

Ag teacher resigns; teachers hired

By Luann Dart

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During its regular meeting May 15, the Elgin-New Leipzig School District board of education approved contracts with a music teacher and a counselor, and accepted the resignation of the ag education teacher.

Avery Roth resigned as ag education teacher and FFA advisor as of June 30.

Roth started with the district in 2023 under a unique program. While Roth did not have a teaching degree, he was filling the position with a permit from the N.D. Education Standards and Practices Board, which issues teaching permits where documented shortages of regularly licensed teachers exist.

“This decision was not an easy one, as the agricultural education department and FFA chapter hold a special place in my heart,” Roth wrote in his resignation letter. “I am immensely grateful to have had the opportunity to serve in this role for the last two years. Thank you for taking the chance on a non-traditionally certified teacher. This job has truly fostered personal and professional growth that will impact me for life. The support from administration, my colleagues and my students has made this experience incredibly meaningful.”

Lexie Tatum, who graduated from Dickinson State University this spring, will be the new K-12 music teacher. She is a native of New Salem, where she completed her student teaching. She replaces Gillian Kochel, who died April 28 after serving as the district’s music teacher since 2023.

Shelley Ackerman has been hired as the K-12 counselor, replacing Jared Bollom, who resigned. For the past two years, Ackerman has served as the elementary school counselor for the Tioga School District.

Bollom, who has served as both the elementary school principal and K-12 counselor since 2022, attended his final board meeting this month.

“It’s been a very memorable experience. I’ve learned a lot,” he said. “You have some amazing teachers, we have amazing students here and you have a wonderful community and I hope to see it continue to grow and flourish.”

Policy discussion

The board approved the second reading of a policy which significantly changes the wording regarding the senior class trip.

The former policy, amended in 2002, stated: “A senior class trip may

be allowed, but shall be limited to a one-day, in-state trip planned by the senior class advisors and the class members. The trip plan shall be brought to the board for approval.”

The new policy tightens approval requirements and sets more criteria for the trip: “A senior class trip may be allowed, but shall be subject to requirements and expectations of the administration and school board. The proposed trip plan shall be presented to the Elgin/New Leipzig school board for approval no later than the regular January school board meeting. The trip plan shall include a proposed trip itinerary indicating educational and cultural exposure/ experiences. No formal trip arrangements and financial commitments may occur prior to board approval. Class funds must be sufficient to finance the trip at the time of presentation to the board. The trip may not include more than one day of excused absence from school attendance. Chaperones must be approved at the same time as the proposed trip.”

Under a “class trips” heading, the new policy also states: “The Elgin/New Leipzig School District will not authorize or endorse class trips that are non-school sponsored and/

or non-curricular in nature.”

Following approval of the policy, President Randy Fischer asked board members to be careful about their wording during meetings, based on discussions about the policy during last month’s meeting.

“It’s nice that we have discussions about it, but sometimes our discussions get put in words into the paper that probably shouldn’t be in the paper, so be very careful about how you say some things in our meeting that we don’t want in the paper to offend anybody,” he said.

In another policy discussion, Lamont Gaugler asked the board to consider adopting a policy that homeschool students not be eligible for homecoming royalty.

The district does not have any policy related to homecoming royalty, and royalty is decided by the senior class, Secondary Principal Terry Bentz said.

“For us to say we’re going to put in place a policy on who can be king and queen, that’s kind of overstepping what we can do as a school board,” Amanda Petrick said.

“We don’t want to discriminate,” Fischer said.

Bentz asked that a policy not be adopted and Hirning advised it could be either an administrative decision

or be in the student handbook.

The board asked the issue be reviewed by the Policy Committee for a recommendation to the rest of the board.

Federal cuts impact district

Superintendent Dr. Sherlock Hirning told the board the U.S. Department of Government Efficiency has cut funding for the 30-year-old AmeriCorps program, which provided the district’s resources for reading intervention for K-3 students and math intervention for K-8 students.

“It was very effective. We had excellent results,” Hirning said.

The program’s staffing was not a cost to the federal government, because the district was paying the salaries for the two staff members providing the tutoring and will continue to keep that staff, but the district does not know if the resources, materials and website used for the program will still be available.

“So, we really don’t know whether we’re going to be able to have the program next year or not. It’s in limbo right now,” Hirning said.

Playground equipment

The board decided to open temporary accounts at First International Bank & Trust in Elgin and Dakota Community Bank & Trust in New Leipzig until Aug. 1 for patrons to donate to help purchase new playground equipment. The district has \$28,000 in the account, with the total cost estimated between \$60,000 and \$80,000.

ELGIN AND NEW LEIPZIG senior meals menu

Fri., May 23: Hamburger on a bun, potato salad, baked beans, fresh fruit, milk, coffee.

Mon., May 26: Happy Memorial Day - No Meal.

Tues., May 27: Roast beef, mashed potatoes with gravy, stewed tomatoes, pears, milk, coffee.

Wed., May 28: Bacon cheeseburger, tater tot casserole, muffin, green beans, chocolate zucchini bar, milk, coffee.

Thurs., May 29: Meatball sundae, mashed potatoes with gravy, glazed carrots, fruit salad, milk, coffee.

Fri., May 30: Chicken wrap, spaghetti salad, corn, rhubarb dessert, milk, coffee.

For meal reservations in Elgin, please call Our Place Café, 584-3150 by 9:00 p.m. the day prior to the meal.

All menus subject to change due to availability of foods.





HONORING OUR HEROES

We will be closed on **Monday, May 26** in observance of Memorial Day. We will be open for regular business on Tuesday, May 27.

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NOTICE for sale on bids

The City of Elgin has for sale on sealed bids the following items:

- 1967 Chevy Truck 40 - 4 speed
- 292 Chevy engine, sewer body with 1,000 gallon plastic tank
- 400 feet of 1-inch sewer hose with 3 piston Bean pump
- 300 Ford 6 cylinder Engine power plant

Bids will be received until Noon on Jun 5, 2025 at the City Hall - 305 Main St. N., Elgin, ND 58533

The City of Elgin reserves the right to reject any or all bids. Bids will be opened at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, June 5 at the Regular City Council meeting.


The top three bidders will be allowed to raise their bid at bid opening. Call 584-3001 or email cityofelgin@westriv.com for more information.

Reva Weekes, City Auditor

5/22, 5/29



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