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ODOT announces closure of Highway 101 in Harbor; no school closures or delays planned

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Brookings, Ore.] – Brookings-Harbor School District 17C confirms that there will be classes as usual Friday, Jan. 29, despite the expansion of a series of sinkholes along Highway 101 in Harbor that threatens to undermine all four lanes of traffic on the main thoroughfare, as well as several local businesses. Kalmiopsis Elementary, Azalea Middle School and Brookings-Harbor High School will be in session with normal start and end times, although some bus routes may run with slight delays.

Although a sinkhole has existed in the parking lot of the Fireside Diner in Harbor since mid-December, the size of the void started increasing suddenly around noon on Thursday, after a night of heavy rain. The Oregon Department of Transportation believes the series of events was touched off last month after the failure of an underground culvert that carries run-off water from South Coast Shopping Center, under the highway and to the Port of Brookings-Harbor.

Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is on the scene and monitoring the situation closely, and planned to close the section of Highway 101 adjacent to the sink holes as of 9 p.m. Thursday evening. The closure is expected to last at least a week.

All school bus runs affected by the highway closure will be rerouted and students should report to their stops for pick-up at the usual time. Depending how the situation develops over the next few days, there may be updates to routes and pick-up locations.

During the closure, bus routes and all other southbound traffic will be diverted to Lower Harbor Road at the south end of the Chetco River bridge, and northbound buses and traffic will take a left at Benham Lane in Harbor to detour through the Port. Shopping Center Avenue, which runs parallel to the highway on the west side, is also closed after a landslide about 50 feet from the sinkhole collapsed the road Thursday afternoon, and broke a local water main.

“The district is dedicated to providing safe transportation to and from the schools despite the road closure conditions,” said Superintendent Gallagher. “Our district transportation department is closely monitoring this situation and will make appropriate accommodations.”

Updates will be distributed to KURY radio station (95.3 FM), the Curry Coastal Pilot and the district website at www.brookings.k12.or.us. Road closure information can be found on the ODOT Tripcheck website at tripcheck.com.

Brookings Harbor School District 17-C: "Every Student Can Succeed."