

LOCAL
POSTAL CUSTOMER



- April 17, 2026** **Parent Survey Closes**
It's not too late! The district would love to hear from you! Visit grantschooldistrict.org or contact any school office for more information.
- April 17, 2026** **Croghan Field Dedication**
We will be commemorating the naming of Croghan Field at the April 17 softball game, 12:00 p.m.
- April 23, 2026** **Kindergarten Gold Rush**
Kindergarten registration and family fun for all incoming students and families.
- April 24, 2026** **Malone and McConnell Fields Commemoration**
Do you know how Malone and McConnell Fields got their names? Join us in commemorating these fields at the April 24 baseball game, 12:00 p.m.
- April 25, 2026** **Alumni Staff and Board Member Dinner**
This annual dinner honoring our retired staff members, former long-term employees, and former board members will take place on Saturday, April 25, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. in the Grant Union Commons. Invitations have been sent. Please confirm your attendance by emailing Kalli Wilson at wilsonk@johndaysd.org. Spouses are warmly welcome. Didn't receive an invitation? Please contact Mark Witty at markwitty@johndaysd.org to be added to our mailing list. We look forward to an evening of connection, appreciation, and celebration of all who attend.
- May 8, 2026** **Kindergarten Move-Up Day**
Incoming kindergarten students experience a classroom setting and fun activities.
- May 20, 2026** **Spring Music Concert**
All District Bands and Choirs, Grant Union Old Gym, 6:00 p.m.
- June 6, 2026** **Grant Union Jr/Sr High School Graduation**
- June 9, 2026** **Last Day of School**
- June 22, 2026** **Summer Food Program Begins**
Additional information coming soon!

PROSPECTOR PRIDE

April/May 2026

Volume 3 Issue 5

A publication of Grant School District 3, Grant Union Jr/Sr High School,
Humbolt Elementary School and Seneca Elementary School

Rebecca Nordtvedt Named School Superintendent

Grant School District 3 recently announced Rebecca Nordtvedt will be taking over as school superintendent effective July 1, 2026. In case you have not had the opportunity to meet Rebecca (Beccy) Nordtvedt, we would like to introduce you to her and take the time to get to know her better.

Nordtvedt has many family ties to Grant County. Her father, Mike Knadler, worked as a custodian at Humbolt Elementary for many years, and her mother, Sandy (Hehn) Knadler, graduated from Mount Vernon High School. Her grandmother, Elise Wright, worked at the John Day Post Office for many years. Nordtvedt grew up in Grant County, spending a couple years in Long Creek but the majority of her childhood in John Day and Canyon City.

She attended Humbolt Elementary, John Day Junior High, and graduated from Grant Union High School in 1993. She had many favorite teachers, including Mrs. Gingrich at Humbolt Elementary, Mrs. Nodine and Mr. Houk at John Day Junior High, and Mr. Ediger and Mrs. Reynolds from her time at Grant Union High School. Mr. Houk and Mr. Labhart coached her in track and she credits them with playing a big part in her success throughout high school and as an adult, with a track scholarship opening doors for her to attend Linfield College.

Nordtvedt was involved in many different areas during

high school, including FBLA, Student Council, and the track team. "Most of my favorite memories were from track," she said, thankful for her opportunity to run anchor with the 4x400 team who won multiple state championships together. "I also have very fond memories of homecoming activities—the hall decorating, dress up days, noise parade, pep assemblies and bonfire", Nordtvedt said, "We spent so many hours decorating the hall and endless phone calls with friends coordinating dress up day outfits."

Following graduation, Nordtvedt attended college at Linfield and enjoyed running for the track and field team. She graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Health and Physical Education (again inspired by Mrs. Nodine from John Day Junior High), then earned a Masters in Teaching from Oregon State University. She taught for multiple years at Central High School in Independence, Oregon, where she met her husband, Tom, who is a History/Social Studies teacher.

The couple moved to his hometown of Ketchikan, Alaska, where Beccy earned her Masters in Education-School Counseling from University of Alaska-Anchorage. After five years in Alaska, they moved their family back to Independence, Oregon, to be closer to her family and she worked as a school counselor. She later earned her Administrative Certificate from Portland State University.

