



## Clark administrators offered contracts at February school board meeting

All three Clark School administrators were offered contracts Monday, at the February meeting of the Clark School Board, at the high/middle school library.

The board went into executive session at 7:25 p.m. and came out at 8:50 p.m. and then offered one-year contracts to superintendent Luanne Warren, principal Jerry Hartley and business manager Mary Nelson, with salaries to be determined at a later date.

Also hired at this meeting was district technology coordinator, for the 2016-17 school year, Travis Weyh, Watertown. He will replace

the retiring Brenda Jenkins and will have an 11-month contract.

Monday's meeting began at 5:00 p.m. and the first hour plus was spent talking health insurance. Representatives from the Northern Plains Insurance Pool (NPIP) - Sanford Health Plan visited with the board about this self-funded health insurance pool, made up of 63 schools, many of them smaller schools.

A vote, of these 63 schools will take place on March 23, so more will be talked about and decided, at the March school board meeting.

2017 is the final year that the

federal government, under the Affordable Care Act, will be allowed to have (state) health plans such as this grandfathered in, so there is a time frame to get this accomplished.

Several questions were asked by the board, concerning guarantees of self-funding, etc., but the health plan representatives said several times that this self-funding pool is not a new concept and more (schools) is better, as far as keeping a health insurance pool from going broke. In March the board will vote

**Clark administrators**  
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## Greg Furness owns only Success, Dakota Territory postmark in existence

Back before many railroads and towns were established and completed in Clark County there were the post offices and quite a few of them to one's surprise with names that have since gone by the wayside.

One such post office was the Success Post Office in section 33 of Washington Township, in southern Clark County.

Local historian/collector Greg Furness is the owner of the only postmark known to exist from the Success Post Office. Not only does he have a postmarked letter, inside of the letter was a land deed from postmaster, Butler Winter and his official postmaster general appointment certificate, signed May 28, 1884.

Furness is a member of the Dakota Postal History Society which includes both North and South Dakota and he also has an extensive collection of post cards.

"In one of my issues of the Dakota Collector magazine that they sent out, they featured all of the post offices in Clark County," explained Furness. "I later acquired a letter with a postmark from the Success Post Office. It was mailed from New York and I acquired it from a dealer in postal history from Florida. What interested me more so, at first was a signature from W. Grover Cleveland on the side of the certificate. He was president when the land deal was signed in 1887."

Butler Winter was the second postmaster appointed to Success in 1884 and President Cleveland's land deal wasn't signed until 1887.

Walter Q. Gresham was the Postmaster General on the certificate that signified Winter's appointment. "Gresham was an officer in the Union Army and also a two time candidate for the presidency," added Furness. "Chester Arthur was the president when the Success Post Office's first postmaster was appointed."

Following Winter was Robert Finley as postmaster in 1887 to 1893.

The Success Post Office was formed in Berlin Township by Sherman B. Griffing as an expression



Going back in history, 32 post offices have been opened in Clark County since 1879. Many have been closed with names such as Success, Frisby, Jolly, Dana, Darien and Stusted with many in rural areas.

Shown above, Greg Furness of Clark, an avid collector and historian has acquired the only Success Post Office postmark, known to still exist. As a bonus, inside the letter was a Post Office General appointment certificate from 1884 (Butler Winter's) and Winter's land deed for the location dated in 1887. Furness is also in possession of a Jolly postmark from the Carpenter area.

of hope noted the Dakota Collector publication.

It opened on December 4, 1883 and continued until May 14, 1894, after which, local mail was processed in Willow Lake. The original name proposed was Cherry Lake, after a lake in the southeast corner of the township, named in 1880 by early surveyors because of the wild cherry trees on its bank.

Berlin Township was originally named for the Bayer family homesteaders who had come from Ber-

lin, Germany originally. However the name was changed after WW I, the anti-German feeling among residents resulted in a petition that brought about the name change to Washington Township in November of 1918.

The Success Post Office was one of those that was moved a few miles in 1885 to a nearby location. Eight early post offices made similar moves in their existence in Clark

**Furness**  
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### Top of the Week

#### Cracker Barrel is February 15 in Clark

The Legislative Cracker Barrel is set for Presidents Day, Monday, February 15 in Clark, starting at 10:30 a.m. This legislative coffee will be held in the Community Room of the Ulyot Building.

