

Community Connections

WINTER 2021



Hybrid learning begins for elementary students



ABOVE: Cape Horn-Skye first grade teacher Nichol Yung leads her students through an activity. UPPER RIGHT: Cape Horn-Skye third grade teacher Josie Hudson gives hand sanitizer to a student

Safety precautions for in-person learning

These practices are required for anyone entering our school buildings, including all students and staff:

- Daily health screenings for everyone
- Practicing physical distancing
- Frequent hand washing and sanitizing
- Wearing masks or face coverings at all times
- Increased sanitization of work surfaces and tools

The district also asks that everyone avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands while in public, and, of course, stay home if you're sick.

Next steps

Washougal middle school students will return for in-person instruction beginning with a sixth-grade orientation on Feb. 11 & 12. Grades 7 and 8 will head back to campus on Tuesday, Feb. 16. Plans for reopening Washougal's high schools are underway, and the hope is to begin hybrid learning in March. Per the state's Department of Health reopening guidelines, high schools will be able to expand in-person learning to more grades once the spread of COVID-19 in our community declines to below 200 cases per 100,000 residents.

Washougal's elementary schools filled with the gleeful sounds of students reuniting with teachers and classmates when the district reopened last month under a hybrid learning model. While pre-k students and kindergarteners have been going to school since the fall, students in first- through third-grade headed back to campus on January 19 and were joined by their fourth- and fifth-grade peers on January 25. It's a welcome shift away from completely remote learning for many of the district's students.

"While teachers and students have made gains through our impactED program, we know that the start of our hybrid program will make the time together even more powerful and set students up for success on their remote days," said Renae Burson McMurray, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning. She added, "the

return to school also provides students with critical social and emotional learning opportunities, and time to interact with peers."

The hybrid model features half of students attending classes at school two days per week, while the other half are engaged in Remote Learning (impactED) at home. Group "AA" attends school in-person on Mondays and Tuesdays, while the "BB" group comes to school on Thursdays and Fridays. Students in both cohorts have asynchronous lessons on the days they are not at school.

The phased implementation of a hybrid learning model is supported by updated guidance from the Washington State Department of Health. WSD worked with elementary staff, public health officials, and other school districts to ensure safety

continued inside >

School Counselors modify social-emotional support techniques to connect remotely

The roles of WSD School Counselors may have been altered during the pandemic in the sense that the journey of their work has changed—but not its destination. Their goal remains to build relationships with all students and families, and to provide children an outlet through which to be seen and heard. For many students and families, it's more important than ever to have strong social-emotional support as they navigate the many challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"During a typical school year, I am able to see my students for quick check-ins, impromptu problem solving, and help with de-escalating issues so they can be ready to learn and engage with others," explained Alysia Noriega, Hathaway Elementary School counselor. "I am still able to connect with my students through many different means such as whole classroom lessons, small groups, and one-on-one; however, it takes much more coordination between myself, the students, and their families."

Because the distance learning students don't have recess and other outlets for

interacting with their peers, the counselors' lessons are a combination of check-in time to hear what everyone is doing and excited about; lessons from the district-approved social-emotional learning curriculum, Second Steps; and extra videos and games that apply to those lessons.

"I've been able to do a variety of different lessons and activities with my students, and the focus of these lessons vary from week to week, and from grade level to grade level," Noriega explained. "Topics we have covered this year include coping strategies, problem solving, emotion regulation skills, growth mindset, friendship building, and bullying prevention."

Despite the numerous obstacles that this year has brought, Washougal counselors have been able to do their job in a meaningful, successful way.

"I've seen remarkable success in getting students with barriers to connect with their teachers this year," said Post. "I've seen kindergarteners learn how to be students. I have also worked with staff and talked with them about tools to help with their



Alysia Noriega, Hathaway Elementary School Counselor, holding a stuffed koala, which she often uses as a therapeutic device with students.

own emotional health because we cannot help our students if we do not take care of ourselves."

