

BOARD highlights

A QUICK LOOK AT THE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS OF PUTNAM CITY SCHOOLS

May 15, 2017

53 Retirees Honored for Contributions to District

Fifty-three retiring district employees were recognized Monday night and thanked for their years of service to Putnam City.

Thirty-six of this year's retirees are certified employees; 17 are support employees. The 52 retiring employees have a combined 1,325 years of experience in education, 1,124 of which are with Putnam City. When considering certified staff only, it's 982 years of teaching experience retiring from the district. The retiring teacher with the longest tenure in the district is Bob Wilson of Putnam City North High School, who is retiring after 37 years in education.

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SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT by Dr. Fred Rhodes

▶ We congratulate Brenda Davis, principal of Arbor Grove Elementary, for being named winner of the James R. Burnett Distinguished Principal Award for 2017 by the Oklahoma Association of Elementary School Principals (OAESP). Ms. Davis was selected for this award this year, as stated by OAESP, because of leading the school in academic improvements in a relatively short period of time. This is especially meaningful because the award is named for James R. Burnett, who was a "12-year club" member and graduate of Putnam City High School. He later became principal of Coronado Heights Elementary and then opened Wiley Post Elementary in 1973 before becoming the executive director of OAESP.

▶ Putnam City West student Courtney Castle won second place for video production at the Technology Student Association's State Career Tech Conference. She was required to produce two videos, one of which presented the dangers of posting unprofessional messages on social media and another that presented the dangers of online gambling.

▶ Putnam City North boys' soccer coach Tom Pecore recently became the first ever 6A boys' coach to have been selected both as the West All-State coach and the East All-State Coach. Mr. Pecore was the West 6A All-State Boys Coach in 2001 and 2003 and in April was named the 2017 6A East Boys All State Soccer Coach. He will coach the East 6A boys team against the West 6A Boys team at Putnam City Stadium the weekend of June 8-10.

▶ Erica Stephens, a 2014 graduate of Putnam City High School, has been elected president of the student government association president at Oklahoma State University. Ms. Stephens, a junior at OSU, is studying strategic communications and political science.

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COMMENTS by Public and Board Members

Jay Sherrill congratulated students who are about to graduate and thanked all the teachers, administrators and support staff who helped get them to the point they are at.

Cindy Gibbs thanked Wiley Post Elementary students for a very creative presentation spotlighting district graduate Mike Mitchell.

Gail LoPresto said the 4th-grade musical at Arbor Grove Elementary was "lovely." She said the productions of *Aladdin* at Capps Middle School and *Wishes* at Cooper Middle School were very well done. She complimented the Putnam City West band and noted that it is continuing to grow. She said the district arts festival was excellent. She also mentioned that Mayfield Middle School Principal Tracy Sowinski took part in the Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon and qualified for the Boston Marathon.

Becky Haliburton thanked the student-athletes who were recognized at the board meeting, saying they make Putnam City proud.

Meeting Date: Monday, May 15, 5 p.m.
Location: Administration Building
Roll Call: All five members of the board were present: Becky Haliburton, president; Gail LoPresto, vice president; Cindy Gibbs; Jay Sherrill and Bill Wetmore. Also present were Dr. Fred Rhodes, superintendent; and Sandy Lemaster, board clerk.
Next Meeting: Monday, June 5, 5 p.m.

Putnam City Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, marital or veteran status, or disability.

Retirees Honored (continued from page 1)

Retiring from the district this year are:

- Jackie Anderson
- Steve Arwood
- Debbie Baldwin
- Wayne Berkoben
- Carolyn Blackwell
- Sally Bornstein
- Harriette Bottom
- Joy Bowes
- Carla Bryant
- Stephen Burger
- Deborah Clements-Smith
- Claudia Coulter
- Mike Coulter
- Vicki Crowley
- Blanca Curl
- Tamara Delozier
- Connie Douglas
- Sabrina Dunlop
- Joyce Estes
- Pamela Fielder
- William Gallop
- Lon Gibson
- Scott Goosen
- Anne Guevara
- Chester Hable
- Judy Harvey
- Velma Hodges
- Dena Holman
- Wendelyn Jones
- Cathy Keller
- Jan Kimzey
- Jonel Levy
- Vicki Logan
- Ellen McNeill
- Buster Meeks
- Sandra Milbourn
- Candace Milligan
- Toye Mitchell
- Myra Nowell
- Ann Oswalt
- Robert Patton
- Lisa Provenzano
- Elizabeth Sawatzky
- Sheryle Smith
- Carolyn Standrich
- Deborah Stroud
- James Taylor
- Colette Warkentin
- Bob Wilson
- Lu Ann Wilson
- Danny Winstead
- Catherine Woolery
- Nerly Zurlen

Assistant Principal Appointed

The board on Monday night appointed Erin Wolke to serve as a middle school assistant principal for the 2017-2018 school year.