All District II legislators, Sen. Brock Greenfield, Rep. Burt Tulson and Rep. Lana Greenfield have indicated they will be in attendance.

The question and answer session is expected to run an hour or better.

#### WEATHER

Ryan Eggleston - Official Weather Observer

	HI	LO	PR
Feb. 2	24	13	tr
Feb. 3	23	9	tr
Feb. 4	23	8	0
Feb. 5	29	15	0
Feb. 6	35	20	tr
Feb. 7	32	18	tr
Feb. 8	24	4	0
2016 precipitation to date			.40
2015 precipitation to date			.47

#### Schlagel Tourney is Saturday, Feb. 20

Area junior varsity boys and girls basketball players will take to the court Saturday, February 20, at 9:00 a.m. for the 5th annual Lee Schlagel Memorial Basketball Tournament in Clark. The boys teams participating are Clark-Willow Lake, Hitchcock-Tulare, Sioux Valley, Warner, Redfield-Doland and Florence-Henry.

The girls teams are Clark-Willow Lake, Sioux Valley, Warner, Hitchcock-Tulare, Redfield-Doland and Florence-Henry.

#### Presidents Day is Monday, February 15

Due to the observance of Presidents Day, news and correspondents' columns must be in the mail to the Clark County Courier by Saturday, Feb. 13. This must be done in order to ensure mail delivery to the newspaper office by Tuesday, Feb. 16 for Wednesday's publication.

The mailing address for the Courier is 119 First Ave. East, Clark, SD 57225-1712. News items and columns may also be dropped off at the Courier office or emailed to courier@itctel.com. Staff will be working on Monday to meet deadlines.

# February 15-19 is School Board Recognition Week



Clark School superintendent Luanne Warren unrolled this banner showing Clark School has been an accredited school for 100 years! As next week is School Board Recognition Week in South Dakota, it is a good time to honor our area school boards.

Clark School Board members include, left to right, President Bob Steffen, Trudi Gaikowski, Todd Fjelland, Amy Sass and Shannon Huber.

The Clark School District, Willow Lake School District and Henry School District will join districts across the state to thank school board members for their leadership and service to local school districts and communities during South Dakota School Board Recognition Week from February 15-19.

"This is a good opportunity to recognize our school board for their dedication to our children and our community," said Clark superintendent Luanne Warren.

The men and women serving the Clark School District are Bob Steffen, Amy Sass, Trudi Gaikowski, Todd Fjelland and Shannon Huber. "This board is responsible for setting the vision and goals for the

district and strives to provide a quality education for our students," commented Warren. "The school board also hires quality educators, adopts policies and evaluates progress while always keeping the best interests of our students in mind."

Willow Lake school board president Caryl Schmidt likes how diverse the backgrounds are with their school board members. "We bring many levels of expertise to the board in our individual strengths, whether it be banking, sports, teaching or economics.

"Also the amount of community involvement we have in our small town is fantastic and it is all done for the right reasons - the students and what is best for them," ends

Schmidt.

"The Willow Lake staff and students really appreciate the Willow Lake Board of Education for their support and continuous efforts to improve the school dynamics," said Willow Lake superintendent Scott Klautt. "We want to show our gratitude to the board in regards to the building project, improvement of the school curriculum and culture. The board has made great efforts to improve the entire school and community relationships through our strategic plan. I personally want to express my appreciation to our school board for their efforts to ensure our students get a high quality education at Willow Lake School."

School board members in Willow Lake are Caryl Schmidt, Julayne Thoreson, Paula Warkenthien, Cory Bratland and Aaron Wicks.

Steve Zirbel, superintendent at Henry School had this to say about the Henry School Board, "I have had the privilege of working with the Board of Education in the Henry School District for the past several years. In each of the years their concern for students attending the Henry School District has been their primary focus. The Board of Education of the Henry School District should be recognized for their dedication to students, their dedication to the patrons of the District and their commitment to maintaining the long term viability of the School District. Our appreciation to Neil Jensen, Adam Hartley, Dave Fuller, Paula Blue and Nicky Watson for all that you do to serve kids in Henry."