Hybrid learning

(continued from front page)

protocols are in place for the security of all students and staff.

WSD families not yet ready for their students to come back to in-person learning are able to continue full-time Remote Learning. This option will be available at least through the end of this school year, but it is considered an overall temporary arrangement. It is the district's hope that most impacted students will eventually return to their in-person classrooms once schools are fully reopened.

"Our entire community must continue to wear masks, watch our distance, and wash our hands often so we can welcome more students back for in-person learning," said McMurray. "Health officials continue to emphasize these simple, but critical steps be taken in our daily lives to slow the spread of COVID-19."

Student athletes return to outdoor practice



After months of practices being placed on hold to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our community, Washougal's high school students are thrilled to finally be able to get together again to safely condition and practice for the sports they love and look forward to all year. The Washington Interscholastic Activities Association, in alignment with DOH guidelines, has permitted practices for some sports to resume, starting with sports that are typically played in the fall. WHS' cross country teams started practicing in January, with all students wearing masks/face coverings and exercising in pods of six or fewer students. Plans for resuming middle school sports are underway, with those grades expected to return to practice once hybrid learning begins.

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Washougal Community,



The big news this winter is that our schools have opened for in-person learning! The journey to see our students return to our schools has been a team effort from everyone: our teachers, staff, administrators, community partners, and students and their families. I find myself quite thankful to be part of this amazing community, especially as we navigate these unprecedented times. Although we have overcome many challenges during this school year, we are thankful for some of the important lessons we have learned as we support our students with improved parent communication, expanded technology skills, flexibility in learning platforms, a focus on equity, and creative approaches to support social and emotional learning.

The WSD Strategic Plan continues to be our guiding light as we move forward to ensure that all students in this district are known, nurtured, and challenged to rise. This year, the school board has committed to a focus on Equity, Stewardship of Resources, and Partnerships to Support Students. Fiscal resiliency has been our theme as we make sure to allocate resources appropriately in a way that helps us improve student achievement. Our CTE and Culinary Departments have demonstrated grit and determination by establishing scratch cooking and creating a project-based food truck program. Through it all, our district has not been just surviving, but rather, thriving!

I think we can all agree that Washougal is an "Educational Destination," and the collective efforts from all of us are definitely seeing our district Rise!

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary Templeton



SCHOOL BOARD CORNER

The school board is made up of five volunteers from the Washougal community who dedicate a large portion of their spare time to making Washougal an amazing place to learn. Many have a personal connection to the school district and each cares about the success of all students. WSD is very appreciative of the board's thoughtful approach to leading the district, especially in the midst of a year with many varying and frequently shifting needs. Washougal school board members were recognized at the January board meeting as part of the statewide School Board Appreciation Month. Please thank our board members next time you see them around town for the important work they do for our schools!

ONLINE BOARD MEETINGS

March 9 & 23. Meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. Visit our website for information on how to participate.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

This spring, Washougal School District board members and leadership team members will take an opportunity to share information about the district's legislative priorities with local lawmakers during A Day on the Hill. In February, representatives from Washougal and other area school districts will meet with legislators to help them understand the education issues our community is facing, whether related to COVID-19 or otherwise. The hope is that the legislators will take school districts' concerns into account as they develop and shape the state's budget and consider changes in state laws that govern education.

The WSD board advocates for legislative priority around the following:

- Advancing vital programs and services,
- Expanding access to equitable instruction, and
- Securing staff and district resources.

Advancing vital programs includes urging the state to fund educational services to students with special needs, and strengthening school safety by supporting services and training

around social-emotional health of students and staff.

Expanding access to equitable instruction includes advocating for policies that close the opportunity gap for persistently underserved students, and reviewing the prototypical funding model to provide staffing that supports the many needs of students. For example, the state's prototypical funding model would provide less than one part-time nurse for the entire district. This does not allow us to adequately support students and their health needs, especially during the pandemic. The district has six part-time nurses to provide coverage at our schools.

