

August 1, 2023



Looking Forward to the First Day of School: Tuesday, September 5 2023

Dear Butte Falls Charter School Parents and Community Members,

This is just a quick midsummer update. Here's hoping you and your family is enjoying a safe and healthy summer break!

Refreshing our Facilities

We are pleased to welcome Mr. Sean Childers as our new Facilities & Maintenance Manager. We were fortunate to have several strong applicants for this position. Mr. Childers has experience in project management, manufacturing, fabrication, excavation, and construction. He has previously worked in the private sector in Eugene and Bend in the production of equipment and tooling for aerospace and other precision industries. Mr. Childers' responsibilities will include management of facilities and supervision of custodial and maintenance staff. He will also maintain our safety plans and advise district employees on safety regulations and procedures.

Summer provides our best opportunity for deep cleaning and repairing our facilities. This summer is no exception. On Monday, July 24, [Stanley Steemers](#) brought four crews up to clean the floors in all elementary classrooms and the main office area. This was especially needed as we had a very muddy fall last year. Stanley Steemers also cleaned classrooms and the office at the secondary campus. We will be resetting classrooms over the next four weeks, finishing the cleaning and sanitizing of the rest of the facilities.



Four Stanley Steemer crews. 7 hours! Amazing!



They came, they cleaned, and our floors are ready!

We have several temporary summer employees who are helping us paint classrooms, doors and other spaces that need refreshing. At the high school campus this includes the Health/Electives classroom and the English/Language Arts classroom. With the help of [Global Pacific Environmental, Inc.](#), we have removed the carpeting and underlying asbestos tiles in the English classroom and will be working with [Fashion Floors](#) to install new carpet squares.

At the elementary campus, we are refreshing the staff restrooms and several classrooms with new paint. The seventh-grade classroom is also scheduled for new carpeting. We will finish painting all elementary classroom doors and the gym doors before students return.

Our elementary parking areas will be sealed in August, which will allow us to restripe parking spaces and curbing to comply with safety regulations. We anticipate some additional painting on our elementary playground areas to guide student play at recess.

We are adding a counseling room at the elementary campus, which can also be used for small meetings. This will provide an additional place for students to meet with counselors or other specialists. A substantial amount of funding (\$4,000) for this counseling room comes from a grant from [Lines for Life](#), a non-profit agency dedicated to preventing substance abuse and suicide and promoting mental wellness. We are thrilled that this space will be available as we start the school year!

Thank you, Protectors Insurance!

[Protectors Insurance](#) (Medford) has been our School District’s Insurance Agent of Record for many years. In July, Protectors moved into new offices at 1555 East McAndrews, Suite 301, in Medford. Business partners Joe Hubbard and Lloyd Williamson offered to us a number of office items free. This very generous offer allows us to upgrade some desks, tables, office chairs, room dividers, and other useful business furniture. We will greatly enjoy our “new-to-us” 10-foot Boardroom meeting table, which fits very well in the District Board Room. Protectors helps us maintain property and liability insurance and keeps us compliant with state regulations and requirements. In this instance, they are not just protecting us, but also providing for us. Thank you, Lloyd, Joe, and the team at Protectors Insurance!



Partners look out for each other. Thank you, Protectors!



A new-to-us Board Room table (glass top still in crate).

District and Southern Oregon University look to expand Partnership

When the District acquired the final 3 acres of the former Butte Falls Fish Hatchery from the federal government in 2018, [Southern Oregon University](#) (SOU) agreed to be our higher education partner. That relationship with a research university helped define the plans and usage of our [Natural Resource Center](#). In the intervening five years, a number of SOU Environmental Science and Policy

students have chosen projects at the NRC as the vehicle for their college capstone projects. This has allowed our students to see what college level research is like. It has also built relationships between our school and SOU.

In mid-July, the District hosted a meeting with our high school science teacher, Ben DeCarlow, and long-time NRC project manager and teacher Chris Mathas, Dr. Neil Woolf (SOU Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs), Dr. E. Jamie Trammell (Chair and Association Professor of Environmental Science & Policy), and Dr. Vincent Smith (Associate Professor of Environmental Science and Policy). The three-hour meeting was at the NRC and included a walking tour of the facility, a robust discussion about what has already been accomplished over the past five years, and exploratory conversation about next steps in growing the partnership.



Native tree species thrive in the NRC Green House.



Thoughtful planning leads to excellent student learning.

The District is close to finishing the initial site development projects that provide the basis for program development. Our students have completed the first of the three bridges planned for traversing Ginger Creek. The student-built public restroom facility should be completed late this fall. Renovations to the Higher Ed house are slated to continue into 2024. The finishing touches on the parking and road infrastructure should be completed before students return to campus. The next step in this process will be finalizing agreements for a trail from the NRC to the city limits adjacent to the water bottling facility.

This past year the NRC was approved by the state as a site for Outdoor School programs. As the district and the Butte Falls community began to develop a system of recreational trails in the recently acquired [Community Forest](#) surrounding the town, the opportunities for our students and SOU students to participate are increasing significantly.

State relaxes Covid Vaccination Requirements.

In mid-June, Oregon eliminated the regulatory language requiring that all public school employees, volunteers, contractors and service providers complete the Covid-19 vaccination regimen. While Covid is still present in our country, the death rate has dropped substantially as many people have been vaccinated or have gained some level of immunity. This regulation greatly limited the involvement of volunteers in our programs. Thankfully, with this change we are able to include more people as volunteers. **If you are interested in volunteering in our schools, let us know in August.**

New Teachers and New Teaching Assignments

We are pleased that we have filled all of our classroom teaching positions. Mrs. Jill Dufresne has volunteered to become our seventh grade teacher for the coming year. Mrs. Dufresne joined our staff six years ago when our school began to grow. During that time she has taught fourth and fifth grade students and so she knows our incoming seventh-graders very well. Her willingness to serve in this new assignment opened up a 4th/5th grade assignment for a new teacher.

We have hired Ms. Kristina Severns, a veteran teacher with almost a decade of experience teaching at the elementary (K-5) level in public, private, and charter school settings. Before teaching, Ms. Severns served in the National Guard. She comes with exceptional recommendations. We are also pleased to welcome Mrs. Gemma Zamora as our new K-12 Special Education teacher. She comes to us after teaching Special Education students in Las Vegas, Nevada. She has previous teaching experience with K-12 Special Education students in the Philippines.

We are still seeking to fill some key support staff positions (custodian/maintenance worker, educational assistants, substitute bus drivers, substitute support staff). Information is listed on our website (www.buttefalls.k12.or.us – About Us – Employment Opportunities). You may also inquire via Feedback@buttefalls.k12.or.us or call Julie Freeman at 541-865-3563, Option 5.

Here are some important upcoming District dates. Please check the District News and Events at our website (www.buttefalls.k12.or.us) for any updates.

- **First Day of New School Year** – Tuesday, September 5
- **School Board Meeting** – 6:00 p.m. Monday, September 11, at District Office

Thank you for your support and encouragement for our students and staff.

Sincerely,



Dr. Phil Long, Superintendent

From small seeds grow mighty trees!

Bonus News!

This summer we have had some help from work crews associated with Project Youth Plus as well as some of our own students. Here are a few glimpses.



Incoming 9th graders spend a day building and installing basement windows. 7/26/23



Project Youth Plus work crew preps to tackle blackberries.



Even open range cattle want to be at the NRC. (They were kindly escorted off the grounds.)