During School Board Recognition Week, the Clark, Willow Lake and Henry School Districts invite students, staff and community members to take part in showing appreciation to school board members.

"As elected leaders, school board members serve an important role," Superintendent Warren said. "They are the link between the school and community."

## Henry School Board hosts opt out public meeting

A shortfall of \$127,318.80 in the Henry School 2016-17 general fund has the school board talking opt out of the tax freeze. Right above this figure in the handout given at Wednesday's Henry School public meeting is the sentence: "If the 2016-2017 Budget stays the same we will not have sufficient cash on hand to operate the school."

Henry superintendent Steve Zirbel and school board president Neil Jensen used the hour-long meeting to present the numbers at hand and to answer any and all questions that the 50 or so patrons in attendance had to offer.

Henry School Board members include: Jensen, Paula Blue, David Fuller, Nicole Watson and Adam Hartley. The school board meets this Friday, at 7:00 a.m. and at this meeting a new opt out resolution will be proposed.

Jensen then spoke of the reality of an opt out election, to be held Tuesday, April 12, 2016.

"If the opt out is voted down, we do not have enough money to fund our general fund budget," he said and added that if schools run out of money, there are two choices, either dissolve or consolidate.

The school board president added that this opt out option has been on the horizon for years and Zirbel voiced maintenance and repairs along with some unforeseen costs have brought about this \$292,536.00 budget deficit for 2015-2016.

Zirbel said he really didn't have a grasp on what the legislature will do or won't do this session. "The state legislature could really help us out here, but who knows what

they're going to do."

Currently the state funds \$5,600 per student, at Henry School. There are 166 students enrolled at Henry, with 43 percent being open enrollees.

Prior to opening up of the school population question and answer forum, Zirbel stated, "This opt out is necessary for Henry School to remain a positive environment for students. Schools are for children."

Questions and answers are a vital part of a public meeting. Following, from the Henry School website, are the questions and ensuing answers, provided by the school:

**Q: Do we have a fund balance? A:** Yes we do. July 1 of this year our fund balance for General Fund was \$457,753.20.

**Q: If you get the Opt Out how much can you put in all the funds? A:** It all goes to General Fund only.

**Q: What are your projections on how long the school would stay open? A:** For the foreseeable future given we have adequate funding.

**Q: Does it cost the school to transport the out of district kids? A:** No more than it costs to transport in district kids.

**Q: Let's say this school board is going to take care of this money but what happens later on when the same board members are not here? A:** I believe the Board of Education will adjust the published resolution on February 12th.

**Q: Where would kids go if the school closes? A:** Kids would go to Clark, Watertown, Hamlin and Florence.

**Q: How many kids are in each class? A:** K-14; 1st-16; 2nd-8; 3rd-14; 4th-8; 5th-18; 6th-11; 7th-10; 8th-8; 9th-15; 10th-15; 11th-11; 12th-14.

**Q: Would you still be in a deficit if the legislature passes everything? A:** Yes.

**Q: Going by the Dept. of Ed. why is there a difference for Expenditures? A:** Annual reports will always differ from audit reports by a small margin. The annual reports and audit reports are available at the office.

**Q: Is your open enrollment keeping pace with what you are losing as kids graduate? A:** The state of South Dakota has failed to fund education adequately but in the case of open enrolled students in Henry we receive the same funding dollars that we do for in district students.

**Q: How do the open enrollment kids get in here? A:** They make applications and have to enroll.

**Q: How do you pay the Opt Out money back? A:** The Opt Out money is levied to your taxes that are paid by the taxpayers of the Henry School District. There is no accumulation of debt.

**Henry School Board**  
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Opt Out \$	2016 Totals w/ Opt Out			2016 - % Increase		
	TOTAL - AG	TOTAL - OO	TOTAL - OTHER	TOTAL - AG	TOTAL - OO	TOTAL - OTHER
100,000	6.914	10.439	16.981	10.148%	18.841%	26.384%
200,000	7.551	12.095	20.527	20.296%	37.694%	52.776%
300,000	8.188	13.750	24.072	30.444%	56.535%	79.160%
400,000	8.826	15.409	27.623	40.609%	75.421%	105.589%
500,000	9.463	17.064	31.168	50.757%	94.262%	131.974%