the previous two years,” Gist said. “We’re looking to rebound from that and waiting for our scores now. We think we’ve done well, but we’ll see.”

The TEA accountability ratings take into account student achievement, school progress and a district’s success in closing the achievement gap among disadvantaged groups. Student achievement is measured through performance on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness; college, career and military readiness; and the district’s graduation rate.

Meant to guide leaders in deci-
Completion of stadium turf sets tone for new year

A worker smooths out a letter in the Massey Stadium end zone.
David Lewis/The Post-Signal

A focus of the adopted strategic plan is providing a safe school environment.

“We’ve already done a tremendous amount of work on that,” Gist said. “We had outside vendors come in and evaluate our school safety and give us a lot of great ideas and new things. They updated our security plan, so we are excited moving forward.”

Assistant superintendent Harold Colson, who joined Pilot Point ISD in March, oversaw the update of the district’s safety and emergency operations plans, along with several other district projects.

“He’s very well-spoken, very knowledgeable,” Gist said, referring to Colson. “He gets things done, not just in a timely manner, but generally ahead of time.”

Colson said he has had a very positive experience at the district. He has previously worked in Bonham, Hurst-Euless-Bedford, Arlington and Denton.

“I’ve worked in bigger school districts,” Colson said. “What I like about Pilot Point is the personal touch, your relationship with the community. The faculty and staff seem to be a little bit more intimate.”

In addition to safety and security, Colson also worked with the district’s custodial staff this summer to prepare campuses for the upcoming school year. He also worked with schools to update the district’s student and employee handbooks.

“We’re in training right now in capturing kids’ hearts and helping our new teachers prepare for the new school year and develop relationships with students,” Colson said. “We’re going to continue to work through the strategic plan this year.”
PILOT POINT ISD AT A GLANCE

www.pilotpointisd.com

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• Assistant Superintendent: Dr. Harold Colson, hcolson@pilotpointisd.com
• Administrative Assistant: Marilyn Pelzel, mpelzel@pilotpointisd.com

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• Campus Secretary: Kasie Simmons, ksimmons@pilotpointisd.com

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• Trustee: Alan Strittmatter, astrittmatter@pilotpointisd.com
• Trustee: Coby Chandler, cchandler@pilotpointisd.com

School Board Meetings
• Date: Second Wednesday of Each Month
• Time: 6 p.m.
• Place: Administration Building, 829 S. Harrison, Pilot Point, TX 76258

School Meal Prices
• Elementary and Intermediate: Breakfast - $1.50; Lunch - $2.70
• Middle School and High School: Breakfast - $1.50; Lunch - $3.20

2019-20 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

Aug. 5-9: Teacher Prep/Staff Development (Non-instructional Day)
Aug. 12-16: Teacher Prep/Staff Development (Non-instructional Day)
Aug. 19: First Day of School/Begin First Grading Period
Sept. 2: Holiday
Sept. 27: End First Grading Period
Sept. 30: Begin Second Grading Period
Oct. 11: Early Release
Oct. 14: Teacher Prep/Staff Development (Non-instructional Day)
Nov. 1: Early Release
Nov. 8: Second Grading Period Ends
Nov. 11: Third Grading Period Begins
Nov. 22: Early Release
Nov. 25-26: In-service Comp. Day/Student Holiday
Nov. 27-29: Holiday
Dec. 20: Third Grading Period Ends (Early Release)
Dec. 23-31: Holiday
Jan. 1-3: Holiday
Jan. 6: Teacher Prep/Staff Development (Non-instructional Day)
Jan. 7: Fourth Grading Period Begins
Jan. 20: Holiday
Feb. 17: Teacher Prep/Staff Development (Non-instructional Day)
Feb. 14: Fourth Grading Period Ends
Feb. 18: Fifth Grading Period Begins
Mar. 6: Early Release
Mar. 9-13: Holiday
Apr. 3: Fifth Grading Period Ends
Apr. 6: Sixth Grading Period Begins
Apr. 10: Holiday
Apr. 13: Bad Weather Make-up Day
May 20: Sixth Grading Period Ends (Early Release)/Last Day of School
May 21: Bad Weather Make-up Day
May 22: Teacher Prep/Staff Development (Non-instructional Day)

BACK TO SCHOOL CALENDAR

Aug. 13
• Fish Camp, 5:30-6 p.m., Pilot Point High School.
• Meet the Teacher Night, 6-7:30 p.m., Pilot Point High School.
• Meet the Teacher Night, 5:30-7 p.m., Selz Middle School.
• Boys Athletic Meeting, 6:30-7 p.m., Selz Middle School.

Aug. 15
• Meet the Teacher Night, Pilot Point Elementary School, 5-6 p.m.
• Meet the Teacher Night, Pilot Point Intermediate School, 6-7 p.m.

Aug. 19
• First day of school.
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The Post-Signal/School Days Friday, August 9, 2019

Speaking in code

Valerie Wall is the Pilot Point ISD’s new technology director. She has already updated the district’s website and launched a new mobile app.

Andres David Lopez

New tech director looks to showcase PPISD through technology

By Andres David Lopez

Valerie Wall is the Pilot Point ISD’s new technology director. She has already updated the district’s website and launched a new mobile app.

“During her first summer as technology director for Pilot Point ISD, Valerie Wall oversaw the launch of the district’s new website and mobile phone application. I really wanted to showcase our students and our school district,” Wall said. “I don’t feel like the last site really did that. It was kind of dull with the picture of the admin building the first thing you saw when you went to it. Our students do some great things, and I wanted to highlight that.”