Wolke has served as an instructional coach at Wiley Post Elementary this year. Before her time at Wiley Post, she worked for three years as an elementary school administrative intern, first at Northridge Elementary and then at Apollo Elementary and Rollingwood Elementary. She also spent six years as a counselor at Hilldale Elementary School and two years as a counselor at Wellston Elementary School.

She holds a master's degree in educational leadership from the University of Central Oklahoma, a master's degree in counseling psychology from Southern Nazarene University and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Oklahoma Christian University.

Administrative Changes at Schools Announced

Superintendent Dr. Fred Rhodes announced new administrative interns and shifts for an assistant principal and several administrative interns for the 2017-2018 school year.

Ben Hodges, an assistant principal at Capps Middle School, will move to Mayfield Middle School next year, replacing Isaac McCord. Erin Wolke, newly appointed as a middle school assistant principal (see article at lower left), will take over for Hodges at Capps Middle School.

Rhodes announced that Deanna Ellis, a teacher at James L. Dennis Elementary, will be an administrative intern next year at a school still to be determined. Barbara Rose, a teacher at Hefner Middle School, will also be an administrative intern next year, splitting time between Western Oaks Middle School and Cooper Middle School. Jana Johnston, an administrative intern this year at Cooper, will be at Hefner next year. Putnam City West Teacher Veronica Johnson, who at the last board meeting was announced as a new administrative intern, will be at Putnam City North next year. Hillary Grange, a teacher at Bethany High School, will become an administrative intern at Putnam City High School next year.

Board Highlights is not a comprehensive review of every item that takes place at board of education meetings. Its purpose is merely to provide information about items that seem of most interest to district employees and patrons. Complete board meeting minutes may be found at <http://www.putnamcityschools.org/BoardofEducation/BoardMeetingMinutes/tabid/565/Default.aspx>

Superintendent's Report (continued from page 1)

▶ We congratulate James L. Dennis Elementary and Western Oaks Elementary for each receiving a \$40,000 grant from the Oklahoma Educational Technology Trust. The grants will provide technology equipment as well as professional development through OU's K-20 Center. Dennis Elementary funding will be used to purchase additional iPads for use in classrooms and in the MakerSpace room. iPad minis will be purchased for use by pre-k students. Western Oaks funding will be used for a recording studio and mp4 players, which will assist English Learner students by providing a way to listen to books at home.

▶ Putnam City Academy students Camie Deuel and Hannah Brooks had photographic artwork accepted into the University of Central Oklahoma's 2017 juried high school photography contest. Camie and Hannah each had three pieces on display in the Gaddis Gallery on campus during the month of April.

▶ The Putnam City North OSSAA Academic Team was named fourth runner-up in Regional 6-A competition. Maxx Ibarra was honored as a sophomore All-Stater by the Oklahoma Association for Academic Competition. Team Captain Kaiser Cleburn was honored as an OSSAA student leader with exceptional character and is the only letterman for the 2016-2017 school year.

▶ We congratulate Dr. Jason Memoli, curriculum specialist for fine arts and gifted education, who recently defended his dissertation and now has earned the title of "Doctor."

▶ Three Putnam City students were recently named winners in the Oklahoma Education Association's 2017 Read Across America poster contest. About 400 students from across the state entered this year's contest. Andrea Alvizo, a freshman at Putnam City High School, received the Best in Show award. Her winning artwork will be featured in the next issue of OEA's magazine, *The Education Focus*. Liam Miller, a 2nd-grader at Tulakes Elementary, won second place in his division. And Azrael Casper, a 4th-grader at Western Oak Elementary, received third place in the 3rd-5th grade division. Later this week you will be able to see the winning artwork of our students and all the other winners in the photo gallery section of the OEA website.

