

Community Connections

FALL 2018



Above and upper right: JMS students guide CRGE first grade students as they explore how a human hand works.

Middle school students lend expertise to first-graders

When first grade teachers at Columbia River Gorge Elementary needed Jemtegaard Middle School students to lend a hand, Greg Lewis gladly offered his Medical Detectives class to help. The project goal was for elementary students to learn how the human hand functions.

“Our first-grade teachers are working to add more engineering and problem solving into our curriculum,” said Allison McGranahan, CRGE first grade teacher. “We are currently studying the human body which includes the skeletal and muscular systems. We looked at several learning projects that incorporated engineering into the study of hands and they were daunting to facilitate with an entire classroom.” That’s when the teacher team of McGranahan, Sydney Termini and Rachell Calvary-Reeves considered asking for a class of middle school students next door to assist

small group learning.

Using paper hands along with string, straws, tape and beads, older students helped the younger students to explore how the muscular and skeletal systems work together to make a hand move.

“It was fun and interesting to work with first graders,” said JMS 8th grade student, Kaylia Pierce. “They do not think the way that we do. Some of their ideas were pretty interesting.”

“There is a lot of value in bringing these middle school students in to our classrooms,” said McGranahan. “This work supports team building and builds leadership skills for the older students. And it’s important for our elementary students to problem solve with someone other than their teacher and who is closer to a peer. I think they all had a lot of fun.”

Bond funds upgrades to Fishback Stadium

This fall, sports fans at Fishback Stadium have enjoyed upgraded facilities that were made possible by the 2015 voter-approved capital facilities bond. These improvements were above and beyond what the district had originally proposed in the bond. The district was able to make these additional upgrades due to good fiscal and construction management throughout the process.

One of the most noticeable upgrades is the remodeled restroom facilities, which are now larger, and include features such as ADA accessibility and air blade hand dryers.

Other updates include:

- New visitor-side seating to accommodate 200 people
- New aluminum seats with backs for Panther-side
- Increased usable and secure storage for stadium equipment
- New concessions/ticket booth
- Improved pedestrian flow



The new aluminum Panther seating replaces wooden seats that needed frequent, costly maintenance.

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



Dear Washougal School District Patrons,

I am honored to be serving as the superintendent for the Washougal School District and am excited about the direction this district is headed. The late summer and early fall have been filled with both challenges and opportunities for us as we navigated through a complex bargaining process and then launched a start to school that by many accounts was one of the smoothest in recent history. Students are learning, teachers are teaching, staff is supporting student achievement, and a vision for success is being cast. We are hopeful for the future!

Over the course of this school year, I will be enacting the Superintendent's Entry Plan, which will involve "listening to learn and leading forward" in order to develop a deep understanding of the historical and current context of the Washougal School District's strengths, hopes and challenges. The goal of this plan is to create a smooth and successful transition, inform the future direction of our district, and to develop authentic, trusting partnerships with staff, students, families, and the community. I am actively seeking multiple perspectives on the District and will use the following four questions to guide this entry plan:

- What is going well in the Washougal School District?
- What are the key issues facing our school system which need attention?
- What are your hopes for the Washougal School District into the future?
- How can I be most helpful in my role as superintendent?

Once this data has been gathered, synthesized, and organized thematically, I will be sharing with the School Board and the community what I have learned. Additionally, we will be gathering stakeholder input throughout this year as we update the WSD Strategic Plan, so thank you in advance for your willingness to respond to electronic surveys during the month of November via ThoughtExchange. I look forward to meeting all of you in our schools, at events, and around Washougal.

I have been struck with the level of engagement from the community in the affairs of our schools. There is a high-level of support and excitement for where we are headed and what we can accomplish together. As we continue to hold high expectations for ourselves and others, we can continue on our trajectory to be one of the strongest school districts in our region. Together we can be part of the vision to see "Washougal Rising."

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary Templeton

District to gather community input for 6-year strategic plan

Washougal School District will be working to chart its course through a new strategic planning process during the 2018-19 school year.

"The new strategic planning process will be a tool to help decide where we want to go as a district and create discrete goals for what we want to work on together," said Dr. Mary Templeton, WSD Superintendent. The six-year plan will provide direction for 2019-2025.

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- Dr. Mary Templeton, Superintendent

The district plans to include its many stakeholder groups such as teachers, students, parents, business leaders and the Washougal community through a series of input forums. For the first time, the district will use ThoughtExchange, an online platform to gather community input.

Goals of the process include:

- Assure that the district is involved in continuous improvement as an educational system in line with community expectations
- Identify strengths and opportunities
- Develop a plan to guide the district's future work
- Strengthen community engagement in our schools

Watch for meeting dates this winter. For more information, contact the WSD office at 360-954-3001. 🌱

Angela Hancock joins board

Angela Hancock was sworn in as the new Washougal School Board Director for District #2 at the Tuesday, September 25 board meeting. She replaces Elaine Pfeifer, who resigned in July after nearly 14 years of service.



"I look forward to representing District #2 community members," Hancock said. "My main priorities as their board director are transparent communications, fair representation, being accessible and continuing to be a vested member of the community." District #2 covers areas to the north of Washougal River Road and in Skamania County.

Hancock, a mother of two current Washougal students, has been very active in many areas of the district. She is a past employee at Gause Elementary, Cape Horn-Skye Elementary and Canyon Creek Middle School as well as a long-time volunteer at CH-S. She was a valuable member of the successful Vote Yes for Safe Schools Bond and is a current CCMS Booster secretary.