The new website and app have been designed to highlight district accomplishments, but they also incorporate new features. For school registration this year, for example, parents were able to submit forms and required documents through the website. The convenience has been received positively by parents.

Wall said she is also excited about teacher pages on the website and app. Each will have a built-in form so teachers are easy to reach.

The website and app will be linked to district Google Calendars so upcoming events are updated.

“I’ve got three kids in our school district and trying to find things on the last site was a little difficult,” Wall said.

Superintendent Dan R. Gist said the new website and app are part of an effort to ensure meaningful communication exists between all stakeholders, as is called for in the district’s strategic plan.

“We’re excited about the new website,” Gist said. “We’re really excited about the new app. And Mrs. Wall has just done a tremendous job, working all summer to get those up and going online.”

The district’s strategic plan also calls for the implementation of a plan to annually review and adjust the utilization of technology and equipment.

As part of that effort, Wall has undertaken an inventory of devices used in the district.

During school registration earlier this month, Wall explained to parents the district’s link to learning program for the issuing of laptops to students.

“We just purchased 125 new Chromebooks for our sixth graders,” Wall said. “Every fifth grade to 12th grade student has their own computer to use in the classroom.”

Once school starts, Wall has planned to conduct training for teachers and administrators on how to make updates on the district website and app. She also plans to help teach-
Tehnology director’s reach extends into the classroom

Wallers incorporate new software to help English-language learners.

Wall took over as the district’s technology director in April. Before that, she worked for Lewisville ISD as a technology facilitator for four years. She has about 14 years in education.

“Before that, I taught second grade,” Wall said. “And I was a first grade teacher. I taught third grade. And I taught fifth grade.”

Family brought Wall to Pilot Point. Her husband, Jeremiah Wall, teaches world history at Pilot Point High School and has been with the district for 15 years.

“We really wanted our kids to be in a small school district, so they started here in the fall, too, and they had a great school year, so we are excited about that,” Wall said.

As technology director, Wall heads a three-person department that includes a network administrator and a help desk specialist.

“I really want teachers and students to focus on 21st-century learning skills,” she said. “So, communication, collaboration, problem-solving, critical thinking and how we can use technology in the classroom to be members of a global community.”

Wall said she wants students, teachers and parents to understand the difference between consuming and creating when using technology.

“That’s where that higher-level thinking comes in, when students are able to use technology to create things,” she said. “So, they are building their own website, perhaps, or they are working with a Google Slide or they are collaborating with classmates, and things like that. That’s really, I think, where the real deep learning takes place, when they are creating with that technology.”

“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”

MARK 10:13-16

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St. Thomas Aquinas

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Saturday | Reconciliation 3:15-4:15 p.m. | Mass 5 p.m.
Sunday | Masses 8 a.m., 11 a.m., 12:45 p.m. (Spanish) | Confessions 3:15-4:15 p.m.
Genna Reyes had been so busy working to graduate from Pilot Point High School she hadn't made concrete plans for what would come after.

The senior sat down with Sam Williamson, the assistant director of the University of North Texas High School Career Connect program. He helped her complete a survey through the U.S. Department of Labor's O*Net Interest Profiler.

The tool measures six types of occupational interests. Reyes scored highest in the artistic field.

“I have more of an idea of what I want to do,” she said. “I might go back home and look for a college.”

In 2017, the Greater Texas Foundation awarded $1.6 million to UNT to extend its college and career mentoring program to middle and high schools. According to the High School Career Connect website, the program was established in response to Texas House Bill 5 from 2013, which required public school students to choose endorsements, or academic tracks, in eighth grade. The endorsements are meant to help students tailor their high school experience to one that better prepares them for their careers.

Starting last spring and continuing this fall, UNT students will visit Pilot Point High School and provide college and career mentoring. In the spring, 50 seniors, including Reyes, participated in the new partnership.

Kevin Moffitt, Pilot Point High School's 11th and 12th grade counselor, selected students for mentoring based on whether they had committed to a college.

“Anyone else who had a question about what they were doing, or were stuck in the process, is who we sent in there,” Moffitt said.
Mentors help seniors plan

Gunner Jackson sat down with Madeline Owens, a junior broadcast media major at UNT. He told her he had visited Oklahoma State University and is hoping to study veterinary medicine there. He had also applied to several other colleges.

Owens advised him to keep a checklist of things he needs to do to prepare once he makes his choice, such as signing up for orientation, housing and a meal plan.

The UNT students are employed by the college. They commit to undergoing at least 20 hours of training and to working between 10 and 20 hours a week as mentors at several schools in the county. They also track progress made with each student they interact with.

This year, Williamson said he is noticing how high school students view taking on debt to pay for college. “They see the generation before them drowning in college debt,” he said.

For students nervous about taking on loans, Williamson advised they start planning for their chosen career early. This would help limit extending how many semesters they spend in college while they figure out their major and career track, he said.

Williamson also acknowledged that college is not the only path to success and that the economy provides good jobs that don’t require a four-year degree. Mentors have been instructed to direct students to training based on career goals, instead of them choosing a college before being sure of what they want to pursue.

Every year, Moffitt arranges for students undecided about their next step to visit North Central Texas College and to interact with the Texas Workforce Commission regarding free training opportunities.

