



INSIDE TODAY

# YANKTON DAILY PRESS & DAKOTAN



## HAIR IT IS!

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# YSD Teacher Pay Frozen

### YEA Accepts Two-Year Contract With No Pay Increases

BY SHAUNA MARLETTE  
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Yankton School District (YSD) teachers have agreed to a salary freeze for the next two years, it was announced at a special meeting of the Yankton School Board held on Friday.

Negotiations on the teacher master contract were completed this week because, according to school board member Jim Fitzgerald, "it was important to have contacts in place prior to the opt-out vote on Tuesday so that district patrons know our teachers are willing to do their part."

According to the master contract, the base wage for teacher salaries will remain \$35,870 for the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years. This is consistent with the two year freeze that the district has done with administration and hourly staff.

"We felt that we were echoing the feelings of the community," said Linda Messler, president of the Yankton Education Association. "I feel the school district has been a very good steward of the money that the taxpayers have given them over all the years that I have been in Yankton. ... We have to tighten our belts just like everyone else has been doing. We are very willing to do that in order to help

maintain the best education possible."

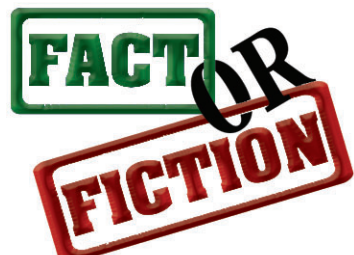
Board member Chris Specht, who was on the negotiations committee along with Fitzgerald, said that he felt the negotiations were handled very well.

"The education association recognizes that many in our community have sacrificed significantly over the past couple of years," he said. "They needed to step up and be a part of that sacrificing. It was important to show the community that there was not going to be some great increase for teachers, hourly staff or administrators should the opt-out pass. I think there is that fear out there. Everybody in the district knows that is not practical, but we needed

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KELLY HERTZ/P&D  
U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem (R-S.D.) fields questions during Friday's public meeting in Yankton. The forum dealt mainly with the soaring federal debt and its impact on the economy.



## Questioning The General Fund Balance

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Press & Dakotan series "Fact or Fiction," is our attempt to clarify the issues surrounding the Yankton School District opt-out. By checking with state and local authorities, as well as other resources, we hope to give you the best answers from as independent sources as possible.

If you have a question or concern about the opt-out that you want clarified, send the question to: Fact or Fiction, c/o Shauna Marlette, PO Box 56, Yankton, SD 57078; or e-mail the question to news@yankton.net. We will do our best to provide as much information as possible ahead of the May 24 vote.

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QUESTION: How do school funds get into the general fund reserve account? Will some of the funds that the opt-out produces (if it passes) eventually go into the general fund reserve account? What can funds in the general fund reserve account be used for?

ANSWER: According to Tammy Darnell, the director of finance for the South Dakota Department of Education, the general fund balance is defined in §13-13-10.1 section 7 as: "the unreserved fund balance of the general fund, less general fund exclusions plus, beginning with transfers made in fiscal year 2001, any transfers out of the general fund for the previous school fiscal year."

She said the general fund reserve balance is the amount of excess funds, not needed by the school district to fund its general fund expenditures.

In the Yankton School District, the general fund expenditures in 2010-11 budget are:

- salaries (64.9 percent);
- benefits: Social Security, retirement, health insurance and workers compensation premiums (22.28 percent);
- purchase services: utilities, property insurance, postage, travel, legal expenses, audits and elections, etc. (7 percent).

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## FLYING INTO THE FUTURE



KELLY HERTZ/P&D  
YHS Senior Jesse Bicknell is flying into his future having earned both his diploma and pilot's license this month. Here is he pictured with the plane he flew for his pilot's license test.

## YSD Grad Earns Pilot's License, Diploma

BY SHAUNA MARLETTE  
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When Jesse Bicknell, a member of the Yankton High School class of 2011, walks across the stage to receive his diploma on Sunday, it will be the second huge achievement in as many weeks.

Last week he earned his license to fly. Beginning when Bicknell was only seven, his great-uncle Ted Lindeman a veteran Navy pilot from World War II, would take him flying. That evolved into Lindeman giving Bicknell flying lessons when he was 16.

"The first time I went up with him, I don't think we were above the tree-tops be-

fore I was telling him, 'Don't go higher,'" Bicknell said. "But, I just loved it. I would fly with him every chance I could get. When I was old enough, I knew I wanted to get my license."

His father Jim said he knew, when Jesse was as young as 4-5, his son would be a pilot some day.

"We went to the air show over in Sioux City when he was really young," he said. "We had the opportunity to tour a B1 bomber. We were in there for about an hour and he was just asking questions and looking around. I finally said, 'I know this is interesting, but let's

I like sports, but I never really did get into them, it wasn't my thing. I just wanted to do something a little bit different than everyone else. We joke, 'Everyone can take their cool car and cruise Broadway, I get to do that with a plane.'

PILOT | PAGE 18

JESSE BICKNELL



KELLY HERTZ/P&D  
South Dakota Lt. Gov. Matt Michels spoke Friday at a Yankton Interagency meeting about the importance of recognizing that "the government" and "the people" are one and the same.

## Michels: No Separation Between Gov't, People

BY NATHAN JOHNSON  
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While it is easy to see a gap between "the people" and "the government," South Dakota Lt. Gov. Matt Michels emphasized Friday that they are one and the same.

That message has always been important, he said. However, with the death of South Dakota State Penitentiary senior corrections officer Ronald "R.J." Johnson on April 12 allegedly by two prisoners, Michels said that subject has been weighing on his thoughts.

"We're sitting in an office where (Gov. Dennis Daugaard) and I and a couple other people were working when somebody came in and said, 'We've had a prison guard murdered,'" Michels told a meeting of Yankton Interagency Friday at the Avera Sacred Heart Hospital Professional Office Pavilion. Yankton Interagency promotes the free exchange of information, concerns and solutions among human service organizations in the greater Yankton area.

Michels continued, "I don't care how much you pay (government employees), they're not there working for the compensation. They're working to take care of us. Government's primary purpose — us — is to take care of people in terms of safety."

Another purpose of government is to take care of people who cannot take care of themselves, he stated.

"Please don't ever forget it," Michels said. "It's not them and us — it's us. It's us working together to either improve lives or advance causes to make sure people are well. To have a gap, and have a view that people who are serving us in our state government are leaning on a shovel, is wrong. I'm not saying that's a pervasive view. I have just taken it upon myself to say we are blessed."

The number of South Dakotans signing up for National Guard service is evidence of that blessing, he added.

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