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Left: 1993 Grant Union graduate Rebecca Nordtvedt.
Right: Rebecca Nordtvedt returns to Grant School District 3 as Superintendent. Welcome Home, Beccy!

Singing Valentines

Thank you to Levana James and the High School Choir. They arrived around 9:00 a.m. on February 12, 2026, to sing to me and give me a beautiful Red Rose for Valentine's Day. It was very special as I recently lost my husband—they brought tears to my eyes—but happy tears! I have supported this fundraiser in the past. Thank you.

-Merrie Paladiczuk, Bear Valley

New Baseball Scoreboard Installed

Thank you to all who donated their time and resources to install the new baseball scoreboard. I have to give a huge shout out to Patriot Plumbing and Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative. Bob, Seth and Garrett with Patriot Plumbing have been there every step of the way and have donated countless hours. Chris and Pat with OTEC helped us with the augering and heavy lifting. I would also like to thank Brian Smith with North River Electric, Hueckman Contracting and the City of John Day for donating time and resources. We appreciate everyone's hard work and flexibility as we worked around the weather. It looks great and we couldn't have done it without you.

-Aaron Lieuallen, GSD3 Project Manager



Auto Shop Repairs Truck

Field's Grassfed Beef wants to thank Mr. Miller's Autos II and III classes for the repairs to our pick up. The students did an amazing job!

-Field's Grassfed Beef



Humbolt Ambassadors

Congratulations to our Humbolt Elementary Student Ambassadors for February and March! In February, we had Connor McLeod, Bella Moss-Martin, Ryder Moulton, Vivienne Klusmier, Samantha Reitz, and Kennedy McCarthy. Student Ambassadors for March were Ka'Sun Cook, Bryson DeRosier, Gracie Dryden, Easton Crismon, Hunter McQuown, and Ginny Clarry.

-Charissa Moulton, Humbolt Dean of Students

Students Tour Post Office and Courthouse

A shout out to the United States Post Office and the Grant County Courthouse for taking the time to show Humbolt students around!

-Humbolt Staff



Grant Union Students of the Month

Congratulations to the January students of the month who were recognized for the Respect Award: Jessie Cole, Kaitlyn Charette, Dane Collins, Alexis Rose, Everett Vardanega, and Aaliyah Judd. The February students of the month were chosen for the Integrity Award: Yashly Ceja, Addison Wilson, Osmar Ceja, Kelty Carey, Carmen Spencer, and Emmalyn Northway.

-Grant Union Staff

Thank you, Chester's and A1 Stitching!

The third graders had a great time participating in our 3rd Grade Winter Games! Thank you to Chester's for donating T-shirts and 4A Stitching for adding our Olympic rings.

-Robyn Miller & Kristal Hansen, Humbolt 3rd Grade



We Appreciate our Bus Drivers!



Grant School District 3 bus drivers include Shirley Daniel, Logan Bailey, LeAnn Coalwell, Sharon Flory, Lenny Dowdy, Chris Beil, and Transportation Director Gary VanderStelt. Thank you for keeping our students safe!

Grant Union Math Club Represents at State



Grant Union Math Club members won first place in their Regional Competition at Blue Mountain Community College on February 21, 2026. The team included Josie Hollowell, Ellie Gibson, Paislee Smith, Annabelle Raschio, Artemis McKnab, David Archibald, Wyatt Lieuallen, and Sam Bailey. Special awards for finishing in the top ten were awarded to Gibson, McKnab, Bailey, and Raschio, with Bailey finishing second overall and first in the Countdown Round! The team qualified for the state competition and represented Grant Union in Salem on Saturday, March 7, 2026. Congratulations Mathletes!

FFA Members Attend State Conference



Grant Union Jr/Sr High School was well represented at the recent Oregon FFA State Conference in March 2026. Members attending included Aly Qual, Seth Gehrke, Chloe Hardiman, Bryant Baker, Summer Berry, Sam Cole, Timber Winegar, Thomas Shaw, Brooke Taynton, Jacob Mast, Artemis McKnab, and Morgan Molyneux.

Welcome Home, Trey & Stephaine Thompson!