“There will always be a few kids that just want to wait and see what happens after their senior year and get a service-level job,” he said. “Our goal is that at least you’ve thought through all your options. And if you want to do that, it’s great. Do that. We need service-level jobs, too. But we want to expose you to all opportunities first, so you don’t think that’s your only option.”
Ryann Balentine, a pre-K teacher at Pilot Point Elementary School, retrieved items from her classroom’s closet in preparation for the start of the school year.

Amanda Jimenez, right, an ESL aide at Pilot Point High School, helped Alicia Giron, center, register her daughter Nicole online. Classes in the PPISD will start on Aug. 19.

Ready to go!

Photos by
Andres David Lopez/
The Post-Signal
Great schools ... 

Great community!

PPISD NEW TEACHERS/STAFF

**HIGH SCHOOL**
- Chad Ford: Physics and AP Physics.
- Megan Gibson: Biology.
- James Alling: World History/Econ.
- Travis Marsh: BIM 1 & 2/coach.
- Carol Wooley: Content Mastery.
- Roabla Resendiz: Spanish.
- Kristina Dormandy: Counselor.
- Jason McNabb: Math/Boys Coach.
- Laura Callahan: English 1 & Pre-AP English 1.
- Andie Clark: PEIMS/Registrar.
- Nathan Elliott: Network Specialist/Technology Technician.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**
- Tabetha Millirans: Math/Technology/Coach.
- Tiffany Cross: Seventh Grade Reading.
- Kenedee Stasny: Athletics/Teen Leadership.
- Brianna Maray: Seventh Grade Writing.

**INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL**
- Mary LeMarr: Fifth Grade Science.
- Melissa Paisley: Third Grade Science/Social Studies.
- Stephanie Davis: Fourth Grade Math/Reading.
- Jennifer Francy: Fourth Grade Science/Social Studies.
- Jennifer Lott: Fifth Grade Math/Reading.
- Katie Kreamer: Sixth Grade Math/Reading.

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**
- Kelly Hataway: School Nurse.
- Kasi Mack: Counselor.
- Maycee Stuckly: Second Grade Teacher.
- Soledad Mercer: Bilingual Kindergarten Teacher.
- Rachel Raines: First Grade Teacher.
- Savannah Matzinger: Special Ed/CM/Girls Coach (HS).
- Stephanie Fowler: Kindergarten Teacher.
- Susan Roth: Pre-K/PPCD.
- Yesenia Giron: Teacher Aide.
- Amanda Jackson: Special Ed Aide/PE.
- Rhonda Box: Pre-K Teacher.
- Linda Shepard: Second Grade Teacher.

**MAINTENANCE**
- Jason Mundkowski: Maintenance Director.
- Matthew Lawrence: Maintenance Crew.

**ADMINISTRATION**
- Dr. Harold Colson: Assistant Superintendent.
- Valerie Wall: Technology Director.
- Nathan Elliott: Network Specialist/Technology Technician.

**On the road again!**

Clint Johnson demonstrated where his students will sit on the first day to simulate driving. Johnson integrates real-world experiences such as cooking and reading newspapers to understand current events as he teaches sixth-grade social studies at Pilot Point Intermediate School. Abigail Allen/The Post-Signal
OUR GOALS

• All students will have a sense of belonging through the knowledge of their unique strengths.
• All students will be empowered to embrace the challenges yet to be encountered.
• All students will be prepared to be successful and productive.

OUR MISSION

The school where every student wants to grow, the district where every educator wants to teach, and the community where every family wants to live.

OUR CORE VALUES

Relationships
Integrity
Family | Faith
Compassion

PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

Pilot Point ISD graduates shall be servant leaders possessing integrity who are adaptable, resilient and driven; who shall be confident, critical-thinkers and life-long learners; with a mastery of etiquette and communication skills.

OUR STUDENTS ... OUR FUTURE!
Workers being supervised by Pogue Construction worked on the walls of the new gym being built at the back of the Aubrey Middle School. The gym and nearby locker rooms are part of a district-wide bond construction project that has seen varying delays, from minor to major, thanks to the frequent rainfall over the course of the last year.
Full steam ahead

Aubrey ISD making headway on campus building projects

By Abigail Allen
Assistant Editor

When the Aubrey ISD students at Brockett Elementary and Monaco Elementary start their school year, many of them will be sitting in new or newly renovated classrooms.

The Pogue Construction crews were set to wrap up all of the major work on the expansions of the two schools by Aug. 1.

“There will be some things that we’re working on over the next few weeks after that, but we should have everything pretty much ready to go the first of August,” Belding said.

At Brockett, the expansion gives four of the five third grade classes a home and it created a new art room.

Monaco’s expansions were added to the ends of the green and yellow hallways with two classes tucked on to each.

“At both campuses, we took some classroom space and made a true, good life skills classroom for students that are served through special ed that need really specialized services,” Belding said. “And so now we have classrooms that are designed to meet their needs.”

At Monaco, another modified room will house the motor lab where students who need it can receive physical therapy and occupational therapy, Belding informed the school board at the June 26 board meeting.

The expansions of both elementary schools cost roughly a combined $3.2 million of the $51 million bond the district’s voters approved in November 2017.

“We did everything we could to make sure both campuses were matching up in what they were offering and the facilities that they have,” Belding said.

Aubrey Middle School students and their families will find some of the school’s first phase of bond construction completed.

Belding told the trustees in June that the middle school improvements had the most rain delays out of the renovation projects. The project, which includes the auxiliary gym addition, another set of locker rooms and a weight room, is projected to be completed in December.

“They utilities were very complicated, moving utilities around,” Belding said.

