

Community Connections

FALL 2019



Strategic plan to guide future of the district

As Washougal students start their school year, many with new pencils, backpacks and sneakers, Washougal School District begins with a new Strategic Plan to guide its vision over the next five years. The WSD Board of Directors adopted the 2019-2025 Strategic Plan in the spring to set the course for the Washougal School District.

“Our vision, simply stated, is for Washougal to know, nurture, and challenge all students to rise,” said WSD Superintendent Mary Templeton. “We have also developed a set of meaningful goals designed to lead the district to become one of the top performing districts in the state.”

The comprehensive strategic planning process began in November 2018 with input from Washougal School District community, parents, students and staff. These stakeholder groups met in person and online to share ideas which were distilled by a steering committee representing all groups. This culminated in a shared vision and goals to be adopted by the Washougal

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Class of 2023 signs grad pledge

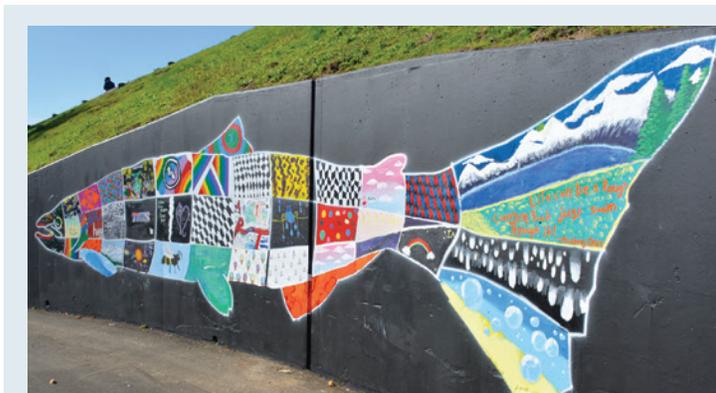
Incoming Washougal High School freshmen were welcomed at a special, “We will graduate!” rally event August 26. After learning the school cheer and meeting staff, each student was invited to sign a banner, pledging to graduate high school.

“We want the Class of 2023 to be the first class to have a 100% on time graduation and leave a legacy for other classes to follow,” WHS principal, Sheree Clark told students and parents seated on gym bleachers. “Everything you do at school the next four years will matter for you to reach the goal of graduating on time,” said Clark. “The good news is you are not alone. You have your

friends, parents and a whole team of people at WHS to help you get through!”

The idea for the freshman graduation commitment signing came from the Panthers Rising event held last spring that featured all graduating seniors who had made commitments for their post-high school education, including four and two-year colleges, apprenticeships, military and trade schools.

“We are challenging all of our WHS students to rise,” Clark said. After students signed the banner, WHS staff also signed their commitment to help students reach this goal. 🌱



LEFT and TOP RIGHT: Students from Jemtegaard and Canyon Creek Middle Schools are the newest contributors to the surge of public art in Washougal. More than 25 student artists from the Club 8 after-school program met to create a patchwork Chinook salmon mural on a public retaining wall at the corner of “D” and Durgan Streets downtown. The project was led by JMS art teacher, Dani Allen, who met with local muralist Travis London to come up with their individual designs for the piece. Allen was the driving force behind the project that has been envisioned for several years. Thanks to the City of Washougal, the Washougal Schools Foundation and the Washougal Arts and Culture Alliance for their partnership in this effort.

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Washougal Community,

It is hard to believe that I am now in year two as your superintendent of schools. The work has been rewarding and exciting, and I am grateful for the continued community support of the Washougal School District. We are poised to become one of the top performing school districts in the state with our six-year strategic plan as our guiding document. Join us as we cast a vision to know, nurture, and challenge all students to rise and grasp onto opportunity for the future. Our school board has selected two specific areas of focus from the strategic plan to guide the work of the 2019-20 school year: Financial stewardship of our resources and improved student achievement via effective instruction.



Although the new state funding model for schools has provided challenges for us, we have maintained our promise to the community and to our staff that we will retain excellent teachers and staff, while at the same time finding efficiencies in operations that will allow us to “stay the course” of budget stabilization over the next several years. To that end, we are moving successfully and accurately toward our goals and acknowledge that we have an obligation to make additional investments in innovation and social-emotional wellness.

