

## **Senior class members graduate on high academic note**

**91 percent passed every single course taken in fourth quarter of year, an incredible number**

By **Paul Lane**

Updated: July 27, 2011, 6:38 AM

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Grand Island's recently graduated class did an excellent job staving off senioritis, according to recently released school district data.

During Monday's School Board meeting, Superintendent Robert Christmann shared information that was compiled from the 2010-11 academic year in terms of student achievement in the high school. It showed that 91 percent of Grand Island's senior class passed every single course in the fourth quarter of last year.

"That's an incredible number, and that's the highest number of any grade in any quarter," he said.

Among seniors, 18 percent fewer failed at least one course in the fourth quarter than in the first quarter of last school year, he said. Nine percent fewer freshmen failed a course in the fourth quarter than in the first quarter, while 10 percent fewer sophomores and 16 percent fewer juniors did the same.

Overall, 73 percent of the high school students passed every course in any given quarter.

"That's a pretty good number academically," Christmann said.

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- The funding forecast from the federal government appears as grim as from the state government, according to Christmann. After meeting with New York's two senators and Grand Island's representative, he said that education — which has not traditionally been a target of would-be budget-cutters — might see a large chunk of change taken away from it nationwide. The federal government is working on reducing a budget deficit in excess of \$1 trillion.

“There's a lot of dollars that are on the table for education that could mean big changes for school districts,” Christmann said. “Hundreds of millions of dollars in education cuts are possible.”

- In working to meet a new state mandate for next school year, Grand Island's administrators will receive training in how to evaluate staff members under Annual Professional Performance Review guidelines from members of Erie 1 BOCES, Christmann said.

APPR is a state mandate whereby administrators will rate teachers and principals on a scale of 0-100. The review will use a combination of standardized test scores, observations and other methodology to create the score, which will then be used to label the employee ineffective, developing, effective or highly effective.

In order to reduce costs, three representatives from BOCES will go to Albany next week to receive training in how to perform the evaluations from the state Education Department, Christmann said. From there, those representatives will teach leaders from Erie 1 BOCES' 18 member districts in how to perform the evaluations.

“It's here, so we have to deal with it,” board member Tak Nobumoto said.

- The district's capital project committee will meet at 7 p. m. Aug. 3 in the middle school theater. The committee, which is expected to recommend what to include in the district's next renovation plan, will then meet at least weekly in order to have a plan ready for board consideration by October, President David Goris said.