In the meantime, the athletics program is working on figuring out the backup plans for practices and games until the project is completed.

The first phase of the middle school project has a price tag of a little less than $5.1 million.

Jackie Fuller Elementary, which was initially supposed to be ready for this school year, was also delayed by the rain. It is now projected to open for the 2020-2021 school year.

“They anticipate — weather permitting — pouring the foundation slab in early August,” Belding said.

The parking lot will be poured after the foundation slab is completed.

The new elementary school will take up the biggest chunk of the bond: $23 million for the building alone.

Kari Abrams, who served as the principal at Brockett for two years, will be the first principal at Fuller Elementary, and she will be able to help with the final design choices in the school. She will also be working with the new Brockett Principal Courtney Siggers and new Monaco Principal Barbara Pitt during the year Fuller Elementary is under construction.

The other ongoing bond project in the district is the construction of a new agricultural facility and the renovation of the existing structure.

Although the other projects are being handled by Pogue Construction, the ag project was awarded to Command Builders of Krugerville.

At the June 26 meeting, Command Builders owner Jobie Denton told the board of trustees that the project had hit a snag in the form of oversaturated soil, which was preventing the heavy machinery from being able to access the project site.

He also said a small retention pond was needed to help the area drain properly with the added building footprint.

“When you drive by there, you can see where that one area is dug out, and that’s it,” Belding said. “They’re ... also in the process of preparing the pad for the foundation of the two new buildings, so they’re making progress.”

Those will be a new arena and a new barn. The old facility “will have some stalls for projects that will be separate from the new one but also an additional practice arena, and that’s where the ag teachers’ office and the restrooms will be,” Belding said.

The overall project for the agricultural sciences center will cost a little more than $1.5 million. It’s estimated to be completed around early October.

The guaranteed maximum price for those projects add up to $32.8 million. The remaining roughly $18.2 million of the $51 million bond money will be used in a second phase of development, which will include a new auditorium and band hall as well as a practice track and football field at the middle school.

“There were some complicating factors with a flood plain study that we had to complete and then there were some other things that we had to account for [with the middle school track and field],” Belding said.

Construction on the track should start soon.

“You have to have certain weather conditions to pour the track, so we really don’t want to wait until next spring to get on that,” he said. “We want to go ahead and move as quickly as we can now that we’ve got most of our plans lined out and all of those hurdles have been overcome.”

Until that second phase is finished, the middle school athletics students will still need to practice sports such as football at the high school.

When the construction of Fuller Elementary is nearly all wrapped up, the band hall and auditorium project will begin.

“Scope-wise, it’s difficult to oversee construction with every facility in the district and to make sure the quality’s there that meets our standards and the standards of the community,” Belding said.

Overall, the district has been working with the different firms handling the current projects to build and remodel great facilities, Belding said.

“We want to make sure we get things done in a timely manner and with great quality,” Belding said.

“We want to make sure we get things done in a timely manner and with great quality.”
18 The Post-Signal/School Days Friday, August 9, 2019

AUBREY ISD AT A GLANCE

www.aubreyisd.net

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• Deputy Superintendent: Terrie McNabb
• Assistant Superintendent for HR and Student Services: Shannon Saylor
• Chief Financial Officer: Eric Hough

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• Campus Secretary: Lanise Heath, lheath@aubreyisd.net

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• Phone: 940-668-0200
• Principal: Karen Wright, kwright@aubreyisd.net
• Campus Secretary: TBA

Brockett Elementary
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• Principal: Courtney Siggers, csiggers@aubreyisd.net
• Campus Secretary: Rebecca Caranna, rcaranna@aubreyisd.net

Monaco Elementary
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• Phone: 940-668-0000
• Principal: Barbara Pitt, bpitt@aubreyisd.net
• Campus Secretary: Jill Bruce, jbruce@aubreyisd.net

Early Bird Learning Center
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• Phone: 940-668-0060, ext. 1806
• Director: Pam Bloedel, pbloedel@aubreyisd.net
• Campus Secretary: Tina Cundiff, tcundiff@aubreyisd.net

School Board
• President: Jim Milacek, jim.milacek@aubreyisd.net
• Vice President: Dr. Joey Saxon, joey.saxon@aubreyisd.net
• Secretary: Colleen Dow, colleen.dow@aubreyisd.net

2019-20 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

Aug. 2: In Lieu/Staff Development
Aug. 5-19: Student Holiday/Teacher Staff Development
Aug. 14: First Day of School/First Grading Period Begins
Sept. 2: Student/Teacher Holiday, All Offices Closed
Oct. 11: First Grading Period Ends
Oct. 14: Student Holiday/Teacher Staff Development
Oct. 15: Second Grading Period Begins
Oct. 15-17: Parent Conference (window of opportunity)
Oct. 18: Early Release ALL SCHOOLS
Nov. 25-29: Student/Teacher Holiday, All Offices Closed
Dec. 18: Early Release ALL SCHOOLS
Dec. 19: Early Release ALL SCHOOLS
Dec. 19: Second Grading Period Ends
Dec. 20: In Lieu/Staff Development
Dec. 23-Jan. 3: Student/Teacher Holiday, All Offices Closed
Jan. 6: Student Holiday/Teacher Staff Development
Jan. 7: Third Grading Period Begins
Jan. 20: Student/Teacher Holiday, All Offices Closed
Feb. 17: Student Holiday/Teacher Staff Development
Mar. 5: Third Grading Period Ends
Mar. 6: Student Holiday/Teacher Staff Development
Mar. 9-13: Student/Teacher Holiday, All Offices Closed
Mar. 16: Fourth Grading Period Begins
Apr. 10: Bad Weather Day
Apr. 13: Bad Weather Day
May 20: Early Release ALL SCHOOLS
May 21: Early Release ALL SCHOOLS
May 21: Fourth Grading Period Ends
May 22: Student Holiday/Teacher Staff Development
May 25: Student/Teacher Holiday, All Offices Closed