Trey and Stephaine Thompson are no strangers to Grant County. They both trace their families back at least four generations in the area with family members who have graduated from Long Creek, Prairie City, Mt. Vernon, Dayville, and Grant Union High School. Trey grew up in John Day while Stephaine was raised on a ranch in Mount Vernon, but they knew each other, having both attended Humbolt Elementary School, Mount Vernon Middle School, and graduating from Grant Union High School.

Trey is the son of Jeff Thompson and Dovie Wood and has two sisters, Preslie Webb and Fallen Lusco. His favorite teachers were Mr. Hennen, Mr. Jones, and Mrs. Smith, and he was active in basketball, baseball, and Science Club. His favorite high school memories include his position as Mr. Jones' teaching assistant during his senior year and representing Grant Union at the 2012 3A/2A/1A Baseball All-Star Game. After graduating in 2012, Trey attended the University of Oregon, earning a Bachelor of Science in General Science with an emphasis in Chemistry.



Trey and Stephaine Thompson with their daughters Sloane, Reese, Tori and Whitley.

Stephaine is the daughter of Jimmy and Brenda Randall and has one sister, Kerry. She has many fond memories of family, friends, and school. Stephaine was involved in basketball, softball, band, FFA, student council, and cheerleading, and her favorite teachers were Mr. Jones and Mrs. Shelley. Her favorite memories from high school center around situations when her class was united, like winning the Homecoming Spirit Stick in their junior and senior years, or being a cheerleader during the 2008 Football season when the team won the 3A State Championship. After her graduation in 2009, Stephaine attended Treasure Valley Community College, earning her associate's degree before transferring to the University of Oregon in 2012. She graduated in 2014 with her Bachelor's of Arts in Psychology, and Trey and Stephaine were married in August 2014.

The couple traveled around for a few years, gaining education and work experience as well as starting their own family. Their first daughter, Sloane, was born in Springfield, Oregon, in 2017. The family relocated to Rochester, Minnesota, when Trey received an opportunity to work in a laboratory at the Mayo Clinic, specializing in Leukemia phenotyping, as an Education Specialist of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology at the Mayo Clinic School of Medicine. While living in Rochester, their second daughter, Reese, was born.

Trey graduated with his Master's in Healthcare Administration in 2020 from Louisiana State University-Shreveport, and the family moved to Gilbert, Arizona, where Trey worked as a laboratory manager for Labcorp. While in Arizona, they welcomed their third daughter, Tori, into the family. In December 2021, they moved to Eagle Point, Oregon, for a lab manager job in Medford, and in March 2023, the family had the opportunity to return to Grant County when Trey accepted the position of manager at the Grant County Health Department. They welcomed their fourth daughter, Whitley, to the family later that year.

Stephaine works with Frontier Childcare Resource & Referral as an Infant/Toddler Specialist, where she provides support to child care providers across the county. They are thankful for their experiences along the way, but excited to be back in Grant County. "We have moved many times, but all of those moves provided us with valuable life experience," the couple shared, "but our goal was always to move back home if we could make it happen."

When the family isn't at work, school, and running kids to various activities, Trey is the head coach of the Prospector baseball team, and they all enjoy cheering on the Prospectors (and the Ducks)! Welcome home to Grant County, Thompson Family! It's a great day to be a Prospector!

Where are you now? We would love to hear from all of our alumni! Reach out to us by e-mail at shoutout@grantesd.org or call the district office at 541-575-1280.

OBOB Teams Turn the Page on a Great Season

After months of preparation and local competition, Humbolt Elementary's Battle of the Books teams were ready to compete in the Oregon Battle of the Books regional competition. Both teams had a strong showing at regionals, proving their knowledge and teamwork every step of the way.

The third through fifth-grade team, the Terrific Page Turning Turtle, included Sydney Reitz, Finley Armichardy, Ezra Randleas, Corbin Saul, and Agnes Bailey, along with coach Carrie Sullivan. The team finished pool play in fourth place, advancing to the knockout round, where their season came to a close after

a great effort.

The sixth through eighth-grade team, Projekt Pony, included Samantha Reitz, Cleome McNab, Artemus McNab, Penelope Green, and Vivienne Klusmier, along with coaches Jessi Brunson and Tawnya Reitz. Their adventure followed a similar storyline to their younger counterparts. They also finished fourth in pool play, advanced to the bracket, and ultimately fell in a tiebreaker round after a close matchup.

