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Cubs may be 3A with UIL rules change

AUSTIN — The University Interscholastic League Legislative Council met Sunday and Monday to make decisions on proposed rule changes in UIL academics, athletics, music and policy.

The Legislative Council approved a proposal to rename all conferences, creating a Conference 6A.

The current Conference 1A Division II, comprised of six-man schools, are to become Conference 1A.

Current Conference 1A Division I, comprised of 11-man schools, will become Conference 2A, current conference 2A schools will move into Conference 3A, etc.

Brownfield Cubs Head Coach and Athletic Director Bryan Welps said he was surprised at the mid-year vote by the UIL, but thought it would be a positive move for high school football.

"Creating the 6A teams will help every size school because it will alleviate the huge discrepancy in size that currently exists," he said. "There are too many teams across the state that are playing schools in their own district with three times as many students and that's just not fair. I think this will be a fair deal for everybody."

These changes will go into effect on August 1, 2013 for the 2014-2016 alignment, if approved by the Commissioner of Education.

Another rule change would allow as many as four teams in each district to make it to the playoffs in all team sports, which some say waters down the process.

"I can see both sides and how it's good for teams to make the playoffs," he said. "But I'm worried it will mean less. I still want the playoffs to be a big deal."

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Texas A&M AgriLife Extension agents Chris Bishop, Scott Russell and Russ Wallace worked a pair of plots into mounds Monday afternoon in the Community Garden for a trial growing strawberries enclosed in a protective tunnel. About a dozen gardeners were on hand for a Garden Club meeting, where the trial was discussed, as well as other Fall gardening tips.

Williams no longer employee of city PD

Darrel Williams is no longer employed by the Brownfield Police Department, the *Brownfield News* has learned.

Williams left BPD effective Saturday, according to a response from City administrators to an open-records request.

The response listed "confidential personnel matter" as the cause for his employment termination.

Williams declined to comment to the *News* as to why he left, as did Chief of Police Tony Serbantez.

Williams worked for BPD since May 1, 2006, most recently as a detective sergeant with the department's Criminal Investigations Division.

He was suspended Oct. 9 after accusations resurfaced that he resigned from the Kermit Police Department in 1995 and agreed to permanently surrender his peace officer's license at that time in lieu of facing a grand jury on a sexual-assault charge.

Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education media spokeswoman Laura Le Blanc confirmed to the *News* on Monday that Williams' license is still valid, and shows no record of suspension.

City Manager Eldon Jobe said city administration will not schedule any town hall meetings or open-session discussions during council meetings regarding the Williams controversy or other issues related to the police department because of their policy on personnel matters.

"It's all confidential," he said. Mayor Bob Simpson declined to comment when asked the same question.

Jobe has not received any requests for such meetings, he added.



Darrel Williams

Statewide school district lawsuit begins

AUSTIN - More than a dozen attorneys representing about 600 Texas school districts -- including all three in Terry County -- laid out their case on Monday that the state education funding system is inefficient, outdated and favors wealthy districts over poor ones.

They contend that over time, the system has eroded many students' chances of getting a good education.

Five other cases have alleged as much since the 1980s.

Marisa Bono is a staff attorney with

the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund (MALDEF), which represents some of the state's poorest districts.

This time, she says, tougher achievement tests and graduation requirements are shedding new light on long-time problems.

"The difference with this case is that we're really at an unprecedented point in terms of rigor and standards that are set by the state for our school districts. We're really talking about some high-stakes testing that's going to be very expensive for school districts."

One school superintendent in the courtroom was Dr. Nabor Cortez, of the small La Feria School District near Harlingen.

In response to budget cuts, he says, they've laid off teachers and aides although their student population continues to grow.

The state allocates some dollars based on numbers of lower-income, special-education and English-language learners. Cortez says those formulas are outdated.

"The Weighted Average Daily Attendance, which is based on formulas, they have not been updated in ages - for 20 to 30 years. We know that there's something called 'inflation,' and it doesn't forgive anybody."