Finally, the impacts of COVID-19 on school districts and staffing have been significant. The board is asking the legislature to hold the line on basic education funding, especially with regard to enrollment and transportation, in order to avoid mid-year budget cuts in districts. They also seek assistance from the legislature in covering costs of employee salaries, healthcare costs, and other benefit costs, which have increased due to recent changes.



WASHOUGAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

#WashougalRising

SUPERINTENDENT: Dr. Mary Templeton

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Cory Chase, President; Angela Hancock, Vice President; Donna Sinclair, Legislative Rep; Jim Cooper; Chuck Carpenter



Alex Yost, Washougal's first CTE Professional Technical Assistant, stands in front of the new food truck, which will be operated by WHS students.

WSD food truck project delivers career exploration opportunities

The Washougal School District Career and Technical Education (CTE) program focuses on exposing students to authentic work scenarios guided by knowledgeable, passionate staff with real-world experience. One way this is happening is the development of a fully operational student-run food truck, which was purchased by the department in spring 2020.

Learning activities centered around the food truck project will include all aspects of business development, such as creating a business plan; learning about health department rules and regulations; navigating local permitting and licensing requirements; developing manuals for training and safety; and coming up with a marketing strategy. There will also be opportunities in manufacturing, welding, small engine service/repair, and

maintenance for students interested in those CTE experiences.

To support these activities, the district hired Alexandra Yost as Washougal's first CTE Professional Technical Assistant. "We are delighted that Alex is bringing her extensive business and culinary background to the team," said CTE Director Margaret Rice. Yost is the former owner and chef of OurBar in downtown Washougal and is currently a member of the Washougal City Council. "We know she will fit right in, and our students and district will greatly benefit from the wealth of knowledge she brings from her professional experience as a local business owner." Yost will also support WHS in establishing a Green Team that helps with composting, recycling, and waste reduction, with a goal of achieving Green School certification.

New Advisory Team sets equity goals

Washougal's new Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Team assembled for the first time last fall under the leadership of Assistant Superintendent Aaron Hansen to begin establishing goals and parameters for its work. Following a dialogue about foundational equity-focused learning and theory of change led by WEA Equity Consultant Ben Ibale, the team began identifying the most pressing issues of equity in Washougal.

New members are still being welcomed to the team, which includes representation from a diverse array of patrons, staff, and students, ensuring voices from all parts of the Washougal community are present and have a voice in guiding this important work. The team will go over the purpose of their work, as well as review student data and discuss the questions that arise from the data. They will also identify pressing equity issues and have additional time to determine whether there are other topics to add.

The work of this team is centered around identifying pressing equity issues, which is a vital component of building a District Equity Plan. The team also provides input into the development of policy and an equity decision making tool that will help guide decisions on instruction, programming, staffing, funding, and policy. All members of the Washougal School District should strive to implement anti-racist practices and build equity awareness through all of our activities and decisions. Together, we can continue to rise toward authentic change and guarantee hope and resiliency for each child.

