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Extra funds bolster Oregon City school bond projects

The Oregon City voters who approved a \$158 million school bond issue last November may be surprised to learn bond projects will benefit from an added \$32.9 million in funds from other sources.

"Thanks to the Oregon School Capital Investment Matching program, we gained an added \$7.7 million," said Chief Financial Officer Susan Dodd. "This program was designed to incentivize local voters to approve school construction bonds."

An additional \$17.8 million came from the bond premium, an extra amount investors paid for the district's bonds because they offer an interest rate higher than the prevailing rate.

"We will also receive \$6 million in added funding from the interest earned by investing the bond funds until they are needed," said Dodd. "Those funds are invested in low-risk funds that guarantee a steady return while protecting and enhancing the public's investment."

The district has also chosen to invest E-rate funds for technology infrastructure and funds from the Oregon Department of Energy for energy-efficient LED lighting tied to bond projects.

"By combining these added funds with our bond, we can tackle more school renovation projects, lower costs by combining different funded projects into one bid package, and also ensure we are covered in the event of any contingencies," said Director of Operations Wes Rogers.

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Unified basketball breaks down barriers

Sometimes breaking down barriers and erasing stigmas is as easy as getting to know someone who is different than you. Thanks to the Unified Basketball program at Oregon City High School, students have been doing that for three years.

The co-ed league combines athletes from special education with other athletes from their school, playing side by side. Some students have physical disabilities, and others have developmental delays. Special Olympics created the program.

Sam Lary, a senior at Oregon City High, helped start the program with help from his mother Josie Rankin. This year the school has two teams that play against other teams in the region.

"Last week we played two home games against the Forest Grove Vikings," said Lary. "Both teams had their work cut out for them, but with the spirit of our spectators and some pretty amazing shots, they played excellent ball."

“I absolutely love working with these kids,” said coach John Systma. “We’ve discovered we have way more in common with each other than we have differences between us. Something I saw in our Wednesday game was how passionate they were. I was excited to see how hard they played, and how much they cared about the team's success.”



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McLoughlin Elementary chess club takes second place

The chess team at John McLoughlin Elementary had a strong showing at a regional Chess for Success competition, with the team placing second and third grader Kev Thao winning first place in the grades K-4 group.

PHOTO: McLoughlin third grader Kev Thao won every match and took first place at a regional chess competition.



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OCHS drama students to stage *Almost, Maine*

The theater program at Oregon City high will stage Cariani's *Almost, Maine*, a drama where surreal things happen under the influence of the aurora borealis.

Populated with characters who are humorous, plainspoken, thoughtful, and sincere, the play is a series of loosely connected tales about love. One story tells of a woman who carries her heart, broken in nineteen pieces, in a small paper bag. Another is about a man who shrinks to half his former size after losing hope in love.

Appropriate for ages 13 and up, the show will run at 7:30 p.m. nightly from February 27 to March 2 in Oregon City High School's Black Box Theater, 19761 S. Beaver Creek Road. Admission is \$8 at the door.

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