April 20, 2022

Dear Patrons of the Salmon River School District,

On April 18th, many of you received a letter from Travis Hollon. I want to clarify some of his comments—first, the amount of money we have in reserve. Our auditor recommends keeping a four to five-month operating expense in a reserve account. Our building roofs are all well past their life expectancy. We are currently collecting information about the process and amount needed to upgrade our roofs. Although we do not know the actual amount, the cost will be hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Second, a mechanism for refunding the taxpayers if levy monies go unused. Mr. Hollon is correct that there is no mechanism for reimbursement. For the district to run a supplemental level in May, we must set the levy amount well before the State sets the education budget. Once a levy passes, it must be certified by the district with the counties in the fall. The school district can certify the levy for less than the approved amount. The Board lowered the levy amount to $495,000 for this year.

Third, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Policy, 3281. Yes, in 2018, policy 3281 was adopted and revised this winter. This policy aims to provide procedures and guidance that protect all of our students when a transgender student enrolls in our district, nothing more.

Fourth, Library Books. Two books were brought to our attention of the hundreds of books in our elementary library. The first book, "Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls" by Elena Favilli, is a book that contains the stories of 100 women from the past and present. This book does include the story of Coy Mathis. The individual whose case went to the Supreme Court concerning transgender rights. As well as many other stories, it also contains the story of a Biological Geneticist who confirms that genetically there are only two genders. The second book, "Drama" by Raina Telgemeier, is a story about middle school students putting on a play. During the book, a boy does admit that he is gay. The two boys kissing was done in the performance context in front of a live audience. As a result of these books, the Board revised the district's "Library Selection Policy 2510 and 2510P." The policy provides an opportunity for input in selecting books and procedures for addressing books that an individual may be concerned with. Many parents have told us that they have used these books to discuss gender identity and sexual orientation issues with their children. If a parent does not want their child to have access to a specific book, they can let their child's teacher know.

Many things are stated and posted on social media concerning the school district. If you have any questions or concerns, I encourage you to contact the district office, Michelle Hollon- hollonm@jsd243.org (208-630-6027) or Jim Doramus- doramusj@jsd243.org (208-630-6027), Trish Simonson at the elementary - simonsont@jsd243.org (208-630-6055), or Kyle Ewing at the secondary school at ewingk@jsd243.org (208-630-6025).

Sincerely,

Jim Doramus