2019-20 Financial Report

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM



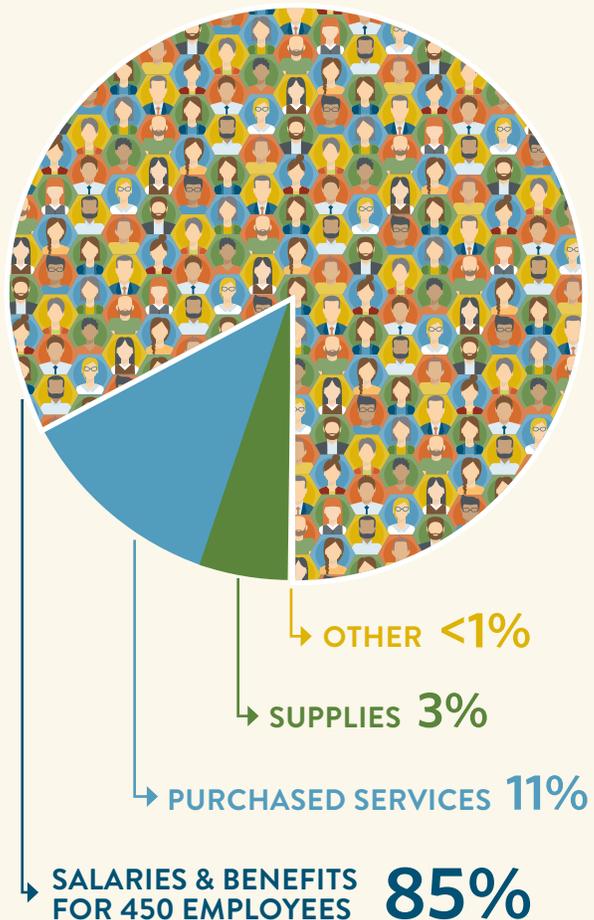
2019-20 REVENUES*

STATE FUNDS - 80% Per pupil funding, State Levy Assistance, Transportation funds	\$36,633,988
FEDERAL FUNDS - 5% Special Ed, CTE, Title I, Title II, USDA Commodities	\$2,202,717
LOCAL NON-TAX FUNDS - 2% Facility rentals, community education, donations, etc.	\$1,038,501
LOCAL LEVY FUNDS - 13% Educational Programs & Operations Levy, Technology Levy	\$6,152,176
TOTAL 2018-19 REVENUE	\$46,027,382

2019-20 EXPENDITURES*

BASIC EDUCATION - 55% Most salaries & benefits, materials, professional development	\$24,941,063
SPECIAL EDUCATION - 16% Educating students with special needs	\$7,235,595
CAREER & TECHNICAL ED. - 4% Middle and high school work- and college-readiness	\$1,975,981
OTHER INSTRUCTION - 3% Title I, Learning Assistance, bilingual programs, Highly Capable program	\$1,482,414
TRANSFERS OUT - <1% One-time, long-range capital facilities planning	\$51,584
SUPPORT SERVICES - 22% Purchased services and other operational expenses	\$10,138,341
TOTAL 2019-20 EXPENDITURES	\$45,824,977

WHERE THE MONEY GOES



*Our fiscal year begins September 1 and ends August 31. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.



#WashougalRising
 www.washougal.k12.wa.us
 4855 Evergreen Way • Washougal, WA 98671

Nonprofit Organization
 U.S. Postage PAID
 Washougal, WA
 Permit No. 14

Washougal School District Patron
 Washougal, WA 98671

The path to reopening Washougal schools

Despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, Washougal has adapted its teaching and learning programs to accommodate a diverse array of instructional needs for its students and families. While many students and families are excited to be heading back to class for part-time in-person learning, Washougal Learning Academy remains as an option for families who don't want or aren't able to come back in person. With multiple learning options available, there is a path for every student, no matter their needs or preferences.

SCHOOL REOPENING PATHS

1. Attend your regular Washougal school

2. Attend online

Option A: Hybrid Model



- Half of students attend classes at school while the other half are engaged in Remote Learning at home
- Students attend **two days per week in-person**, and switch to learning at home for the rest of the week
- **Safety precautions:** daily health screenings, face coverings, social distancing, increased hand sanitization

Option B: Remote Learning Model



- Full-time Remote Learning
- Teacher check-in times on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday
- An option for families and students not ready to come back in-person
- Temporary: Designed for students who will eventually return to their regular school



- K-12 all-online program
- Flexible schedules
- Specifically designed program for each student
- Dedicated teacher support
- Uses nationally recognized curriculum designed for online learning

**Students and families are asked to commit to a full semester of learning through WLA, and this program requires weekly consultation/check-in with teachers.*