Student achievement and opportunity to “stretch” have been at the core of our success during the 2018-2019 school year and we see continued opportunity and excitement during the 2019-2020 school year. Our on-time graduation rate has soared from 83% to almost 90% in one year. We have expanded our Advanced Placement offerings at the high school. Our ninth-grade students are significantly above the state average for successful completion of coursework during the freshman year. Our internships and apprenticeship opportunities have continued to increase and we are actively working with the Port of Camas-Washougal to create pathways for our students to enter into industry during the high school experience and beyond. Partnerships with the community and industry experts have provided students in grades K-12 opportunities in robotics, coding, STEM, Knowledge Bowl, Science Olympiad, the Arts and real-life business principles.

Thank you for your commitment and support of our schools. Our future is bright!

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary Templeton

Strategic Plan *(continued from front page)*

School Board.

Templeton described how she has witnessed WSD staff knowing, nurturing and challenging all students to rise in her presentation at the Back to School Rally on August 22.

Additionally, the hashtag #WashougalRising has been introduced by WSD to offer a place on social media to celebrate the work of the strategic plan and the growth and success of students and staff. “We actually hope the entire community will use this hashtag to share all the great things happening in Washougal,” said Templeton.

Through the strategic planning process, six pillars have been established to help guide district work.

EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION

We will invest in attracting, retaining and developing excellent teachers and staff. We will provide relevant, rigorous and supportive instruction with high expectations for all students.

CAREER & COLLEGE READINESS

We will prepare students to contribute to the community they live in, whether in skilled trades, higher education, or professional careers.

EQUITY

We will engage in intentional efforts to identify disparities that create opportunity gaps, and take action to eliminate the achievement gap. We will develop and strengthen students’ agency, so they are prepared for careers, college and life.

WSD will be accountable for the results and use multiple metrics for each goal to measure success.

“We are more than excited to put our strategic plan into action,” Templeton said. “We are confident we will reach our goals as we know, nurture, and challenge all students to rise.”

To read the complete plan, visit our website: www.washougal.k12.wa.us/blog/2019/08/20/wsd-strategic-plan-2025/ 

EDUCATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

We will ensure all students are involved in innovative, artistic, creative, vocational, and intellectual pursuits, so they develop confidence, understanding, and agency in the classroom and beyond.

PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT STUDENTS

We will partner to build culturally responsive schools, where all children are known, supported, and connected through positive relationships in a safe environment.

STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES

We will maximize resources to create opportunities for our students through a transparent budget process that aligns with our priorities for student achievement and operations of the district. Every dollar matters.





New AP classes offered at WHS

This fall, Washougal High School offered a new Advanced Placement (AP) course titled Computer Science Principles, bringing the total number of AP courses at the school to 13. AP courses offer a rigorous, collegiate level curriculum that prepares students to succeed in college and other educational and training programs after graduation.

The new course will feature volunteer instructors through the Microsoft Philanthropies TEALS program, bringing subject matter experience and opportunities for students to learn alongside industry professionals. WHS students can take AP courses in Art, Calculus, Biology, Chemistry, English, Music Theory, Physics, Psychology, Spanish, and History. Students who complete the course can register for the AP exam in May, and students who perform well on the exam can earn college credit, providing an opportunity to skip introductory coursework upon enrollment in college.

“We are excited about adding a new AP course subject for the 2019-20 school year,” said Aaron Hansen, WSD Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Student Services. “Last spring we were intentional with our message to students that we wanted all of our students to challenge themselves academically. Our AP enrollment reflects the good work our counselors did as we have many more students enrolled in AP courses this coming school year.”

“We are planning to continue to add more AP offerings at WHS as well as continuing to encourage all students to stretch themselves,” he said. “The work our students are doing now is preparing them to compete in the global economy and be able to effectively participate in a rapidly changing world.”

WHS students can also earn college credit by taking College in the High School coursework in pre-Calculus, Calculus, and Spanish through a partnership with Central Washington University, and many additional courses through Dual Credit courses with Clark College and Mt. Hood Community College.