BACK TO SCHOOL CALENDAR

Aug. 12
• Meet the Teacher Night, 6-7:30 p.m., Aubrey High School.
• Meet the Teacher Night, 5:30-7 p.m., Aubrey Middle School.
• Meet the Teacher Night (public pre-K), 5:30-6:30 p.m., Early Bird Learning Center.
Aug. 14
• First day of school.
Welcome to Aubrey ISD!

The mission of the Aubrey ISD Chaparral family is to inspire, nurture, and empower all students to realize their potential and to succeed in an ever-changing world.

Meet the Teacher

Meet your child’s teacher prior to the start of school on the following dates and times:

**Brockett Elementary**
Meet the Teacher Night – Thursday, Aug. 8 from 5 - 6:30 p.m

**Monaco Elementary**
Meet the Teacher Night – Thursday, Aug. 8 from 5:30 - 7 p.m.

**Early Bird Learning Center (Public pre-K)**
Meet the Teacher Night - Monday, Aug. 12 from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

**Aubrey Middle School**
Meet the Teacher Night - Monday, Aug. 12 from 5:30 - 7 p.m.

**High School**
Meet the Teacher - Monday, Aug. 12 from 6 - 7:30 p.m.

**Students can meet their teachers, put supplies in their lockers, get parking passes, buy t-shirts.**

Communication Tools for Parents

**Notification** - Please make sure your school's front office has your up-to-date contact information (emails, phone numbers). We will use that information to contact you through a mass notification system about upcoming events, bad weather and emergencies.

**Website** - Families can access important information such as student handbooks, policies, and teacher webpages from our website at:  [www.aubreyisd.net](http://www.aubreyisd.net)

**Social Media** - For up-to-date information and announcements become a friend of Aubrey Chaparral on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/aubreychaparral](http://www.facebook.com/aubreychaparral).

**Parent Portal** -- For information on your child’s grades and attendance, be sure to sign up for Parent Portal. Contact your child’s campus to receive a username and password in order to access the site.

**Aubrey ISD App** -- The Aubrey I.S.D. mobile app is a one-stop shop for everything that involves Aubrey schools. The app provides the latest news from the District and individual schools, access to students’ classes and grades. Available free for iPhones and Androids.

Athletics -- Visit [aubreysports.rankonesport.com](http://aubreysports.rankonesport.com) for sports schedules and updates.

Start and End Times for the 2019-20 School Year

Brockett and Monaco Elementary: 7:45 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Middle School: 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
High School: 8 a.m. - 3:38 p.m.
Early Bird pre-K Morning Session: 7:45 - 11 a.m.
Early Bird pre-K Afternoon Session: 12:15 - 3:30 p.m.

Tax Free Weekend is August 9-11

Lunch Prices for 2019-20

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<th>Lunch (Student)</th>
<th>Breakfast (Adult)</th>
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<td>High Schools</td>
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Hello Chaparrals!

I am excited about the 2019-20 school year! We have a wonderful school district made up of talented students, families, teachers, staff, and community members. Aubrey ISD is committed to providing the very best educational experiences for our students. Our vision is to be a “World Class” school district and ensure our students are successful.

The Aubrey I.S.D. Mission Statement says, “The mission of the Aubrey I.S.D. Chaparral family is to inspire, nurture, and empower all students to realize their potential and to succeed in an ever-changing world.” We are on a mission to help our students prepare to take advantage of opportunities as they progress in their lives. We want our students to have choices: the choice of going to college, attending a technical school, pursuing their chosen career, joining the military, or whatever they may dream of doing as they grow. Students need to be prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Our district is committed to providing students with experiences to fully prepare them to be successful in our ever-changing world.

To achieve our Vision and Mission, the school district works diligently to ensure our teachers and staff have what they need to deliver high-quality instruction in the classroom. Our teachers engage in ongoing professional development to stay current on research based instructional delivery. We work diligently to meet the varying needs of our students and families. We are focused on working with families to help our children succeed in a safe and nurturing environment.

Aubrey ISD is committed to providing successful and engaging cocurricular and extracurricular activities. Our staff works hard to ensure each and every program is given every advantage to succeed and help our students develop their individual gifts and talents. Our programs such as art, athletics, band, agriculture, cheer, Academic Decathlon, UIL Academics, theater, etc., are vital to the overall experience of our students. As a school community, we believe these programs teach students many life lessons and provide great value to their growth and development.

All of this is not possible without a strong relationship and commitment to partnering with parents and the communities we serve. We are honored that you, our parents, have given our district the opportunity to work with and to educate your children. Thank you for your trust and support as we work to inspire, nurture and empower our children to succeed now and in the future. Being an Aubrey Chaparral is special!

We are all excited and looking forward to a great 2019-20 school year! Together we will make this a special time in the lives of students, staff, families, and our community.

Sincerely,

David Belding, Ed.D.
Superintendent

AUBREY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
415 Tradell Lane
Aubrey, TX 76227
(940) 868-0060 Fax (940) 385-2827

~ A Great Place to Learn ~
Students always see new faces on the first day of school. On Aug. 14, two new administrators will welcome students and teachers at the front doors of Monaco Elementary in Providence Village.

