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Searching for news in Watkins, Bennett, Strasburg, Byers, Deer Trail and Agate

Wednesday, November 26, 2025

Angry parents urge firing of Agate supt.

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

AGATE — While demands for the immediate suspension, then firing, of the superintendent/principal weren't directly addressed, the Agate School Board announced last week that allegations of inappropriate interaction between secondary and elementary students have resulted in changes to campus security and student access to buildings.

During a bombastic public comment period at the Nov. 17 school board meeting, a mother and a handful of other elementary parents stated their extreme displeasure with Superintendent Melinda Walls for her handling, or lack thereof, of lingering com-

plaints surrounding student safety concerns. The worries predominantly circulating around one high school student's interactions with elementary students, particularly kindergartners.

Last week's school board meeting exploded when the mom of three elementary students and other parents alleged lack of appropriate oversight or action and breach of privacy protocol by Walls that caused them to pull their students from the school.

"[I'm a] mother whose family is truly hurting. My children trusted this school, I trusted this school, and I followed every rule I was told to follow when I reported a very serious concern," she said.

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STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Agate School Board members Mike Bate, left, Ray Martin, Doug Purdy and Chris Sonnleitner listen to public comment during a heated meeting Nov. 17.



ISAAC MANAUGH/The I-70 Scout

The Spurs Academy at Big Iron Ranch held its Fall Fun Fundraiser Nov. 22. Guests enjoyed a petting zoo with horses, goats, etc as well as food and a silent raffle. Above, Delaya Diana can't help but laugh as one of the donkeys shows her that he has no food in his bowl.

Byers kindergarten date, transfer window revisited

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

BYERS — On the night that director vacancies were formally filled and new leadership determined, the Byers School Board again entertained questions about the district's June 1 cutoff date for kindergartners.

But, this time around, questions also circulated around how quickly students could be transferred into Byers from a neighboring district.

During the Nov. 20 school board meeting, the McCann family asked Superintendent Tom Turrell and board members to clarify the transfer time frame, particularly for kindergartners. Elementary Principal Machaela Eymann said that standard protocol has been to allow transfers after a semester.

The McCanns, who live in the district and have two children that attend Byers

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Bennett trustees entertain another annexation request

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

BENNETT — Two weeks after approving two new developments likely to bring between 2,100 and 2,200 homes to town, Bennett trustees appear to be moving forward with another annexation process.

During its Nov. 18 meeting, the Bennett Board of Trustees tabled the annexation eligibility hearing for the Sunset development following a discovery that proper posting and hearing notification on the property on the northwest corner of town had

not occurred.

The 240-acre-plus parcel located north of Colfax, east of Penrith, south of 28th and west of Trupp Park is currently zoned agriculture but the developer indicated hopes to change it to planned development (PD). While the number of homes at full buildout is unknown, when pressed by trustee Larry Vittum for a ballpark figure, the developer's representative said, "My understanding is about 1,500." Vittum was one of two dissenting votes when

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During the Nov. 18 Bennett Board of Trustees meeting, Arapahoe County District 3 Commissioner Jeff Baker, left, presents trustee Larry Vittum with token of appreciation for serving on the Arapahoe County Open Space Advisory Board the past several years.