

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Message from the Superintendent

Dear Washougal Community Members,

Through the eyes of a new superintendent I observed the start of a new school year. Beginning with the cleanliness of our facilities, the bus ride to school, the meals that are prepared during the day, and the experiences planned for our children, I experienced the deep sense of pride and commitment the Washougal School District has for our community's children.

Students are excited about learning because our instructional staff is preparing challenging and engaging learning experiences that extend our students' thinking well beyond the four walls of the classroom. I have been particularly impressed with staff's use of academic achievement data to target the specific learning needs of each individual student. The results of this work can be seen in the achievement of Washougal's students.

At Gause Elementary I saw a tremendous reduction in the number of behavior referrals between 2009–10 and 2010–11. This made it possible for students to deal with behavior much more effectively and, most importantly, in ways that do not interfere with their ability to learn when they are at school. As a result of this work, Gause fourth graders increased from 78.9% meeting or exceeding the state reading standard in 2010 to 85.5% in 2011 and at fifth grade from 67.7% to 80.6% in reading and from 58.3% to 72.8% in math.

At Cape Horn-Skye, students and parents have endorsed the school's improvement plan, which has pulled everyone together under a common vision. I believe that as a result of this work, Cape's third graders went from 65.9% meeting or exceeding state standards in reading to 83.6% and in math from 48.9% to 64.2%. Fourth grade students went from 66.3% to 77.6% in reading and from 51.3% to 74.1% in math.

If you have not visited Hathaway Elementary in a while, you should stop by to take a look at their data wall. The performance and progress of each and every child is posted in the hallway and children stop to look at their progress. What a great way to empower these young children with the ability to monitor their own learning! Hathaway met math AYP standards this year as a school and as a result of this work the Hathaway third graders showed impressive results on the state tests. In addition, the work to address the learning needs of specific subgroups in the school, Hathaway set the bar last year for students with disabilities at the same grade with 75% of the students on IEPs meeting or exceeding state standards in math.

Canyon Creek Middle School teachers conducted peer observations to learn new strategies from one another and to support each other in implementing

school improvement initiatives. These peer observations reveal the deep commitment to student success. Opening your classroom and your practice to invite feedback from colleagues reflects a foundation of trust that has been built at the school.

At JMS staff are focusing on letting learning guide what is taught rather than delivering curriculum based on a calendar year, textbook, or traditional unit of study. As a result, rigorous Federal No Child Left Behind standards were met at JMS last year. As a result of this work, JMS 6th graders went from 58.5% meeting or exceeding reading standards last year to 76.4% and in math from 52.4% to 61.8% and at 8th grade from 68.2% in reading to 74.3%.

Last year, Excelsior High School broke all records and graduated 25 students. This represents 40% of their total student population. The big news is that 80% of these graduates graduated right on time, at the end of their fourth year of high school. Excelsior students enjoy a rich curriculum including community service projects, such as raised bed gardening, and reading and math "buddies" programs with elementary students. With 41% of Excelsior's students growing up at the poverty level, these accomplishments reflect that attention is being given to the whole child, assuring that they develop in every way as they head into young adulthood.

At WHS it was a banner year for the Fine Arts program—our band and choir traveled to Anaheim last spring and competed in a national competition. At the Heritage Festival, Washougal students took first place in their division, competing with school districts three times our size. Our choir took second place with less than a week's rehearsal time. I am also pleased to note the reading performance of our high school children who are growing up at the Federal poverty level—76.7% met or exceeded the reading bar last year.

These significant accomplishments demonstrate the importance our community places on education and the dedication of our staff and students. The District will continue to count on our community's support to work through the challenges that lie ahead. Washougal's commitment to student success is both a source of pride and inspiration.

Sincerely,



Dawn Tarzian, Superintendent



Mark your calendar for the Trail Band concert

Don't miss the Trail Band concert, a Washougal holiday tradition, Saturday November 26 at the Washburn Performing Arts Center at Washougal High School, 1201 39th St. Washougal. Social begins at 6 p.m. and the concert begins at 7 p.m. Reserved seats are \$30, \$20 and \$15. For ticket information contact Roger Daniels at: rogerdaniels@windermere.com or (360) 852-5151.



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Cape Horn-Skye named School of Distinction

Cape Horn-Skye is one of just 99 schools in the state to be named a 2011 School of Distinction for success in student achievement, an accomplishment they have achieved twice. The school was also recognized in 2009.

The awards are based on improvement on standardized tests over the preceding five years. A school must be at or above the state median for the grade band on a "Reading/Math Level Index."