Plaintiffs' attorneys said wealthy

districts collect about \$2,000 more per student per year than poor districts.

Cortez says that, combined with the state's education budget cuts, means many districts are struggling.

A common theme in opening arguments was that the court fights would not be necessary if the Legislature had fixed the school funding problems.

Bono says the districts are asking the court to declare the system unconstitutional, so state lawmakers will have to act.

"That's really what we're seeking in this case. We're not looking for any special benefits or anything else. We just want to give them the opportunity to succeed and make their dreams a reality."

Bono says the districts and students welcome the new challenges, but the funding inequities set them up to fail.

The Texas Attorney General's office counters that money is not directly linked to students' success, and that the school funding system may be flawed but is not unconstitutional.

Cold front to bring cool temps

The balmy, summer-like temperature enjoyed by area residents last weekend will be a distant memory in the coming days as cooler temps and breezy north winds follow a cold front into the South Plains.

According to both the Lubbock and Midland regional offices of the National Weather Service, a breezy cold front will begin to move south across the extreme southern panhandle and South Plains during the day on Thursday, dropping temperatures to at or below normal.

Friday, the cold airmass will strengthen across the region, dropping daytime temperatures to 20 to 25 degrees below average.

"Behind this second surge, some light sprinkles may be possible as warm air is forced up over the cold air at the surface," said officials with the Lubbock regional office of the NWS in a news story on their website Monday. "Sharply cooler temperatures are in store for the weekend with another freeze possible."

According to the Lubbock regional office, high temperatures in the 40s and 50s are expected over portions of the South Plains and Permian Basin.

As winds shift to the northeast, there is the potential for light showers across portions of the area.

A brief shower before sunrise Monday morning dropped about a tenth of an inch of precipitation on the city of Brownfield, with slightly higher totals received further east in the county.

Tuesday morning, the area was blanketed in a dense fog, limiting visibility on some highways to less than a tenth of a mile.

At least one wreck was blamed on the fog shortly after 10 a.m. Tuesday north of Wellman.

Radiation fog is most common in the fall, when nights get longer, airmasses begin to cool, and land and water surfaces that have warmed up during the summer are still evaporating a lot of moisture into the atmosphere.

The fog was blamed for a two-

vehicle accident about 10 a.m. Tuesday just north of Wellman.

A Ford Expedition driven by Don Creager, 77, of Kermit collided with a utility van owned by Western Star Security and driven by Eric Fincher, 42, of Lubbock.

Brownfield EMS tended to minor injuries at the scene, but no one was transported following the wreck.



Brownfield volunteer firefighters responded to a two-vehicle accident just north of Wellman Tuesday morning on U.S. 385. The accident was blamed on dense fog that blanketed parts of the county in the morning, particularly heavy in the draw near the highway rest area where the collision occurred.

'Spirit of the Plains' earns marching trophy in Saturday competition

Brownfield High School's "Spirit of the Plains" Band was awarded their 44th UIL 1st Division Marching trophy Saturday night at the UIL Region 16 Marching Contest.

All three judges at the competition, Greg Diamond, Fred Pankratz and Ed Troyer, gave Brownfield a Division 1 rating, considered superior. Bands are rated on a Likert scale with a Division 5 rating being considered poor and Division 1 the best.

"This is a very musical group," Diamond said. Fellow judge Pankratz agreed, "This band has the entire musical package."

Troyer said the "Spirit of the Plains" displayed "great execution" and that "All aspects have been very well prepared."

Director Julie Munoz said she was pleased with the band's performance and thankful for their families and other supporters.

"The 'Spirit' had a wonderful audience of supporters," she said. "The band has experienced a lot of success so far this year. They have truly represented Brownfield with great excellence and pride."

Wed 10/24	Thu 10/25	Fri 10/26	Sat 10/27	Sun 10/28



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