While neither team placed in the final standings, both groups showed dedication, teamwork, and a true love of reading. A great chapter in this year's OBOB story!



Students Gifted Food for Spring Break

The Backpack Program is making a big impact in Grant County! On March 17, 2026, 30 incredible volunteers came together to fill 1,000 shopping bags with approximately three pounds of food each. These bags supported all kindergarten through 12th-grade students enrolled in Grant County schools over spring break, helping to ensure they had access to meals when school was not in session.

Food insecurity remains a real challenge in our community, with recent data showing that about 17% of Grant County residents are affected. Programs like this

are a powerful reminder of what we can accomplish when we come together to support our students and families.

The Backpack Program Grant is funded by Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care and is a SHARE Grant (Supporting Health for All through Reinvestment).

A huge thank you to everyone who gave their time and energy to make this possible, with special appreciation to our ESD staff, board members, district school superintendents, Grant Union students and staff, and Monument School staff for stepping up to serve our community. Your efforts are truly making a difference!



Eastern Oregon Regional High School Art Show



Grant Union Jr/Sr High School students Lilly Paddock and Calia Paddock were recognized for their artistic talent by the prestigious Eastern Oregon Regional High School Art Show. Lilly received Honorable Mention in the overall category for her work "Crab Apple Shade." Calia was awarded Art Center East's award "Excellence in the Arts" for Grant County for her work "Pomegranate." Congratulations to these students!



Seneca Elementary Learns and Builds Together

This winter has been a mild one in Seneca. We didn't see our first real snow until mid-February, which means most of our learning has unfolded under open skies, muddy boots, and the steady rhythm of rural life.

Inside the school, that rhythm continues in its own way.

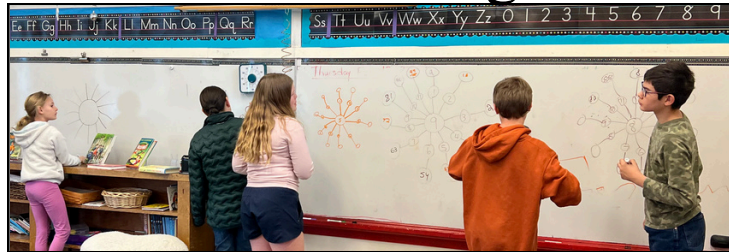
Students have been extending our Seneca Historical Timeline — the growing visual story of our town that stretches down the hallway. This season, they are researching and illustrating the most recent 25 years of local history. They've been interviewing longtime residents, flipping through archives, and sketching scenes that will soon become painted panels. It's one thing to read about history. It's another to realize it lives in your neighbors — and that you are part of what comes next.

In February, we welcomed the Burns Paiute Preschool and Elders for a Valentine Tea. Our students helped set tables, carried teapots, and assisted with pouring. There were cookies, conversation, and plenty of movement. What stood out most was watching children play together. You don't need to share the same name or even the same language to understand play. The preschoolers and our students quickly found common ground in games, laughter, and simple curiosity about one another. It was a reminder that connection often begins in the simplest ways.

We continue our conversations about incorporating Paiute language elements into our timeline, helping students understand languages carry culture and history, and learning about culture and history can build bridges across communities.

Our studies also connect directly to the agricultural roots of our region. A recent visit to a local cattle operation gave students a first-hand look at ranching practices and rural economics. An upcoming trip to Windy Acres Dairy in Prineville will allow them to compare beef and dairy operations — observing organic milking practices, learning about cheese production, and exploring how science, geography, and business intersect in real life. (Cheese tasting tends to make those lessons especially memorable.)

Back in the classroom, colorful string boards are taking shape. Thanks to a generous \$500 donation from



Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative, we were able to purchase wooden boards, nails, vibrant string, and puppetry supplies that now support hands-on learning. What may look like art projects are lessons in symmetry, patterning, skip counting, and early algebra. Students stretch thread into geometric designs and quietly build strong mathematical thinking in the process.