Statewide, the awards were presented to 99 schools by the Center for Educational Effectiveness, Association of

Educational Service Districts, Association of Washington School Principals, Phi Delta Kappa-Washington Chapter, Washington Association of School Administrators, Washington State ASCD and the Washington State School Directors' Association. All of the regional winners will be formally recognized during a ceremony in January at ESD 112.

"The staff at Cape Horn-Skye are so deserving of this award," said Superintendent Dawn Tarzian. "Out of 1,074 elementary schools in the state, Cape Horn-Skye is in this distinguished top 5%!"

District sees enrollment increase

This fall the Washougal School District saw an increase in enrollment. Washougal School District's September enrollment was 2,865, an increase of 103 students since last May's count of 2,762.

The increase is interesting because the district has seen a slight decline each September since the 2006-07 school year, when enrollment peaked at 2,884.

"While the factors contributing to the increase may not be understood for some

time, I'm pleased that families are choosing to enroll their students in Washougal schools," said Superintendent Dawn Tarzian.

Tarzian notes some factors that may have contributed to the enrollment boost are growth in Camas School District, which allowed for fewer boundary exceptions for Washougal students and the relocation of the Camas River Homelink program.

Maintenance work on schedule

In accordance with the Growth Management Act, and Clark County and the City of Washougal ordinances, the District has adopted a long-range facilities plan for 2009-2015. The plan outlines the District's anticipated capital facility needs, schedule, and budget for those improvements over the plan's duration.

This summer, the following projects were completed in keeping with the plan:

- » New roof on JMS gym
- » Two new bathroom floors at Hathaway
- » Replace carpet in portables at Hathaway

- » Repair and paint the exterior of the portables at Hathaway
- » Repair roof membrane at Gause
- » Repair septic system at Cape
- » Clear, repair and reseal gutters at JMS
- » Replace carpet in portables and office at JMS
- » Replace and repair wood walkways to portables at JMS
- » Rewire and add outlets to Fishback Stadium at WHS

It's time to Stuff the Bus!

Stuff the Bus annual food drive and friendly competition between Camas and Washougal School Districts began November 1. All donations are used in our local community and are distributed to Children's Home Society, the C.A.R.O.L. Program and The Treasure House. This event supplies the majority of food used by Children's Home Society to feed those in need in our community all year long. To participate, students need to bring non-perishable food donations to their school. This year's most needed items include: canned beans and chili, tuna or canned chicken, Spam, rice, soup, cereal, pancake mix, mac and cheese, spaghetti sauce, tomato sauce, pasta and spaghetti noodles, oatmeal, cereal bars, and canned fruit.

The Event will be held, Friday, December 9, from Noon to 5 p.m. Buses will be available at both high schools for donations. Donations will be collected from the elementary and middle schools that morning.

Join us at Exterior Wood for the Weigh-In Party at 6 p.m. to announce the winner of this year's Stuff the Bus. Watch for more information coming soon!

Substitute custodians needed

Washougal School District is seeking substitute custodians. Applicants will be contacted to fill in when staff is on vacation, sick or on long-term leave.

Applicants are required to be fingerprinted (\$71.25) and have a current First Aid card (\$35.00). A GED or high school diploma is required. Applicants must take an online Bloodborne Pathogen test and Hazardous Chemical Quiz. Pay range is \$13.63-\$13.78 per hour. For more information, including job responsibilities and how to apply, contact Liza Linde at (360) 954-3041.

Washougal School District considers options for turf replacement at Fishback Stadium

The Washougal School District has begun the process of planning for the replacement of the turf field at the Washougal High School Fishback Stadium. At the October 4 School Board meeting, Superintendent Dawn Tarzian presented a plan in which the District would match each dollar raised in the community and invited local business leaders to do the same. Patrons attending the meeting offered support and suggestions for possible donors who might be willing to make substantial donations or front the money to the district at a low interest rate, to be paid back over the course of the life of the new field.

The School Board expressed support for the plan, including the recommendation from the Superintendent that the District

implement a turf replacement savings plan to assure that resources exist to care for and replace the field in the future. Parents, coaches, staff, administrators, and players were present to advocate for the field replacement. Several patrons in attendance signed up to help with the fund-raising effort.

