



Congratulations to WHS's Science Olympiad Team! They placed 5th at the state tournament.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

WSD board selects name for new elementary

COLUMBIA River Gorge Elementary will be the name of the new Washougal elementary school set to break ground in June. The Washougal School District Board of Directors deliberated and discussed the merits of three names recommended to them by the Facility Naming Committee at their meeting April 11, 2016. The decision came after a 4 to 1 vote.

"Ultimately the board felt that because the elementary school is located at the beginning of the Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area that the name gave it a real sense of place and would be immediately recognizable by most adults and kids," said WSD Board Member, Elaine Pfeifer. "It also honors the significance of the Columbia River Gorge to Washougal in both our past and our future."

The winning name beat out two other name suggestions of Nch'i Wana Elementary and Gibbons Creek Elementary. There were a total of 140 name nominations made by the community with 84 different names suggested. The Facility Naming Committee used the district naming criteria and narrowed the list to three recommendations for the Board. The naming committee was comprised of Rhea Bohlin, Rene Carroll, David Cooke, Joyce Lindsay, Blaine Peterson and Rick Thomas. The process began in January.

The WSD Board selected the name based on the best fit with the criteria set in the district's School Naming procedure and which best represents the Washougal Community. The school colors and mascot will be chosen by the new student body of Columbia River Gorge Elementary.



Chris Allen and Adriana Samuel explore vocab words in Darcy Hickey's class at Cape Horn-Skye Elementary.

Board approves new English Language Arts curriculum for grades K-5

AT its April 26 meeting, the Washougal Board of Directors approved a new English Language Arts curriculum for grades K-5. The decision was based on the recommendation of the Curriculum Adoption Committee, whose work involved months of research and data collection, including several intensive day-long meetings to review options, visits to other schools and districts, and trial lessons in Washougal classrooms.

The new curriculum, Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) is a comprehensive, preschool through fifth grade program for

teaching reading, writing, listening, and speaking while also building students' knowledge and vocabulary.

The Curriculum Adoption Committee was composed of teachers from every elementary grade level at every Washougal school plus representatives from special education, Title I/LAP, the district's instructional coaches and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Patricia Boles. The group identified their three top programs for an in-depth review, after which they unanimously selected CKLA. Per board policy,

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A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Washougal School District patrons,

This spring, the Washougal School District community celebrated a momentous occasion as we broke ground on two facilities replacement projects—new buildings for Excelsior and District Transportation. By commemorating these events, we celebrate the commitment of our community to the future of Washougal's children.

These projects began over two years ago, through the hard work and dedication of community members with the support of voters. The district's new Transportation Facility will house up to 36 buses in a safe and secure facility that includes a modern maintenance facility and dispatch office space for staff.

The new transportation facility is important, not just because it replaces outdated structures and provides additional space and updated amenities, but because it is where we start every morning preparing to engage our students. Transporting our students safely to and from school is one of the many important functions of providing a quality educational program.

Excelsior holds a special place in the Washougal community. The building will provide a safe and secure, modern 21st Century environment that engages students in learning. The new school provides an opportunity to reimagine academic programs that best serve the needs of students as we prepare students for success beyond high school.

The new 10,000 square foot building will provide three classrooms to house up to 90 high school students with more flexible space including a commons space, applied learning culinary/kitchen space, conference and meeting rooms, and outdoor learning area.

I'm really looking forward to watching these projects get underway and I can't wait to share future updates about our new facilities.

Sincerely,
Dr. Mike Stromme, Ed.D.



WSD hires new administrators

THE Washougal School District has hired several new administrators for the 2016-17 school year, two replacing staff resignations and one as the new planning principal for the new Columbia River Gorge Elementary School. They will begin July 1, 2016.



Renae Burson,
Principal, Gause
Elementary School

Renae Burson has been selected as the new principal for Gause Elementary School, replacing Rex Larson who retires in June. Burson is currently the principal of Bella Vista Elementary School District in Bella Vista, California, a role she has filled for the last two years. Ms. Burson has also worked as a curriculum and instruction coordinator, Math project instructor, Math consultant and a classroom teacher. She has experience in implementing programs to help all students succeed and is well-versed in many initiatives used in Washougal, such as the 1:1 technology initiative and professional learning communities. Burson was awarded the 2016 Elementary Principal of the Year in Shasta County for improving outcomes for all students.

"I am really looking forward to joining the Washougal School District," said Burson. "As principal, I make it a point to know each of my students by name and I can't wait to begin developing strong relationships with staff, students, families and the community of Washougal."



**Tami Culp, Associate
Principal, Jemtegaard
Middle School**

Tami Culp is the new associate principal at Jemtegaard Middle School. Culp is currently an Instructional Coach for the North Clackamas School District in Milwaukie, Oregon. Her career spans 25 years in education, with experience as an elementary school classroom teacher, instructional coach, school administrator and adjunct professor at Concordia University. Culp has extensive experience working in Title I schools and leading school and building committees on curriculum adoption, Response to Intervention (RTI), Professional Learning Communities, Positive Behavior

Support and Sheltered Instruction.

Culp began her career in education as a parent volunteer in her daughter's kindergarten class. She had a career in marketing and advertising but found working with children extremely rewarding. "I really felt a connection to working with kids on a regular basis," she said.

Culp and her husband, Jim, have lived in Washougal the past 10 years.