Puppetry has also become part of our learning rhythm. A puppet might introduce a new phonics sound or pose a math challenge before students participate with puppets of their own. When two hands are needed for writing or manipulatives, the puppets are gently "laid to sleep," only to be awakened again for storytelling and discussion. In collaborative puppet lessons, students design and build a character together, learning to coordinate movement, make the puppet "breathe," and communicate clearly enough that an audience understands the story being told. It becomes an exercise in teamwork and awareness — skills that reach far beyond the classroom.

In our small, multi-age setting, older students guide younger ones, leadership develops naturally, and subjects connect in meaningful ways. Learning feels less like separate pieces and more like one steady, growing story rooted right here in Seneca.

As spring approaches, the timeline continues to expand, the paint will soon be flowing, and projects will move from sketches to finished work. The story of Seneca is still being written. We are grateful to be learning — and building it — together.

-Stacy Durych, Head Teacher at Seneca Elementary



Humbolt Child Care Center

The halls of Humbolt Elementary School echo with the happy voices and laughter of children. In 2024, the Humbolt Child Care Center was established with children ages six weeks through five years joining the Kindergarten through sixth-grade students already on campus. The childcare program originally included a daycare and a combined preschool class for three and four-year-olds. One of the biggest changes to the program this year was the division between a three-year-old preschool class and a four-year-old pre-Kindergarten class. The teachers are excited about each student's progress and the ability to focus on age-appropriate activities within each class. The three-year-old class is learning through song and fun hands-on activities. The pre-kindergarten students learn much of the same curriculum, but with the addition of early math and reading skills. Both groups use a Teaching Strategies curriculum that focuses their learning on a specific topic. For example, the groups are about to begin a tree unit so

each underlying learning activity will focus on trees. So while students may believe they are busy at play, the adults understand social and emotional skills, educational skills, and even life skills like working together as a group are being introduced and established.

With the opening of Grant County's newest childcare center, The Village, Grant School District 3 has recently announced they will refer children younger than three years to The Village while focusing school staff on the two preschool classes. This partnership will allow the Humbolt preschool and pre-kindergarten classes to keep the same schedule as Humbolt Elementary School while focusing on Kindergarten readiness. Grant School District 3 has committed to helping families with bus transportation between The Village and Humbolt Elementary School before and after school. The staff is enthusiastic about the future of the preschool program and excited to see the early learning opportunities that will come from a more focused approach. Go Little Pros!



Left: Preschool class at recess, Center and Right: Pre-Kinder class learning through hands-on activities.

Nordtvedt Named Superintendent (continued)

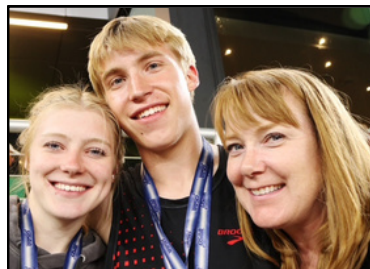
With goals of returning to their small town roots and providing their children with a rural upbringing, the family moved to Wallowa County in 2014, where Beccy started as the principal of Wallowa High School, then moved to Wallowa ESD as Assistant Superintendent and later Superintendent. When she found she missed working with the students, she accepted the position of Superintendent/Elementary Principal at Enterprise School District.

The Nordtvedt's are returning to Grant County with work experience, education, and amazing memories from each place they have traveled. They are thankful for the opportunities available to their own kids along the way. "Some of my most cherished memories were watching my own children run both Cross Country and Track," Beccy said. "They both were on state championship 4 X 400 teams as well as state champion Cross Country teams."

Their daughter Madelyn is now 21-years-old and a junior at University of Idaho, where she is pursuing her goal to be a Math and Social Studies teacher. Their son, Andrew, is 18-years-old and also attending University of Idaho. He has a National Scholarship from Army ROTC

and is an International Studies major with plans to enter the Army as an officer upon graduation.

With both of their kids firmly established in their own educational goals, the Nordtvedts return to Grant County to be close to her parents and give back to the community where her own education began. Tom and Beccy are looking forward to spending time with her family and reconnecting with old friends. She still enjoys running, and is looking forward to "introducing my husband to all the great things in Grant County!" Nordtvedt said. "I look forward to serving and giving back to the community that shaped who I am today."



Left: Nordtvedt with Madelyn and Andrew at their own State Track Meet. Right: The Nordtvedt family.