Fishback Stadium's current turf surface has been in place for 10 years (installed in 2001), with resources provided through the passage of the Capital Improvement Bond. It is estimated that the field is used by more than seven high school sports teams annually, including Varsity and JV girls and boys soccer, football, girls and boys track, and sometimes baseball. Washougal High School physical education classes use the

field on a regular basis. In addition, many community and youth recreation teams use the field as well. The District commissioned a study of the safety of the aging turf field in October of 2010. The consultant from BioMechanica said that the field was in good condition considering its age. The District has been performing maintenance on the field as needed to maintain a safe recreation area for students, but ultimately, the turf will need to be replaced. Studies also revealed that replacing the turf field with a natural grass field would cost the District more money and would not support the same level of use.

If you would like to get involved or would like to make a contribution, please contact Superintendent Dawn Tarzian, 360-954-3001 or dawn.tarzian@washougal.k12.wa.us.

Fall 2011 sports wrap up

The Panther athletic teams have been something to talk about and have the 2011-2012 sports year off to a great start.

As early as last spring, Head Coach Bob Jacobs was enthusiastic about the success that he expected from this year's edition of **Panther Football**. It appears that he had good reason to be optimistic as the Panther Varsity had a great season and spent much of it undefeated.

Cross Country Head Coach Terry Howard has assembled strong teams for both the boys and the girls teams again this year. Stepping up to take over the scoring duties for the Panther Boys team are Sean Eustis and Isaac Stinchfield. Both Sean and Isaac have consistently placed high in some major invitational meets. Sean and Isaac qualified for the State Meet by placing 1st and 3rd at Districts, then went on to place 9th and 13th at State.

The doubles team of Regan Townsend and Andrew Kelly has been the standout this season for the **boys tennis team**. Head Coach Eric Balholm likes the competitive spirit and determination that these two bring to the court.

Washougal Golf may have graduated some talented seniors, but Coach Brian Anderson likes what he has seen this year from his young players. Juniors Beau Scott and Michael Moran and freshman Bryce Sampson have led the way for the Panthers with solid averages in the low 40's. Beau has qualified for the State Tournament in May with his 6th place finish at Districts.

The **Panther Girls Soccer Team** has dealt with some injuries to key players but has still managed to finish solid this season. After placing 3rd in League the girls had one win and two losses in the district tournament and missed out on advancing to the State Tournament.

Panther Volleyball has had trouble cracking the win column this fall, but Head Coach Mandy Busby and her staff have our teams headed in the right direction. Our league opponents have had to sit up and take notice that Panther Volleyball is on the rise, with a noticeable increase in skill level, team play and competitive attitude among our players.

—Doug Cox



Top: Panther Girls Soccer player Isabel Sampson-Wright. Photo by Kathy Akers-Sheenan.

Below: Panther Football player Caleb Howard. Photo Courtesy of 2011-2012 WHS Yearbook Staff.

Don't miss the Washougal Festival of Trees

Mark your calendar for the Washougal Festival of Trees, December 9-10, 2011.

Friday, Dec. 9 — 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. Viewing and bidding on trees, wreaths and baskets, followed by Washougal's tree lighting ceremony.

Saturday, Dec. 10 — 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. Last chance to bid on trees, wreaths and baskets.



A snowman tree created by Washougal District Office staff was part of last year's Festival of Trees.

Preschool programs serve earliest learners

Research shows that children who have access to quality early learning opportunities enter school ready to learn and succeed. The Washougal Community Education Preschool program supports Washougal School

District expectations for entering Kindergarten and uses developmentally appropriate curriculum that addresses the whole child in a positive environment.

The program has been serving the Washougal community for more than 20 years. Preschool is taught at all Washougal School District elementary schools.

The Washington State benchmarks for children ages 3-5 are the foundation for the curriculum. These allow for alignment with the K-12 benchmarks, providing a continuum for student learning.

For more information about the Washougal

Community Education preschool program, contact Lisa Young, (360) 954-3895.



Photo by Bea Remembered Productions.

Find More News at - www.washougal.k12.wa.us

The Washougal School District complies with all federal and state rules and regulations and will not illegally discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation including gender identity, age, marital status, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. This holds true for all district employment and educational programs. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed to the school district's Title IX/RCW 28A.640 compliance officer, Doug Bright, Director of Human Resources, and/or Section 504/ADA coordinator, Allan Fleck, Director of Special Education.

You're invited to the Washougal School Board meetings!

Meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. in the District Board Room, 4855 Evergreen Way, unless otherwise noted.

December 13 • January 10 (Hathaway Elementary) • January 24

SUPERINTENDENT
Dawn Tarzian

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Blaine Peterson, Chair
Ron Dinius
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Karen Rubino (Director Elect)
Terrie Hutchins
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WASHOUGAL
SCHOOL DISTRICT



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