Barbara Pitt is starting her first school year as the new principal at Monaco, and Brett Dobbs is the new assistant principal. The two administrators have a combined 40 years of experience in education, but different journeys brought them to Monaco. Together, they are hoping to blend their experiences to create a dynamic partnership.

“We know that we need to go in and continue to build the strong culture that Monaco has had,” Pitt said. “We need to uplift teachers, students and families to continue that positive school culture.”

Pitt and Dobbs both felt that Monaco was the right place for them to take that next step in their careers.

“I had been an administrator for the last 12 years, and I feel like I am ready to lead a campus,” Pitt said.

By Amy Ruggini
Contributing Writer

Abigail Allen/The Post-Signal
New administrators to lead Monaco campus

Barbara Pitt
Monaco Elementary School principal

Pitt said, “I feel like all my experiences both personally and professionally have just brought me to this place. And Aubrey ISD is a special place, and I really wanted to be a part of it.”

Pitt served as the assistant principal of Renner Middle School in Plano ISD for the last two years. She has worked as an administrator at the elementary, middle and high school levels and also has had the opportunity to work at small and large school districts.

Dobbs is new to Monaco but not to Aubrey ISD. He taught eighth grade English at Aubrey Middle School for the last four years. Prior to working in Aubrey, he taught for 17 years at two school districts in Oklahoma.

“Administration has always been a goal of mine,” Dobbs said. “After 21 years in the classroom, I have done lot of things and had a lot of success in the classroom, and I thought it was time to take some of that knowledge and pass it along to teachers.”

Being in an elementary school will not be new to Dobbs. He taught fourth grade in Oklahoma for 10 years. The big change for Dobbs will be not starting his day in a classroom Aug. 14.

“I still really enjoy being in the classroom,” Dobbs said. “As an assistant principal, it’s going to be a different type of relationship with the kids. I’ll have to figure out how to build those relationships in a different way.”

Pitt was impressed with how well-respected Dobbs was as a teacher. She feels that will translate well with the staff at Monaco.

“His experience with both elementary, middle and high schools are going to help our teachers,” Pitt said. “He will be able to teach them instructionally things that they need to do in the classroom. He can walk through data with them, which is critical for what we need to do to improve student achievement. He was the right fit for what our campus needed and what I needed in a teammate.”

The two did not wait until the first day of school to get to know their new school and community. They held a Meet the Principal event at Monaco on Aug. 1 to give families the opportunity to talk to them in an informal setting.

Pitt made time during the summer to meet with each of her teachers individually. She also invited teachers to a Painting with a Twist painting session in late July as a way for colleagues to catch up with everyone before school started.

On that first day of school, both Pitt and Dobbs have said, they are ready to fully invest in the campus.

“I just want to focus this year about building a culture and keeping things positive,” Pitt said. “I want to make sure that kids come to school feeling safe and feel school is a great place to be.”

Amy Ruggini is the Aubrey ISD web and communications specialist.

The Aubrey Independent School District
Public Notification of Nondiscrimination in Career and Technical Education Programs 2019-20

The Aubrey Independent School District offers career and technical education programs. Admission to these programs is based on availability in the master schedule.

It is the policy of The Aubrey Independent School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap in its vocational programs, services or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

It is the policy of The Aubrey Independent School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its employment practices as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The Aubrey Independent School District will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

For information about your rights or grievance procedures, contact the Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator, Terrie McNabb, at 415 Tisdell Ln. Aubrey, TX 76227, 940-668-0060.

The Aubrey Independent School District
Notificación Publica de No Discriminación en Programas Vocacionales 2019-20

The Aubrey Independent School District ofrece programas vocacionales. La admisión a estos programas se basa en disponibilidad en el programa maestro.

Es la norma de The Aubrey Independent School District no discriminar por motivos de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo o impedimento, en sus programas, servicios o actividades vocacionales, tal como lo requieren el Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964, según enmienda; el Título IX de las Enmiendas en la Educación, de 1972, y la Sección 504 de la Ley de Rehabilitación de 1973, según enmienda.

Es la norma de The Aubrey Independent School District no discriminar por motivos de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo, impedimento o edad, en sus procedimientos de empleo, tal como lo requieren el Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964, según enmienda; el Título IX de las Enmiendas en la Educación, de 1972, la ley de Discriminación por Edad, de 1975, según enmienda, y la Sección 504 de la Ley de Rehabilitación de 1973, según enmienda.

The Aubrey Independent School District tomará las medidas necesarias para asegurar que la falta de habilidad en el uso del inglés no sea un obstáculo para la admisión y participación en todos los programas educativos y vocacionales.

Para información sobre sus derechos o procedimientos de quejas, comuníquese con el Coordinador del Título IX, el Coordinador de la Sección 504, Terrie McNabb en 415 Tisdell Ln. Aubrey, TX 76227, 940-668-0060.
Aubrey ISD welcomes new teachers, staff

Abby Allen will be teaching and coaching at Aubrey High School. She will coach volleyball and track and is entering her first year as a special education teacher. She earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of North Texas and her master’s in social work from UTA.

Jenna Bennett will teach special education at Monaco Elementary. She earned her bachelor’s degree from Stephen F. Austin in special education. She has seven years of teaching experience.

Justin Bohannon will teach physics as well as earth and space at Aubrey High School. He will also coach varsity football and baseball as well as ninth-grade basketball. He earned a degree in biology from the University of North Texas. He has 13 years of teaching experience.

