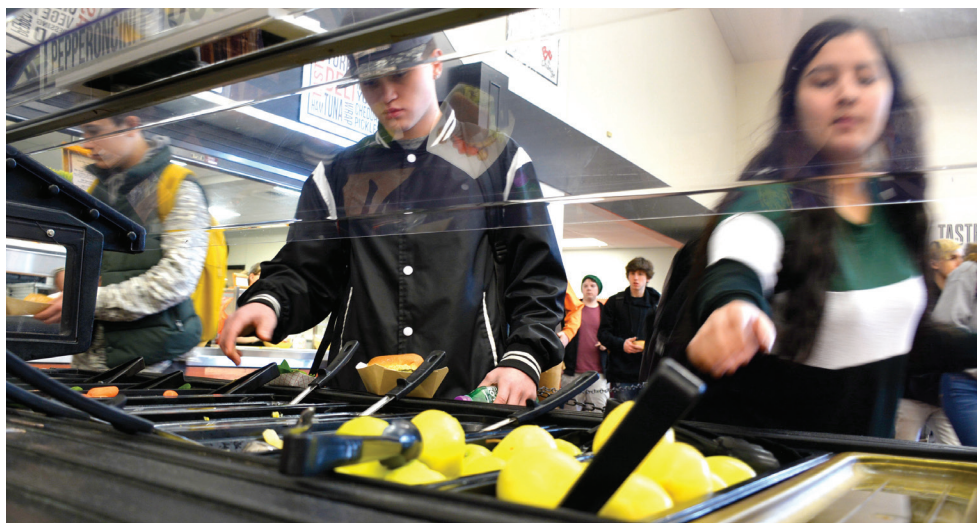
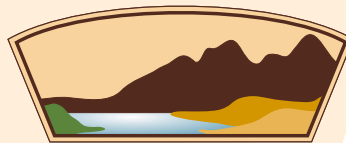


Community Connections

WINTER 2019



WHS revamps school lunch menu

Lunchtime at Washougal High School just got tastier thanks to Sodexo's Taste4, a new meal concept that elevates school lunch for today's sophisticated palates and revamps the classics, including salads and wraps, deli sandwiches, pasta, grilled favorites, and pizza.

"Sodexo used extensive consumer insights on GenZ's retail dining experiences and focus groups with students from across the country to create the Taste4 program," said Mark Jasper, Washougal School District Nutrition Services Director. "It was developed for students by students. Results showed that having fresh food, flavorful options, and spending time with friends in a fun environment are the most important elements to the school lunch experience."

From its name to the sign imagery and the menus, teen consumers were engaged in every phase of development. Sodexo Chefs then created a USDA compliant menu that includes world flavors, spicy comfort foods and unique, fun food combinations.

Taste4 keeps the needs and interest of student diners at its center with do-it-yourself stations, grab-n-go options and faster check-out lines that leave more time for socializing. "We focus on fresh, flavor, friends and fun," said Jasper. The new, innovative meal concept takes high school diners on a culinary journey where they have kicked-up, squeezable and shakable flavors and sauces inspired by Mexican, Asian, Mediterranean, and American Regional cuisine, using spices from around the world. 🌱

Schools get new security cameras

As part of a year-long security audit to ensure our schools are safe for students and staff, the Washougal School District has invested in new security cameras for schools and their parking lots.

The cameras have been installed at Washougal High School, Cape Horn-Skye Elementary and Canyon Creek Middle School, replacing those that were installed when the schools were built or remodeled, nearly 20 years ago. With nearly 75 cameras inside and outside the three schools, this represents a significant investment in safety and security.

The new cameras are much higher quality than the previous versions and are able to record in high definition. Live streams and captured video are also accessible to administrators and safety responders via mobile devices. The cameras have been placed in high traffic areas like the WHS Commons, Fishback Stadium, and school parking lots. Additional cameras will help provide supervision of students during passing time in corridors.

The district is planning additional cameras at other school facilities in the future to help provide school staff with the tools they need to keep students safe. 🌱



March is Youth Arts month, and we've teamed up with community partners to celebrate by offering opportunities for children to create and display art throughout the month of March. Check out the insert to this newsletter for activities or visit www.washougal.k12.wa.us/youth-arts-month

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Washougal Community,

It is usually the springtime that I find myself reflecting on how the school year started, what progress has been made toward our goals, and what opportunities we have experienced together. This year, the Superintendent Entry Plan has provided me with a formal framework for this reflection, and I am happy to say that we have accomplished much so far this year. I joined the district last July and began immediately to “Listen”, “Learn”, and develop a plan to “lead us forward”. This plan identified an interest to develop strong community partnerships, communicate honestly about challenges and opportunities, create a healthy culture of trust, and encourage accountability throughout the organization.

