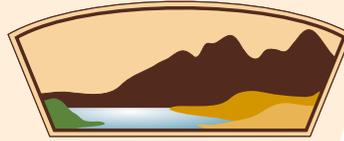


Community Connections

FALL 2017



Teacher Kevin Riley and his Freshman Academy students at Excelsior.

Realizing a dream: District opens two new schools

This fall, the Washougal School District welcomed students and staff to two new schools. Columbia River Gorge Elementary is a brand-new school located on the same campus as the replacement Jemtegaard Middle School.

Construction teams worked diligently throughout the year and especially over the summer to complete the projects a full year ahead of the original timeline. This has allowed the district to take advantage of current building costs, rather than waiting for already rising market costs to increase even further.

“The construction field has seen costs rise steadily over the past few years,” said Superintendent Mike Stromme. “We are pleased that we were able to schedule and complete our projects now and realize savings.”

Jemtegaard’s new design is a safer and more practical school. Students no longer have to travel outside of the main building to get to their classes. The old “pod style” classrooms with open-air hallways have been replaced by larger classrooms for flexible group workspaces. The new 600-student capacity school features energy efficient LED lighting, large windows allowing more light, a courtyard that can serve as an outdoor learning space, and classroom sound amplification built into each instructional space. 🍃

New programs support personalized learning

Washougal’s brand-new Excelsior facility will serve as the headquarters for two new programs that support student success for grades 9-12. The programs offer a fresh approach to learning and provide specialized support for students to succeed academically and graduate on time.

Freshman Academy

The Freshman Academy provides support for incoming freshmen by providing smaller class sizes and more personalized learning. Program highlights include small class sizes, project-based learning, a flexible schedule, and increased parent communication.

“The goal is to provide a positive and

supportive freshman experience for students and put freshmen on the right track at the start of their high school career,” said Associate Principal Mark Castle.

On Track

On Track provides a unique and personalized education for high school juniors and seniors.

Students can access online learning as well as hands-on and career-specific opportunities. By creating a “learning family” students receive personalized assistance. The program addresses credit deficiencies and helps prepare students for graduation and career, college, work and life opportunities. 🍃

NEW SCHOOL QUICK-FACTS:

- CRGES capacity: 520 students
- JMS capacity: 600 students
- Total project cost: \$50 million

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



Dear Washougal School District Patrons,

Exciting things are happening in Washougal schools! We began the 2017-18 school year with the opening of three brand new buildings, and a new Washougal High School Excelsior program to support the success of all high school students.

The brand-new Columbia River Gorge Elementary and the replacement Jemtegaard Middle School opened on time and under budget and are receiving rave reviews from students and staff. Over the first weeks of school it has been extremely rewarding to watch students learning, creating, playing and growing in these 21st century learning spaces. Seeing the smiles on students' faces and hearing their excitement about being in these new facilities is gratifying.

At Excelsior, old inefficient portables have been replaced with a bright, open, new facility that students, staff and the community can take pride in and enjoy. The school has a new educational program focused on targeted instructional support for freshmen and helping upper classmen stay on track on the path to graduation. You can expect to hear great things as these programs get underway and help students succeed.

Throughout the school district, our schools are benefitting from a more balanced enrollment. The opening of the new schools has relieved the pressure on the use of space in our elementary schools and allows more room for students and staff to teach and learn.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the commitment and support of the Washougal community. The opening of these new schools was set in motion back in 2015, thanks to voter approval of a capital facilities bond. However, the dream really began in 2013, when a group of dedicated citizens gave countless hours of their time to painstakingly evaluate every school, every building, and every facility concern patrons and district staff shared to determine current and future facility needs. The Long Range Facilities Planning Committee members gave up their own time to delve into the state of our facilities and the projected needs for future growth while considering student safety, costs, and feasibility. Once the work of setting priorities was complete, the school board approved a bond initiative for the February 2015 ballot. Washougal voters passed the bond, raising the \$57 million needed to make this project a reality.

The Washougal community as a whole should be very proud of what they've helped create, through the process of dreaming, designing, building and finally opening these new buildings.

I hope you'll stop by our schools to see for yourself these inspiring new facilities. Washougal is opening doors for student learning!

Sincerely,

Dr. Mike Stromme



Students in the AVID program participate in an activity that serves as a metaphor for life's challenges. Nathaniel (blindfolded) attempts to walk to the fire hydrant with an increasing number of obstacles while Jacob makes sure he doesn't hurt himself.

AVID program helps prepare students for college & careers

For some high school students, attending college or pursuing the career of their dreams might seem like an unrealistic goal. Maybe they didn't think college was for them or their grades aren't as high as colleges or employers would like. Whatever obstacles might be holding them back, a new program at Washougal High School aims to help them succeed.

The AVID program, which stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination, is brand new at Washougal High School, but it's been a successful program in schools across the state and nation (even the world) for several years. AVID is not a remedial program, its purpose is to help students reach their highest potential.