Angie Capelle will be teaching second grade at Brockett. She earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of North Texas in interdisciplinary studies. She has 11 years of teaching experience and worked as a paraprofessional for the last two years at Brockett.

Megan Crane teaches Pre-K at the Early Bird Learning Center. This is her second year as a Pre-K teacher and her third working in Aubrey. Megan is a graduate of Aubrey High School and earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of North Texas in interdisciplinary studies. She has 10 years of teaching experience.

Jessica Dickinson will teach math at Aubrey Middle School. She graduated from West Texas A&M and has four years of teaching experience.

Miguel Diaz teaches Spanish at Aubrey High School. He grew up in Puerto Rico and earned his bachelor’s degree in accounting from Caribbean University in Bayamon, Puerto Rico. He started teaching Spanish last spring at AHS.

Corinne Divine will teach English at Aubrey High School. She grew up in California and moved to Texas after high school. She taught at Denton ISD the last two years. She earned her bachelor’s degree in government and English from Texas Woman’s University.

Katie Gee will teach English at Aubrey High School. She earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of North Texas and is working on her master’s degree at Texas A&M Commerce. She has seven years of teaching experience.

Mary Gelski is a first-grade teacher at Monaco Elementary. She earned her bachelor’s degree from Texas A&M Commerce. She was a long-term substitute teacher at Monaco last year and was also a tutor there.

Gavin Gregory will teach Texas history at Aubrey Middle School. He will also coach varsity football and baseball as well as middle school basketball. He earned his bachelor’s degree from Stephen F. Austin State University.

Ryan Ladner teaches special education at Aubrey High School. This is his second year at Aubrey. He earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of North Texas. He has two years of teaching experience.

Kallie Maschino will teach third grade at Monaco Elementary. She will also coach varsity cheer at Aubrey High School. She earned her bachelor’s degree in interdisciplinary studies with ESL from the University of North Texas and did her student teaching at Monaco last year.

Caitlin McGuire is the new agriculture science teacher at Aubrey Middle School. She earned her bachelor’s degree in agriculture science and leadership from Angelo State. She taught the last two years at Bronte ISD.

Travis McKay will teach special education at Aubrey High School. He is starting his second year at Aubrey ISD. He will also coach football, basketball and track. He earned his bachelor’s degree in criminal justice from Sam Houston State. He has three years of teaching experience.

Brittany Mulkey is a kindergarten teacher at Monaco Elementary. She is a graduate of Aubrey High School and earned her bachelor’s degree from Texas Woman’s University. She worked as a paraprofessional at Early Bird Learning Center for five years before moving over to Monaco last year.

Jason Noyes is the new band director at Aubrey High School. He brings 15 years of experience as a music educator. He received his bachelor’s degree in music from Texas Tech.

Barbara Pitt is the new principal at Monaco. She earned her bachelor’s degree in education from Bowling Green and her master’s degree from TCU. She has 20 years of experience in education, including 12 as an elementary and secondary administrator.

Amber Schneider will teach fifth grade at Monaco Elementary. She earned her bachelor’s degree from Tarleton State in kinesiology and her master’s in secondary education from the University of North Texas. She has seven years of teaching experience.

Lindsey Spencer will teach third grade at Brockett Elementary. She earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of North Texas and has 10 years of teaching experience.

Sadie Stoffels will teach kindergarten at Monaco. She earned her bachelor’s degree from Midwestern State and has two years teaching experience.

Jana Witherspoon will teach fourth grade at Monaco Elementary. She earned her bachelor’s degree from Tarleton State. She has 13 years of teaching experience.
Josh Ballinger lives in Whitesboro with his wife, Garra, and their two school-aged children.

The happy unit purchased a small plot of land near their family’s farm a few years back and began building a life woven into the backdrop of the rolling rural landscape, planted comfortably close to their roots.

The Ballingers love their home, and they love their town. But Tioga has their hearts.

Every day the family of four travels approximately 20 miles into the Tioga School District, where Josh works as assistant superintendent and Garra as district librarian.

Both kids are enrolled in the district as well, with the youngest beginning sixth grade this fall.

“We’ve made a home here,” Ballinger said of Tioga. “We spend a lot of hours here together, and that’s the whole reason we came — we love the family atmosphere.”

Ballinger worked in Callisburg before coming to Tioga, he said. That’s where his career began. The district hired him straight out of college, and he began working through the ranks. By 25, he was already an assistant principal.

In the spring of 2012, after 12 long years of service in CISD, Ballinger decided to leave.

He wanted to come to Tioga, and his reasoning was simple:

“I came here to be principal,” he said. “I saw it as an opportunity to grow the district. We came in when it was a K-8 campus, but they wanted a high school. So, we got to work.”

Ballinger didn’t make the move to Tioga alone, he said. Superintendent Charles Holloway had transferred several months before the Ballingers.

A seasoned and well-respected veteran in the education community, Holloway wanted to seize the opportunity to grow the school, just like Ballinger did. The two have worked together for over 18 years.

“Holloway and I compliment each other very well,” Ballinger said. “He is very much a forward thinker ... progressive, certainly, is a word that describes him. We don’t sit idle very well, neither one of us. We’re constantly thinking about how to improve stuff.”

The two worked hard to find an innovative way to transition Tioga into a K-12 district as smoothly as possible. Seven years later, THS has already seen four senior classes come and go. Now, students and teachers are prepping for the fall semester.