My entry plan also identified goal areas of focus, which included learning environments, staffing, student achievement, community engagement, and stewardship of resources. Although we still have several months before our school year ends, I am pleased to let you know that WSD is making progress in all of these goal areas. I would like to highlight that the excellent work of our teachers has been an area of strength for us and our early indicators clearly point to improved student achievement and accountability. Additionally, the commitment made by our community to provide excellent buildings and learning spaces has been an area of pride. Whether I am at Safeway, Washougal Coffee Company, City Council meetings, Discovery Dental, Gateway Church, or Starbucks, I am approached often by community members who want to let me know how invested they are in our schools and how impressed they are with the work we do with our children.

The process to develop a new five-year Strategic Plan is well underway and a proposal for adoption by the School Board should be complete before the end of the school year. This collaborative and transparent process has allowed us to surface our areas of strength and also to identify challenges for the future. Once complete, this new plan will guide our work of educating our children and help us determine how we allocate resources to accomplish this important work. I am optimistic that we are on the right path to seeing the Washougal School District rise to be one of the top performing districts in the state of Washington. Together, we can achieve this vision for excellence. Our future is bright!

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary Templeton



Hathaway Elementary students shoot hoops this winter from the comfort of the newly constructed covered area.

Hathaway's new covered play area is a slam dunk!

Hathaway Elementary's new covered play area is a big hit with students. The structure was recently completed using funds from the voter-approved 2015 capital facilities bond. Several additional projects beyond the initial scope of bond work were possible as a result of excellent fiscal management of funds.

These capital items were actually prioritized by the Board before the 2015 bond election but fell outside of the budget the Board was comfortable asking voters to approve.

In addition to the Hathaway play structure, the funds also allowed for: a covered play area at Gause Elementary School; safer traffic flow and parking improvements at Gause; construction of a dry storage building for athletic equipment at Canyon Creek Middle School; and improvements and upgrades to the Fishback Stadium (including replacing existing restrooms with ADA accessible facilities, relocating the concessions area, additional dry and secure equipment storage, replacing wood plank seating with aluminum, and installing new visitor side bleachers).

The original bond funded safety and security remodel and upgrades at all schools, a new 550-student Columbia River Gorge Elementary (CRGE) and new 600-student Jemtegaard Middle School (JMS), a new Excelsior Building at Washougal High School, roof and HVAC improvements at Gause and Hathaway Elementary and building a new, modern transportation facility. 🌱

Steering committee to turn community input into Strategic Plan this spring

In the fall of 2018, the Washougal School District launched a process to develop a new strategic plan to chart the district's course for the future. The five-year plan will provide direction for 2020-2025.

A steering committee of teachers, parents, community leaders, staff, district administrators, and Board representatives has been working to reach out to the district's many stakeholder groups such as teachers, students, parents, business leaders and the Washougal community for a series of input forums. This task force met with more than 15 groups representing parents, staff, and community members from every corner of the district.

In addition to the in-person meetings, the district also used a ThoughtExchange online tool to collect input from stakeholders. From this work, dozens of themes have emerged. A benefit of the ThoughtExchange process is the synthesis of these individual ideas and thoughts by an independent group into tangible themes and priority areas. To see the ThoughtExchange report, visit: <http://washougal.thoughtexchange.com/december-2018-adults>

The steering committee will dive into the results in February and March to turn the shared ideas and priorities into goal areas and a new vision for the district. Watch for updates on the process later this year. 🌱

Coming soon: Budget Meetings

District staff will host a series of budget meetings to share a clear picture of the district's budget, the process for developing the budget, and the district's future financial outlook. The meetings will be open to the public and will offer an opportunity for community members to ask questions about WSD finances and funding resources. Watch for more information and dates coming soon. 🌱



As part of the CRGE Coding Club, Rachael Ries, FVRL Washougal Branch Manager, joins Lauren Byrne, Aubrey Timmons, and Bailey Wright for problem solving fun.

CRGE students build problem-solving skills with Coding Club

Students in the Columbia River Gorge Elementary after-school Coding Club are playing with blocks to increase their skills in critical thinking, programming and problem solving... Robot blocks that is!

"Cubelets are individual robot blocks designed to snap together with magnets," said Sydney Termini, CRGE Coding Club co-instructor. "The blocks can be combined in a variety of ways to construct robots with different behaviors." Termini, and co-instructor Allison McGranahan, have between 30 and 35 club members, from first to fifth grades, attending on Tuesday afternoons.