AVID has two components: an elective class offering academic support and guidance to help students succeed, and a series of school-wide AVID practices to enhance instruction and learning practices and build a culture of success.

In the AVID class taught by Jason Blaesing, students become a community focused on the same goals that will stay together through their high school education. Currently 22 students are enrolled in the class, which focuses on teaching students to be learners, to ask questions and be problem solvers.

"A student might currently be earning a 'C' average," said Associate Principal Sheree Clark, "but AVID strategies help challenge them to be higher achievers. For some of these students, they might be the first in their family to focus on attending college. AVID gives them the tools to be successful and to help them on the path to college, offering assistance with improving organizational skills, critical reading skills, and accessing financial aid."

Over the summer, a team of teacher leaders were trained in AVID and have brought what they've learned back to the school and staff. This year, the focus will be on the freshman class, with another class of freshmen added each year thereafter. Future plans are to expand the program to the middle school level.

Data shows that students in AVID classrooms outpaced the national average for enrolling in college. In fact, in 2015, 92% of AVID students qualified for college, while just 36% of students in the U.S. met the same qualifications. 🌱

Washougal middle school students enter gateway to possibilities

STEM curriculum provides exposure to career pathways

Towers of raw spaghetti noodles rise from the desks in Katie Beaty's Design and Modeling (D&M) class at Jemtegaard Middle School as they attempt to build the tallest tower. In Greg Lewis's D&M class at Canyon Creek Middle School, students learn about the challenges a child faces when born with a debilitating disease like Cerebral Palsy and are tasked with designing and creating a foot orthosis for that child, helping them to use their whole foot, not just their toes to walk.

Students use their Engineering Notebook to draw their designs, discuss them with their team and decide which they think will get the job done. Students huddled in conversation, working together, trying and failing, trying and succeeding.

D&M is the first class offered in the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Gateway curriculum recently adopted by Washougal School District. It is a part of the district's work to bring more Career and Technical Education (CTE) learning to middle school students. "PLTW allows our students to begin building skills and knowledge to continue their education into high school and beyond," said Margaret Rice, WSD CTE Director.

Teachers Beaty and Lewis received concentrated training over the summer, connecting with master teachers and other educators, to learn how to lead this new curriculum. "PLTW's curriculum is researched based, vetted with more than 20 years of educational classroom practice," said Rice. "We know it works."

A second, follow up class the two received training for, Automation and Robotics, will replace the previous Robotics class. "Students will continue to use the design process as they design, build and program their robots to complete tasks and solve problems," Rice explained. "Our CTE courses no longer stand alone; they connect to other classes that build on learning and lead to careers."

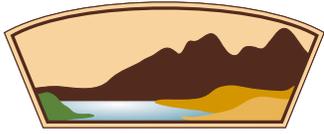
These exploratory classes provide students experience and exposure to



Abby Wall and Mason VanNosten (top) create a foot orthosis and Trenton Keeler and Kaitlyn Jones (bottom) try to build the tallest structure as part of a new Design and Modeling class at Washougal middle schools.

areas of study and interests to help them determine their career pathway, beginning their high school and beyond planning in middle school. "As students engage in PLTW Gateway classes which are all STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) based, they begin to connect possible careers with things they like to do," said Rice. "Isn't that what we all strive for? To

love what we do? Helping our students find their passions is what it's all about. Our hope is to provide students with as many opportunities to gain knowledge, experience and training, preparing them for the workplace while still in high school and making their educational experience relevant and invaluable." 🌱



WASHOUGAL
SCHOOL DISTRICT
4855 Evergreen Way
Washougal, WA 98671

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Washougal School District Patron
Washougal, WA 98671

A big Washougal welcome to our new teachers!



BACK ROW: Amy Henke, Cape/CCMS; Liz Meyer, WHS; Kaitlyn McClain, JMS; AJ LaBree, WHS; Aaron Sanders, WHS; Sacha De Beaumarchais, WHS; Grant Merrill, WHS; Brenda Benson, Cape; Kevin Reilly, WHS

MIDDLE ROW: Stefanie Townsend, District Wide; Julia Cupp, Gause; Nichole Mann, Hathaway; Caitlin Snowden, District Wide; Shannon Van Horn, District Wide; MacKenzie Nelson, Gause; Ellen Hein, CRGE; Aaron Konzek, WHS; Kirstin Albaugh, JMS; Jessica Nickels, WHS

FRONT ROW: Lyndsey Morris, Cape; Becky Miller, Hathaway; Janis Akseki, CRGE; Leslie Gillespie, CRGE; Janet Grove, WHS; Angie Steffanson, CRGE; Kyla Ritchey, WHS; Katie Hofsess, CCMS

WASHOUGAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
www.washougal.k12.wa.us

SUPERINTENDENT
Dr. Mike Stromme

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Ron Dinius, President
Elaine Pfeifer, Vice President
Cory Chase
Teresa Lees
Jaron Barney

Upcoming Washougal School Board Meetings

November 14, District Board Room

November 28, District Board Room

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

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