

So close

Freeman falls one win short of state

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Common ground

Student protests resonate with Columbine shooting survivors PAGE A4



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SAM CRAIG, DAILY SUN STAFF

Kids play on the playground of Stoddard Elementary in Beatrice during a lunch break on Tuesday.

Heidel to challenge Fischer in primary

Retired math teacher focuses on budget, assault weapons

DAILY SUN STAFF REPORTS

A relative newcomer to politics has stepped forward to challenge incumbent Deb Fischer in the Republican Primary for her U.S. Senate seat.

Jack Heidel, of Omaha, is a retired math professor from the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

While he admits that he and Fischer likely agree on many topics, there's two key points they differ on. "She's not doing anything about our debt," Heidel said Monday while visiting Beatrice. "She needs to be challenged. She's not any worse than anyone else, but she's not any better. I probably agree with her on a lot of things but the debt is a huge problem."



Heidel

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Elementary restructuring

Four options are on the table, one potential choice includes elementary leveling

SAM CRAIG Daily Sun staff writer

The Beatrice School District Board of Education held its Committee of the Whole meeting on Monday night, drawing in a large crowd to discuss the potential elementary restructuring.

Paddock Lane Elementary Principal Betty Replogle and Kevin Janssen, the principal of Stoddard and Lincoln elementaries, were on hand to discuss four options for potential changes to the elementary school structure aimed at reducing class sizes.

The district, like many school systems around the state, is faced with a dilemma, Replogle said. Beatrice Public Schools has declining enrollment, declining tax revenue and declining state aid, she said, which has resulted in a \$500,000 budget shortfall.

Replogle said the district is also trying to avoid disproportionate class sizes. This requires students to be shuffled around to different schools, she said, a problem schools have to deal with every year.

Working with Superintendent

Pat Nauroth and Director of Curriculum Jackie Nielsen, Replogle and Janssen said they have developed four possible solutions.

The first option would allow the schools to stay pretty much the same. Lincoln, Paddock and Stoddard would continue to be kindergarten through fifth grade schools, but this would involve moving students between sections and could lead to siblings being separated. It would also cut sections from second and third grades, causing class sizes to increase.

The second option would be to continue to leave students in their current elementary schools, but decrease the third grade at Lincoln down to one section and move a teacher over to Paddock Lane for a third section of second grade, Janssen said.

Option three would reduce either Lincoln or Stoddard to a 1.5 section school, which would be in the model of the old Cedar Elementary before it became the preschool. Paddock Lane would

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Beatrice man arrested for kicking in door

Man claimed someone was trying to kill him

SAM CRAIG Daily Sun staff writer

Beatrice Police arrested a man who they say kicked in a door after claiming someone was trying to kill him.

Logan Allen Retherford, 18, was arrested early Tuesday morning for disorderly conduct, criminal mischief and criminal trespassing.

On Feb. 27 at 12:30 a.m., Beatrice Police were called to a North 10th Street residence where it was reported that a man was banging on the door and claiming someone was trying to kill him.

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District considers short-term budget cuts

Board may make changes to Compass, employ fewer paras, stop textbook purchases

SAM CRAIG Daily Sun staff writer

The last few years haven't been easy financially for Beatrice Public Schools.

That was the message Superintendent Pat Nauroth gave to the Beatrice Board of Education at its Committee of the Whole meeting Monday night, as the board discussed short-term budget recommendations.

Over the previous five years, the district has lost 118 students from kindergarten through 12th grade. Including this year so far, the total comes to 135 students who have transferred out of the

district, said John Brazell, the district's director of business affairs.

"We've lost 118 students in the previous five years and we've lost over \$1.1 million in state aid during that time," Brazell said. "Now, our property taxes went up about \$2.6 million during that time and our expenditures went up an additional \$1.6 million over that same time. So, we actually came out negative about \$150,000."

Students equate to dollars, Brazell said, and the loss of students means the loss of state aid for the district, which has greatly affected what the district is doing.

District expenditures have not increased very much, he said, with an average increase of 1.5 percent per year. On the other side, he said, the district revenue has only increased by 1.4 percent

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