▶ Julia Conner, a member of the Air Force JROTC program at Putnam City High School, is one of only two students in the state to receive the Minuteman Scholarship from the United States Army. The prestigious scholarship will allow her to attend the University of Oklahoma as a National Guard soldier. The Minuteman Scholarship will cover four years of full tuition and fees, totaling more than \$140,000.

Training Gets OK

The board on Monday night approved a contract for training in classroom management for up to 200 teachers. The one-day training, *Recharging Your Batteries for Classroom Management: Three Tiers of Support for the Classroom*, will be offered twice, once on June 19 and again on June 20.

The cost of the training, not to exceed \$8,000, will be paid for through federal Title I funds.

Teachers may sign up for the training in the professional development section of the district intranet, .pc

Auditor Contract Approved

The board on Monday night approved an agreement with Eide Bailly CPAs & Business Advisors to conduct an independent audit of the district for the 2016-2017 school year and assist in preparation of the Estimate of Needs for fiscal year 2018.

The \$54,000 cost for the agreement will be covered by the district's General Fund.

Negotiating Team Appointed

The board on Monday night appointed the 2017-2018 negotiating team to represent the board in the bargaining process with the Putnam City Association of Classroom Teachers.

The team is to be chaired by Human Capital Chief Patricia Balenseifen. Additional team members are Dr. Melani Mouse, Rick Croslin, Keely Frayser and Shannon Meeks. Cory Boggs and Scott McCall are alternate members of the team.

Graduate Feature No. 7 in a Series

Mike Mitchell, Putnam City North High School Class of 1988

For Mike Mitchell, a 1988 graduate of Putnam City North High School, the signs of his future career and future success were always there.

There was his surprisingly sophisticated ability to draw, a talent his family discovered when he was 5 years old. There was the consistently deft, creative work he produced as a student of Art Teacher Mary Jane Herndon at James L. Dennis Elementary School. There were the movies he made when he first acquired an 8-millimeter camera.

The signs were there at Putnam City North, too, when Mitchell and his video camera were a consistent presence at after-school garage band practices. Mitchell shot video of the practices, often followed by everyone gathering around to watch what they'd just done. Some of those same band members also became crew, talent or both in short films Mitchell created.

Mitchell was active in a number of student organizations, including student council and yearbook production. So it's not surprising that signs were there in relation to those activities – sometimes literally. Mitchell often created artwork for shirts and posters for various school clubs and events.

His teachers at Putnam City North saw the signs as well.

"I had him in drama. He wrote all of our assembly skits and was a funny, witty kid," Rose Mary Baker recalls.

With signs appearing all through his years in Putnam City schools, it's perhaps not surprising at all that Mike Mitchell is one of Oklahoma's big successes in Hollywood. In a film career of more than 25 years, he has worked as an animator, voice talent, producer and director. Early in his career he worked for famed directors Tim Burton and Spike Jonze. As his career progressed he worked with such luminaries as Mike Myers, Cameron Diaz, Eddie Murphy, Antonio Banderas, Julie Andrews, Kurt Russell, Ben Affleck, James Gandolfini and others.

Mitchell began in the industry as an artist working on movies including *Antz*, *James and the Giant Peach*, *Shrek II* and *Shrek III*. In time he was directing, first the live-action sequences in *SpongeBob SquarePants* for two years and even a couple of live-action movies. But animated family-friendly films are where his heart is and where he's made his biggest mark.

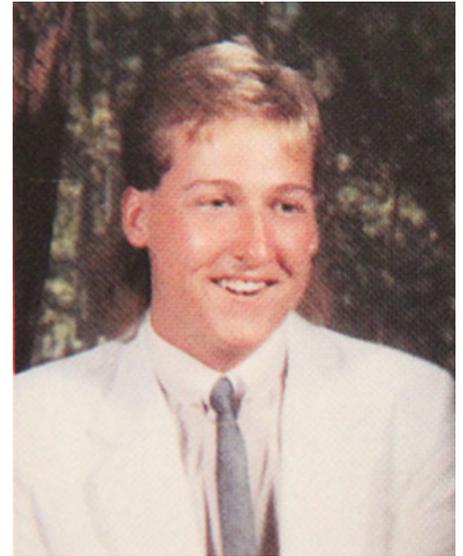
Even if one considers just three films he directed, Mitchell's efforts have brought in more than \$1.4 billion. He directed *Trolls*, an animated comedy that grossed \$345 million worldwide; *Shrek Forever After*, which grossed \$752 million; and *Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked*, which grossed \$343 million.