The CRGE Coding Club activities are often approached as small groups to inspire collaboration and teamwork. "The students are doing a lot of learning from each other," Termini noted. "Students naturally communicate with each other as they share their Cubelet designs. Each brings a different experience to the project. I'll hear a student pipe up and offer suggestions based on something they have tried in the past that worked."

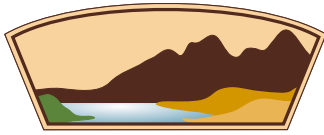
And in coding club, as in life, attempting and failing can be ok the first time. "This is a powerful lesson for some of our higher thinkers who might be upset with an apparent failure," Termini said. "This type of activity provides the chance for them to recognize all that they have learned from working through the problem-solving process." 🌱

The Cubelet materials were made available by the Fort Vancouver Regional Library for the club on February 12. Rachael Ries, FVRL Washougal Branch Manager, was on hand to provide an overview and give student guidance. "Supporting student success is one of our top library district priorities," said Rachael Ries, FVRL Washougal Branch Manager. "It's so smart to pool our resources so kids have access to learning tools like the Cubelets. I enjoy working with the teachers and the kids and it connects the kids to the library in more ways than just through books."

"Rachael joins us about once a month and each time brings new challenges for the students," said Termini. The instructional materials will make their way to the school library for use during library time with librarian Heather Kassel. "Most classrooms have at least one student in coding club so they can take the opportunity to help teach their peers," said McGranahan.

"I am very pleased with the number of young girls who are participating," Termini pointed out. "It's exciting that the interest level is there."

"One of our goals for coding club is for students to have the ability to apply critical thinking in the classroom for subjects like math and even language arts," said McGranahan. "These experiences and activities help them become better problem solvers." 🌱



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WASHOUGAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Lunch Buddies build positive connections

Everyone enjoys having a lunchtime buddy! That is the premise of the new Lunch Buddies program at Columbia River Gorge Elementary that pairs selected students with approved volunteer adults. The program was developed by Katie McCarthy, Family-Community Resource Coordinator at Washougal School District who heard about something similar in another district.



Betty Gabel and Kim Wongwai are two volunteers who eat lunch with a buddy.

McCarthy recruited volunteers through local businesses, booster parents and staff contacts and launched Lunch Buddies this fall. There are currently five lunch buddies who have signed up for the yearlong commitment to develop friendships with students. She hopes those numbers will grow as more volunteers hear about the program and step forward.

"On its most basic level this program offers students another caring adult in their lives who is not a teacher or family member," McCarthy said. "Volunteers are a buddy, a positive presence and someone who takes interest in these students and talks and listens to them."

According to McCarthy, feedback from buddy volunteers has been very positive. "People tell me it gives them a sense of fulfillment and connection to our schools," she said. "They love to have students excited to see them each week to share all manner of things with."

If you have interest in being a Lunch Buddy, contact McCarthy for an application at katrina.mccarthy@washougalsd.org, or call (360) 954-3909. There will be a face-to-face interview to learn expectations and policies and to complete the volunteer background check paperwork. The time commitment is a half hour each week until the end of the school year. 🌱



WHS American Sign Language teacher, Tami Grant, was presented a Teacher of the Year Recognition Award by VFW Auxiliary Post 4278.

VFW recognizes youth essay writers, teacher of the year

Washougal students and a Washougal High School teacher were recently recognized by Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Washington, District Six as a part of their youth essay program.

Washougal High School American Sign Language teacher, Tami Grant, was presented a Teacher of the Year Recognition Award. Grant was nominated by Gail Hitchcock, VFW Auxiliary Post 4278.

"She always has time to talk and assist her students with any questions or problems they have encountered relating to community, home or school," said Hitchcock in her nomination letter. "Each Veteran's Day her students organize and put on a Veteran's Day program for the school and community which includes music, dance and ASL. Her goal is to have the students become outstanding citizens in their community."

Students who received top three honors in the essay contests were also recognized. They were Gabriel Eaton, fourth grade from Cape Horn-Skye; McKenzie Dewey, fifth grade from CH-S; and Dylan Van Horn, senior at WHS. 🌱

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

March 12, District Office

March 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: Marian Young, 4855 Evergreen Way, Washougal WA 98671, (360) 954-3050; Title IX Officer: Marian Young, 4855 Evergreen Way, Washougal WA 98671, (360) 954-3050; Section 504 Coordinator: Allison Blakely, 4855 Evergreen Way, Washougal WA 98671, (360) 954-3020.