“We’ve got some streamlined stuff with our curriculum development that we’re all really excited about,” Ballinger said. “Last year we went 100 percent Google Classroom at the high school level. All of our high schoolers have Google Chromebooks, and we’re trying to move that into the middle school as well.”

With Google Classroom, Ballinger
said, students have access to additional educational resources, as well as a way to interact with the teacher and other students, turn in assignments digitally and check grades.

Another exciting opportunity lies in the school’s college program, which allows students to earn credits for an associate’s degree – for free – while also getting a high school education. Many students enrolled in the program actually earn their associate’s before their high school degrees, Ballinger said.

In the midst of so much innovation and the rapidly growing student population, Ballinger stressed the importance of keeping alive TISD’s close-knit community.

“Forever – for 50 years – Tioga existed with 130-ish kids,” Ballinger said. “It was certainly small, and we want that feeling to continue regardless of how big we get. Now we have around 730 students, which is a much different experience than what the people here are accustomed to. We need people to keep believing in our system, to know that we are taking care of their students and doing a good job educating them.”

Ballinger said he relates to this mission on a personal level, especially because the family-feel of TISD directly influenced his decision to shift careers and enroll his family into the district in the first place.

“The kids were so little when we came to Tioga,” he said. “And they’ve loved it. They made lots of friends right away and have just … grown with the district.”

During his time in Tioga, Ballinger said, he has seen the same happen with other students, as well. It’s one of his favorite parts of the job.

“I’m really excited to get another school year started,” he said. “Schools were made for kids to be in them, and we’re ready for them to be here.”
2019-20 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

Aug. 5-14: 8 Days Staff Development
Aug. 12: Meet the Teacher for pre-K through eighth grade from 6-8 p.m.
Aug. 15: First Day of School for All Students
Aug. 15: Begin First Nine Weeks
Sept. 2: Labor Day Holiday
Oct. 4: Early Release for Homecoming Festivities at 1 p.m.
Oct. 14: Student Holiday
Oct. 18: End First Nine Weeks
Oct. 21: Begin Second Nine Weeks
Nov. 25-29: Thanksgiving Holidays
Dec. 19: Early Release at 1 p.m.
Dec. 19: End Second Nine Weeks
Dec. 20-Jan. 3: Student/Teacher Holiday
Jan. 6: Teacher Workday/Student Holiday
Jan. 7: Begin Third Nine Weeks
Jan. 20: School Holiday
Feb. 17: School Holiday
March 9-13: Spring Break Holiday
March 20: End Third Nine Weeks
March 23: Begin Fourth Nine Weeks
April 10: School Holiday
April 13: Bad Weather Day
April 24: Bad Weather Day
May 21: Early Release at 1 p.m. and Last Day of School for Students
May 21: End Fourth Nine Weeks
May 22: Teacher Workday
May 23: Graduation for Seniors in HS Gym at 2:30 p.m.

BACK TO SCHOOL CALENDAR

Aug. 12
• Meet the Teacher Night, 6-8 p.m., Tioga Elementary School and Junior High School
Aug. 15
• First day of school.
Aug. 26
• Meet the Teacher Night, 6-8 p.m., Tioga High School.
The sounds of music

Tioga High School band preparing for new season

By Baylee Friday
Staff Writer

If you’re passing by Tioga High School early in the morning or even in the evening, your ears are likely in for a treat.

Marching season is right around the corner, after all, and for the past few weeks the THS Marching Band has been hard at work preparing for another year jam-packed with powerful fight songs, lilting melodies and fancy footwork.

The band came together in its entirety for the first time on July 31 to rehearse, though special groups like incoming freshman, color guard and the drumline have been practicing separately for weeks.

“Football does two-a-days and volleyball does two-a-days,” said band director Brad Winders. “This is something that we do.”

Indeed, the band does rehearse twice a day. And the schedule is rigorous.

From 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. the group rehearses on the football field, sans instruments – the focus at that time is on movement and footing. As Winders put it: “We’re just teaching them how to walk again, getting our feet used to working in this new way.”

After that, the group of 35 travels indoors to rehearse with instruments. At that point, the primary area of focus is the music and not the movement, Winders said.

At noon, the group breaks for lunch, only to return at 5 and take to the field once again, this time armed with instruments and ready to put the music and movement together.

This grueling schedule will persist until the school year starts.

“We’ll probably see each other every weekday before the first day of school,” Winders said. “Monday through Friday, twice a day.”

Winders has been teaching at Tioga for seven years.

He came before the high school marching band existed and helped it grow into what it is today: A dedicated group of talented kids, eager to win and unafraid to work.

“If marching band were easy, it’d be called football,” sophomore Cameron Byler said.

The 15-year-old plays marching tuba and has been in band, in some form or other, since the first grade.

“Practice is really hot, but it’s still a lot of fun,” he added. “We have a lot of inside jokes and we all like each other, even if we act like we don’t.”

Last year the marching band had a good competition season, and Winders is excited to see what his students accomplish this year. He’s also implementing something new: jazz band.

“We’re very excited about it,” Winders said. “It’s the first time we’ve ever done it here. It’s a great way to let the students try something new.”

For senior Corbin Pyle, the first year of jazz band will also be the last.

“It’s bittersweet,” he said. “At the same time, it’s a good legacy to leave behind.”

To Pyle, marching band was worth the early mornings, worth the long practices and achy joints. And more.

“It’s hard work,” Pyle said. “But it’s very rewarding at the end.”

‘If marching band were easy, it’d be called football.’
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