What's next? Mitchell has signed on to direct The LEGO Movie Sequel, currently planned for release in early 2019. He's also been chosen to direct a combo live action/animated feature based on the Peter, Paul and Mary song, *Puff the Magic Dragon*.

In an article in March 17th issue of *The Oklahoman*, coincidentally written by Putnam City North graduate Nathan Poppe, Mitchell talked about the special pleasure he takes in making movies for families.

"I'm so happy that there's an audience that still wants to go to the theater and have a good time with their kids. Parents and kids can watch these movies together and enjoy them," he told Poppe.

Mike Mitchell, Then and Now



Read More about Mike Mitchell

- The Oklahoman, March 17, 2017
- boxofficepro, Nov. 1, 2016
- Distinctly Oklahoma, May 2010
- The Oklahoman, July 29, 2005

Student-athletes Recognized by Board

The board on Monday night recognized 17 district athletes and two coaches for outstanding accomplishments this year.

Dr. Dick Balenseifen, the district's athletic director, told board members that the Putnam City High School boys 4 x 800 relay team was honored for winning the state championship. He also noted that Putnam City students Jesse Porter, D'Kari Smith and Tyou Ellis finished first, second and sixth, respectively, in the 100-meter dash. Overall in boys' track, Putnam City West finished fourth in state and Putnam City High finished sixth in state.

Balenseifen said student-athletes with exceptional accomplishments this year are:

Putnam City High School

- Daniel Bradshaw, 4 x 800 relay state champion
- Eric Campos, All-State boy's soccer
- Pedro Carvalho, All-State boy's soccer
- Elizabeth Esparza, All-State girls' soccer
- Donovan Redd, 4 x 800 relay state champion
- Tessa Spoonemore, All-State girls' soccer
- Ron Tatum Jr., All-State football
- Brock Vandersypen, 4 x 800 relay state champion
- Morris Wynn, 4 x 800 relay state champion

Putnam City North High School

- Stephanie Dickerson, All-State softball
- Madisyn Hensley, All-State athletic training
- Taylor Humphreys, All-State girls' soccer
- Adokiye Iyaye Jr., All-State boys' basketball
- McKenzie Kysar, All-State girls' soccer

Putnam City West High School

- Francisco Martinez, All-State boy's soccer
- Jesse Porter, 100-meter state champion
- D'Kari Smith, 100-meter state runner-up

Balenseifen said two coaches earned All-State honors this year.

Tom Pecore of Putnam City North recently became the first ever 6A boys' soccer coach to have been selected both as the West All-State coach and the East All-State Coach. Pecore was the West 6A All-State Boys Coach in 2001 and 2003 and in April was named the 2017 6A East Boys All State Soccer Coach. Pecore has demonstrated sustained excellence in his career, coaching the Putnam City North boys' team to the state playoffs 15 out of the last 17 years and building an all-time record as a high school head coach (which includes time as head coach at two other schools) of 262 wins, 70 losses and four ties.

Erin Herrmann, the athletic trainer at Putnam City North, has also shown excellence over time. This year, for the seventh year in a row, Herrmann has been named an All-State athletic trainer.

Digital Scoreboard Coming to Putnam City Stadium

The board on Monday night approved a contract with Video Reality for construction and installation of a digital LED (light emitting diode) scoreboard at Putnam City Stadium. The contract includes related software and equipment.

Because LED lighting lasts longer than other types of lighting, is considered 90 percent more efficient and carries lower costs in maintenance and repair, it offers substantial cost savings.

The scoreboard will be 21 feet high and 33.6 feet wide. The screen is completely controlled by software so it can easily adapt to different sports, events or purposes. It will have the ability to stream video, allowing for video such as football players coming out onto the field, instant replays of game action, close-ups of homecoming queen candidates on the field, up close shots of band performances, etc.

District officials believe the scoreboard can increase fundraising abilities through advertising at games and are looking forward to the possibility of using the board to enhance graduation ceremonies and other events.

The \$199,850 cost of the job will be covered by bond funds approved by voters. By law, bond funds can be used to construct or improve school sites, acquire school furniture, fixtures or equipment, or purchase school buses. Bond funds cannot be used to pay salaries.

It's expected that the scoreboard will be in place for the first football game of the 2017-2018 season.