"The Board of Directors and myself are pleased to welcome Angela to her new position," said Dr. Mary Templeton, WSD Superintendent. "We are excited about her energy and passion for our school district and are eager to have her join the other four board members in the work of guiding the direction of the Washougal School District." 🌱

Elementary schools add art instruction for all students

This fall Washougal elementary students are connecting their learning to the visual arts thanks to the addition of four new elementary art teachers. Each classroom receives one hour of art instruction per week, tied to the district's language arts curriculum. For instance, when fifth grade students learned about the Mayan culture, that learning is complemented with a Mayan pottery lesson.

The team of art teachers met over the summer to plan the scope and sequence of the curriculum, based on national art standards from the NAEA National Association

of Art Educators and the CKLA curriculum the district is using as a base for art history.

"We really want to deliver a well thought-out art program, where students have the ability to not only create art but to critique it, and to learn the vocabulary to do that," said Cape Horn-Skye art teacher Alice Yang. "In a time when funding is being taken from art in other places, it's great to see that WSD is investing in art."

In addition to creating art, students will learn to write artist statements, and to verbally present what they've created. They'll also explore art history and look at

the purpose of art in their lives.

The added art instruction allows classroom teachers to focus on planning work around other core subjects while the art teachers instruct students on art subjects and projects.

"Being creative and able to solve problems is a marketable, critical skill," said Yang. "It's important for these life skills to be a priority in our students' education." Yang points out that art can reach all students, offering ways to express themselves, even those who don't feel successful in a traditional setting.

Yang is a former architect who taught elementary art in Texas before moving to Washougal. She has taught fourth grade at Cape Horn-Skye because there were no elementary art positions until now.

To help students recognize their growth and appreciate their projects, as students create art, their work will be added to an art portfolio that will be displayed in an online gallery, artsonia.com. There they will be able to see all their art from their K-12 education. 🌱



Cape Horn-Skye fifth graders Aspen Holmes and Morgan Heath create and illustrate Mayan-inspired pottery.

Meet our new Special Education director

Special Education Director Dr. Allison Blakely joined Washougal School District this summer. Dr. Blakely was an administrator for the LEEP program at Clackamas Educational Service District in Clackamas, Oregon, serving students with complex communication needs. Prior to that, she worked as an elementary special education teacher in the North Clackamas School District.



Blakely said she was inspired to make the transition from teaching to administration after she experienced success in her own classroom and wanted to see all students

achieving positive outcomes districtwide.

"I love special education," said Dr. Blakely. "I love the students and I believe all students should experience positive outcomes. I'm very excited to join Washougal, I really see a lot of opportunity here."

A native Oregonian, Blakely grew up in Hood River, and earned her Bachelor's Degree and Ph.D. at the University of Oregon, and her Master's Degree at Portland State.

Blakely's joining WSD seems meant-to-be; last year she took a train trip from Montana to Oregon, and as the train passed by the Washougal district office, Blakely said, "I'd love to work at a place like that!" 🌱

Meet the team: WSD Elementary art teachers



Alice Yang was formerly a 4th grade teacher at Cape Horn-Skye with a background in art education and architecture.



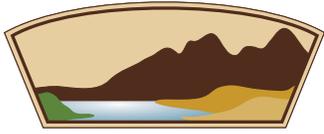
Joanna Sickels is an experienced art teacher from Las Vegas and joined the staff at Columbia River Gorge Elementary.



Suzi Thelen will work at both Gause and Hathaway Elementary and brings her experience as an art teacher from Minnesota.



Brianna Bain works part-time at Gause and is from Massachusetts with experience as an art teacher with a focus on the inclusion of culturally diverse modern artists.



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SCHOOL DISTRICT**
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A big Washougal welcome to our new teachers



BACK ROW: Zach Beal, Patrick Rice, Jeremy Totten, Kathleen London, Tim Gasper, Britney Knotts, Taylor Boswell, Brody Faler, Jennifer Arbaugh, Dakota Marr, Janelle Hoglan-Stanton, Chelsea Skirble

MIDDLE ROW: Chrissy Moses, Brianna Bain, Leslie Woodland, Taryn Tedford, Brittany Guest, Suzi Thelen, Jennifer Richey, Carissa Page, Courtney Murdock, Joanna Sickels, Michelle Rindt, Robyn Riat

FRONT ROW: Becky Wiley, Julie Present, Heather Hopkins, Sydney Croucher, Jayne Poole, Areli Lopez, Tracey Stewart, Dawn Heap, Angelah Quidachay-Ham, Lyndsey Russell, April Boneski, Ashley Weber

Parents invited to join new district leadership for coffee and conversation

All Washougal parents have been invited to share a cup of coffee and thoughts about their schools with Superintendent Mary Templeton and Assistant Superintendent Renae Burson.

"I am new to the community and Renae is new in her role, so we felt it was important for us to step out and engage in dialog with parents around education and our schools," said Templeton.

These informal morning-time gatherings are called "Coffee with Mary and Renae" and will be held at all Washougal schools this fall and winter. Meetings have been held at Jemtegaard Middle School, Cape Horn-Skye Elementary, Canyon Creek Middle School, and Columbia River Gorge Elementary recently. The next is set for Gause Elementary School parents on December 20 from 9-10 a.m.

"The goal is to hear directly from parents about what they feel is going well, what areas need our attention, what their hopes are for the Washougal School District and how we can support them and their students," said Templeton.

Got five minutes?

Please help UNITE! Washougal achieve its goal of 300 completed community surveys and make a difference!

The 5-minute survey asks a series of questions surrounding community views on youth substance use. The results will help to inform a better understanding of the needs of our community and determine the programs, projects, and events offered to meet those needs.

Completely anonymous, survey responses are kept confidential and will be reported only in combination with other responses.

<http://unitewashougal.org/community-survey-2018/>

Upcoming Washougal School Board Meetings

November 13, Columbia River Gorge Elementary

November 27, Hathaway Elementary

Meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. All are invited!

**WASHOUGAL
SCHOOL DISTRICT**
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