"I value relationships and working together to make a difference," she said. "Education is a relationship-based field and it takes everyone working together to benefit students. I am really thrilled about joining the staff at Jemtegaard."

Culp replaces Brian Amundson who has accepted a position with the Battle Ground School District.



Tracey MacLachlan,
Planning Principal,
Columbia River
Gorge Elementary

Tracey MacLachlan has been selected as the planning principal for the new Columbia River Gorge Elementary School. MacLachlan is currently principal at Union Ridge Elementary School in Ridgefield School District. She was previously an elementary teacher in the Camas School District for 12 years. She brings experience in instructional leadership in curriculum, instruction and assessment. She is experienced in hiring and evaluating staff following the state's TPEP model as well as developing and implementing professional development for staff. She previously served as associate principal where she was responsible for managing student discipline issues and working with staff to develop curriculum strategies to help all students succeed. As a former teacher, she fully understands the importance of teacher collaboration to share instructional strategies for the benefit of all students.

"This opportunity to work collaboratively with administrators and the school board to create a new learning environment for the students of Washougal will be an exhilarating challenge," said MacLachlan. "The joy of leading the new Columbia River Gorge Elementary school community from the ground up is a 'chance of a lifetime' in the eyes of this principal. I am thrilled to be joining the Washougal team!"



Students in Vina Black's English class use Chromebooks daily to enhance their learning.

1:1 initiative: Students and staff continue to grow tech skills

AS students and teachers in the Washougal School District become more familiar with technology and the tools that enhance classroom learning and instruction, everyone is becoming increasingly tech savvy. Currently in year three of a 1:1 technology initiative that will put one device (iPad, Chromebook) in each student's hands, new tools continue to streamline teaching and learning.

WHS teacher Vina Black uses technology to enhance learning and improve classroom efficiency and organization. Students still read classics such as William Golding's, "Lord of the Flies," which they are able to read on their Chromebook or via an actual printed volume. But they can quickly access a list of main characters created by their teacher and stored in an online file shared by the class. Quizzes are also online. Instead of handing out a paper test, collecting them, and scoring them, everything happens online where both student and teacher can see the results.

Black and her students use the Chromebooks daily, especially for vocabulary assignments, partner work where students collaborate on the same work, and quiz games that are educational but also fun.

"What's great about technology is that it really engages students at whatever level they are," said Black. "It has been really positive."

Black says that using tools such as Google Classroom, where students can access assignments and store their work has helped organize their classroom. If an assignment is misplaced or forgotten it can be accessed via the shared drive. If a student has a question about an assignment or due date, they can check their Google Classroom from home.

Black says she wasn't a tech expert before, but seeing the positive impact it had on her class made her want to improve her skills and learn even more about how devices could benefit her students. "We have been learning together and with new knowledge and skills, we all feel more confident that we can succeed with technology. A student will say 'I think I can figure this out,' instead of getting frustrated or giving up."

English curriculum (continued)

the Instructional Materials Committee, made up of parents, community members, and administrators also reviewed the curriculum before it was presented to the school board.

"Teachers are really excited about the new curriculum," said Boles. "It's going to create more consistency across schools and allow for increased teacher collaboration."

Third grade teacher Darcy Hickey says that initially she was skeptical that teachers needed a new curriculum but agreed to be a part of the committee to research the options. As they narrowed the options to three, the CKLA program was her least favorite. She volunteered to try it with her students, thinking it would fall short. What happened in her classroom surprised her. "I tried the curriculum with my 'reluctant readers' and was shocked to see that not only did they connect with the curriculum, they hung on my every word!" she said. "Their excitement was

contagious!"

Not only could students answer questions about what they read, they came up with even more questions. The content was so engaging and exciting for them that they checked out books on the subject, (the solar system) on their own. When tested, every student could remember what they had learned. "They proved me wrong," said Hickey, who was so impressed with the curriculum that she introduced it to the whole class. "The content is so real and relevant that they love it," she said. "They are so engaged with it and they are becoming better readers without even knowing it! This program is exactly what we needed."

Training for all elementary and preschool teachers will begin in June, with a full-day session June 21 and another training day in August. Teachers will have access to the program over the summer in order to familiarize themselves with it even further.



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District and community representatives gathered for the groundbreaking of Excelsior on May 10, 2016.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Gorge school projects receive site plan approvals

THE Washougal School District reached a significant milestone as it moves forward in the construction process of three new schools. As of April 12, all site plans and environmental reviews have been approved

and the public comment and appeal process is complete. "This clears the path for updated timelines to be established and construction and site work to begin," said Dr. Mike Stromme, WSD Superintendent.

The construction of the new Columbia River Gorge Elementary School and replacement for Jemtegaard Middle School is within the Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area. "A

full year was built into the construction schedule to provide time to work through the Columbia River Gorge Commission approval of the schools," Stromme said. "District representatives engaged in communication with the Gorge Commission during the early planning process. We are pleased that there were no issues raised that caused delay for the permitting of our schools."

Join us for a
groundbreaking
event!



Tuesday, June 7 • 2-2:30 p.m.

Jemtegaard Middle School/
Columbia River Gorge Elementary

Upcoming Washougal School Board Meetings

May 24, Canyon Creek Middle School

June 7, District Board Room

June 21, 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!

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

SUPERINTENDENT
Dr. Mike Stromme

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