Helping students be prepared and be able to contribute to their community through career and college opportunities is a pillar of the new WSD Strategic Plan. These AP options prepare students academically to succeed in college and build job readiness skills to expand career opportunities. Students and families interested in learning more about Advanced Placement, Dual Credit, or College in the Classroom coursework can contact their school counselor. More information can also be found at: www.washougal.k12.wa.us/whs/dual-credit-classes/ 🌱



The Washougal School District is focusing on student attendance and underscoring the importance of regular attendance for all students.

For example, did you know that:

- Missing one day of school per month, over the course of a child’s K-12 career, is equal to missing 6.5 months of school.
- By grade 6, chronic absenteeism is one of the top three signs a student will drop out in high school.
- Only 17% of students who are chronically absent in Kindergarten and first grade will be reading at grade level after 3rd grade.
- Absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.

Especially in the early grades, success in school goes hand in hand with good attendance. Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school, and themselves. Start building this habit in preschool so they learn right away that going to school on time, every day is important. Good attendance will help them succeed in high school, college and at work.

TIPS FOR PARENTS:

- Set a regular bed time and morning routine.
- Lay out clothes and backpacks the night before.
- Don’t let your child stay home unless they are truly sick.
- If your child seems anxious about going to school, talk to teachers, school counselors, or other parents for advice on how to make them feel comfortable and excited about learning.
- Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, neighbor or another parent.
- Avoid medical appointments and extended trips when school is in session. 🌱



#WashougalRising
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 Washougal, WA 98671

Group to study school start times and make recommendations

The Washougal School District has convened a committee to review school start times and the potential impacts to student health and learning.

According to Assistant Superintendent Aaron Hansen, studies have shown that later start times lead to better attendance and increased academic success.

The group, made up of parents and teachers from each grade band, board representative, plus admin and staff, will meet monthly through February. The group will study research and experiences from other districts, then make recommendations to the superintendent, who will decide and present to board. 🌱

Voters, are you registered?

Previous generations worked hard to earn the right to vote and participate in our country's democracy. Parents can model the value of voting and what it means to live in a democratic society.

Talking to your child about the election, issues you care about, and why you feel voting is important can help them become involved in the electoral process once they are old enough.

Registering to vote or updating voter contact information is easy, and can be done online through the Secretary of State's website, or in person with the Clark or Skamania County Elections office. Visit <https://voter.votewa.gov> for more information. 🌱

Take the Unite! Coalition annual community survey

Please help the Unite! Washougal Community Coalition by taking their annual survey. If you live, work or play in Washougal we need your opinion!

ENGLISH SURVEY: <https://www.research.net/r/CLWA2019EN>

SPANISH SURVEY: <https://es.research.net/r/CLWA2019SP> 🌱

Gause parking lot work marks last of 2015 bond projects



Sophie and Stella Genova were some of the first students to use the new Gause drop off lane.

A parking and circulation project was completed over the summer at Gause Elementary. These improvements were one of the final projects to be completed using funding by the voter-approved 2015 capital facilities bond.

The Gause Elementary Circulation Project added a drive lane in front of the school with a pull-out lane that allows families to drop students off in the driveway rather than on the street. This will reduce congestion along 34th Street during peak pick up and drop off times.

In addition, the north parking lot was expanded to accommodate additional vehicles, and to create a loop for cars to more easily enter and exit. The parking area includes crosswalks for pedestrians to increase safety and trees to make the area cooler in the warmer months.

The Gause project was approved by the WSD Board in January 2018. It was paid for with excess funding resulting from excellent fiscal management of the 2015 \$57 million capital bond. This project had been identified as a needed safety improvement during the 2014 Long Range Capital Facility Planning process. 🌱

SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Mary Templeton

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cory Chase, President
 Ron Dinius, Vice President
 Donna Sinclair, Legislative Rep.
 Angela Hancock
 Teresa Lees

Upcoming Board Meetings

Nov. 12, Columbia River Gorge E.S.

Nov. 26, District Office

Meetings are held at 6:30 p.m.

All are invited!

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT: The Washougal School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination: Civil Rights Coordinator: Aaron Hansen, 4855 Evergreen Way, Washougal, WA 98671, (360) 954-3050; Title IX Officer: Gary McGarvie, 1201 39th St., Washougal, WA 98671, (360) 954-3104; Section 504 Coordinator: Aaron Hansen, 4855 Evergreen Way, Washougal, WA 98671, (360) 954-3050.