HHS graduate Heather (Huss) Bieber was hired as a JR/SR High English teacher for the 2009-10 school year at the April 21 Board of Education meeting.

Bieber earned her B.A. degree in English education from CSU in Fort Collins in 2007 and is currently working on her master's degree in instruction and curriculum design through the University of Phoenix, online.

She is finishing her second year at Wray High School, where she has taught Fundamentals of English, as well as English I, II, III/College Prep and IV/American Literature.

Certified staff employment con-tracts for 2009-10 were also offered last week. First-, second- and third-year teachers were approved individually, while nonprobationary teachers were included in one motion of approval.

Probationary teachers who were offered contracts on 6-0 votes, with Jeff Tharp being absent from the meeting, follow:

First-year teachers Scott Dille, Gina Dorn, Kerri Gardner, Jenny McKenny, Kari Sandquist, Ashley Geist and Rebecca Helm.

Second-year teachers Kristie Pelle, Drew Peregoy, Stefan Betley, Summer Maloney and George Purnell; and third-year teachers Laura Loutensock and Andrea Kammer.

Second-year teacher John Ortner received contract approval on a 5-1 vote, with Jon King casting the dissenting vote.

Nonprobationary teachers were approved unanimously and include: Mary Austin, Joyce Barkey, John Baumgartner, Yesenia Bencomo, Marcia Dalton, Lynette Harms, Nancy Kennedy, Claudia Koberstein, Natalie Krogmeier, Chandra Parker, Susan Renquist, Lynn Schneider, Cathy Sullivan, Theresa Tharp.

Kevin Asbury, Cindi Beavers, Kimberlee Bennett, Roger Brady, Kyle Bules, Tanisha Bules, Nancy Dee, Kristina Ham, Lynette Hudiburgh, Rhonda Mehring-Smith, Desiree Mosenteen, Angela Powell, Sandra Rahe, Martin Roth, Tracy Trumper and Patricia Wiebers.

A 20-minute executive session for personnel discussion was held prior to the vote on contracts.

Kim Killin requests policy, decision assessment

Parent Kim Killin, a local attorney, addressed the board Tuesday night, requesting board assessment of the current policy on bringing a weapon to school, the sixth grade move to the JR/SR High and the random drug testing policy.

She cited an incident from the previous week in which a JH student reportedly took a knife to school, accompanied by threats to harm fellow students. Killin was concerned about consistency of policy in how this situation was handled. She also noted if the school policy with respect to weapons doesn't have a clause for notifying law enforcement, then it needs to be added.

Killin also asked the board to assess the sixth grade move to the JH, which is in its first year of completion. She suggested looking at the additional load on teachers and the number of students that left the district, at least in part, due to this issue.

Lastly, Killin asked for assessment of random drug testing, which was initiated this school year. She voiced concern for confidentiality in who is being tested when a bottle of water is given to the students in class who will be tested that day.

Angie Powell reports from State Standards Committee

HS English teacher Angie Powell was one of 26 chosen from more than 2,000 applicants to

serve on the Colorado State Standards Committee. She reported on the group's activity at last week's board meeting.

The Colorado Dept. of Education (CDE) gave the selected committee one year to look at the state standards, which haven't been revised for 13 years. Powell said the committee, which she co-chaired, has met five times.

In their standards review process, the goal is fewer, clearer and higher (greater depth of knowledge and skills). The committee has done a grade-by-grade articulation with the exception of grades 9-12 and has included 21st century skills and postsecondary and workforce readiness skills.

The review process was tedious, but Powell said she thinks the state will see stellar standards.

Currently at a professional reviewer, the standards will be reviewed by the State Board of Education May 4 and will then be on public display. Eight meetings will be held throughout the state to showcase the proposed standards revisions, with the N.E. Colorado one scheduled Wednesday, May 27 in Sterling.

After the meetings the committee will reconvene, and further revisions will go to another national reviewer. Powell said it is hoped the standards revisions will be ready by December, then CSAPs (Colorado State Assessment Program) will be revamped.

Administrators report

A quarterly financial report and monthly financial statement were reviewed by Sharon Thompson, director of budget and finance, at last week's board meeting.

She said it is anticipated the district will show $230,000 expenditures over revenues at the end of the fiscal year June 30. This is a better picture than the budgeted deficit of $609,000. She also pointed out the monthly expenditures for the district average around $430,000.

JR/SR High Principal Susan Ortner and Elementary Principal Jennifer Kral reported the district was part of a CDE building suitability study on April 15.

The JR/SR High building score was a high B, with the report noting the overall school climate seems to meet the needs of a variety of learning styles, and the building appears to be safe. The overall technology score was a low C.

A high C was the overall building score for the elementary. No technology score was given, with the evaluation noting, "one of the most lacking schools in the state."

In further report, Ortner noted progress on scheduling for 2009-10. She said they're looking at having JR/SR high art teacher Rhonda Smith spend one period at the elementary school each day.

Kral reported on kindergarten registration, noting it looks like 48 students will be starting kindergarten next fall.

She added teachers are seriously looking at using standards-based report cards. A sample from Washington state is being looked at and has been sent to parents for review. Prior to the 7 p.m. Literacy Night on May 11, a 6-7 p.m. question and answer session will be held. Kral said it's their goal to start the 2009-10 school year with the new report card.

Supt. Stephen Bohrer gave a thorough report on information he put together regarding the potential of contracting grounds work in the district. In summary, he said he thinks the district gets more from the position than it would save if the work was contracted out. "I don't think it's in the district's best interest to contract this out," Bohrer added.

Pertaining to the alternative school, Supt. Bohrer told the board of the exemptions he

requested of the public school construction plans examiner in order for the school to be ADA compliant. He said he would like to go ahead and look for grant moneys for the alternative school.

Board member Linda Jelden said the board needs to have dialog to be sure about the long-term picture for the school, especially as it relates to additional costs and grants. It was agreed it would be appropriate to have discussion about this when alternative school director George Purnell gives his report to the board at an upcoming meeting.

King suggests nepotism policy

Board member Jon King suggested the board look into a nepotism policy with regard to employment. He said he's interested in seeing if other districts have such policies.

Others expressed concern that family members often seek to work in the same district, and good people might be eliminated from consideration if such a policy was in place.

King clarified the nepotism issue with regard to supervisory and evaluation roles.

Other business

In other business April 21, the Re-1J board:

—approved a request from Sandra Rahe to use the new gym for a HS girls' volleyball camp June 8-11.

—voted to allow 13 seniors who are attending school part-time this semester to participate in the graduation ceremony. The students include Dylan Bradley, Kurtis Brown, Michal Brown, Brett Gerk, Chelsy Gomez, Trent Harshbarger, Coltin Houghtelling, Aaron Kramer, Kent Loutensock, Brandon Price, Colby Wailes, Kendra Walz and Mitch Wittman.