



### SCHOOL BOARD MEETING REPORT

Board Meeting Date: 10-Mar-15 Superintendent: David Holmes

Administrator/Staff: Dennis Misner

Type of Item:  Informational  Action For Consent Agenda

**Please state your proposal briefly and clearly. What do you want the board to know, discuss, or decide?**

North Valley would like to apply for grants to fund an idea that we are exploring to make us a distance learning hub to 12 other schools. This collaborative course across the Rogue River Basin would be an applied STEM class focused on water related issues. The grants would enable us to purchase video conference equipment and supplies to run the class.

**Provide history/background information on your proposal:**

See the attached letter that we propose to send to a variety of grant opportunities. I was approached by Jay Mathison, formerly SOESD, because of multiple attempts to bring STEM classes to North Valley.

**List the advantages of your proposal:**


We would have updated video conference equipment provided. Our teacher, Pete Lentz, would be provided extensive professional development in the summer of 2015. We would be able to offer a science class to our students that would enrich our kids interested in Engineering and Wildlife.

**List possible disadvantages of your proposal:**

A class offering in the day would cost us 1/7 of FTE in Science. Down the road when the grants expire, this class would need to be funded by the district.

Superintendent's recommendation(s):

Approve: Yes  No

  
SB U:\Forms\misner grant request



February 24, 2015

Kongsgaard-Goldman Foundation  
Martha Kongsgaard - President  
Kathleen Arthur - Administrator  
1932 First Avenue, Suite 602  
Seattle, WA 98101

Dear Martha and Kathleen:

North Valley High School, and approximately 12 other Oregon rural and high-needs high schools are preparing a grant proposal to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service Distance Learning Grant program (USDA RUS-DLT) to fund a distance-learning (DL) program centered around teaching high school students in Southern Oregon about water quality issues of the Rogue River watershed. (See attached map). North Valley HS has an enrollment of nearly 550 students in grades 9-12. 51% are classified as economically disadvantaged according to the Oregon Department of Education statistics for 2013-14. The graduation rate is at the state average of 68%. It is notable that only a little over half the students are enrolled in a post-secondary institution within 16 months of graduation. Our proposed project will address the need to increase those numbers.

We believe we are in a good position to win the grant monies due to our previous successes implementing distance learning in the region. We are well on our way to having the administrative and instructional and curriculum requirements in place. North Valley HS will serve as the "Hub" for this environmental education and protection program, sharing classes with other Southern Oregon high school campuses within the Rogue River watershed. The federal (USDA RUS-DLT) grant will help schools deliver content and data about the watershed by helping them acquire new videoconference equipment to replace the worn-out and heavily-used equipment from a previous RUS-DLT grant.

A gap in our proposal is the need for a part-time project manager, and funds to support "coaches" for water quality clubs, one of the innovations of the program. So, we are seeking funding to help cover these positions and strengthen the proposal to the USDA. Our project will provide new learning models, both in environmental protection and student-led and collaborative projects for rural and economically challenged schools. These models are learner-centered and technology-driven. We believe in the importance of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (S.T.E.M.) education. The River Water Protection (RWP) Project provides critical opportunities for project-based learning in ways that cannot be replicated in the traditional classroom. A key component of the grant is to organize a network of the water quality clubs. Each participating high school's club will be linked to share regional results from actual field work such as sampling, simple water quality tests, and stream restoration projects. As the students learn, they will be able to share regional concerns about water quality, riparian restoration, sustaining fisheries, as well as the effects on and by municipality water quality across the region, linking and strengthening our schools with shared resources.



This unique project will enable high school students in the Southern Oregon region opportunities to develop and share environmental protection curriculum and content, and to gain knowledge and skills in these areas through a multi-school model program. Students will utilize a scientific approach to study river water quality as it moves from source to sea, encouraging and stimulating their interest in environmental curriculum and future careers in this area. Students will learn about possible careers and their requirements, providing relevance to what they are learning in science, technology, and engineering as it relates to the environment today. Students will also learn the communication skills they will need in college, and in any career they pursue through the utilization of modern and emerging digital tools such as videoconferencing and computer-based tools. They will use these tools provided by the grant funds during the project to collect, save, interpret, and share data. The distance learning gear acquired via the grant monies will support collaboration, not only with peers, but also with professionals in environmental protection fields in this region and beyond.

Southern Oregon schools have been leaders in innovative distance learning for nearly two decades. If successful, this project will serve as a model, both statewide and nationwide. We would appreciate an opportunity to provide *Kongsgaard-Goldman Foundation* with a detailed account of the project plan, and the requirements for a part-time project manager and coaches—the one project need that the federal program will not fund due to grant regulations.

With your permission, we will provide you with an outline of our goals, objectives, and critical outcomes that will place our students and our region in the vanguard for the development and support of new kinds of classrooms and new kinds of teaching and learning being sought nationwide. It will provide our students with much-needed support in these fields both during and after school.

We look forward to the opportunity to share our story—our past successes and our future blueprints.

Thank you for taking time to review our project and consider our further application.

Sincerely yours,

Dennis Misner  
Principal, North Valley High School



## Project Regional Map

