

Community Connections

SPRING 2020



Keeping those in need fed



Superintendent Mary Templeton helps distribute iPads to families, so education could continue online.

WSD adapts during challenging times

After Governor Inslee closed schools for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year due to COVID-19, Washougal staff worked hard to adapt to a challenging situation to determine how to provide education in a new way for our students and also to allow staff to continue working.

Staff still at work!

Although work at Washougal School District is far from "business as usual," meaningful work is continuing for most of the 400+ WSD teachers, staff and administrators.

Planning and communication among staff is occurring via email, phone and Zoom online meetings. "All school building teams are remotely collaborating, developing and attending professional

development, planning and providing learning opportunities to our students," said Assistant Superintendent Aaron Hansen. There are daily online meetings with building leadership and district leadership discussing updates, challenges, opportunities, planning and communications.

"We realize this situation offers a unique opportunity to provide professional development to all our employees," said Hansen. "We have extremely talented staff who are very interested in sharing strategies with their colleagues. So, excellent training is being developed and presented by our own staff. This has probably been one of the most inspiring and exciting early outcomes we have seen with individuals volunteering to teach and coach their colleagues."

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STEM learning kits deliver fun

Many Cape Horn-Skye students are actually looking forward to science homework during the current school closure, thanks to Kodiak Crates! These fun and challenging learning kits are created by first grade teacher and district science liaison, Darcy Hickey, and are delivered via school bus to students' homes every other week.

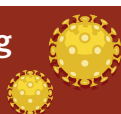
The kits are built around STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) projects and are all hands-on. In addition, Hickey has created a web page that hosts instructional videos and sheets she created and provides a place for families to upload pictures of finished projects.

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CHS 1st grader Kaitlyn Conrad and her catapult made with a Kodiak Crate (photo from her mom)

For more information about how WSD is adapting during COVID-19, visit <https://tinyurl.com/WSD-COVID>



A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

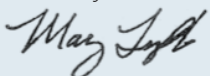
Dear Washougal Community,

As I sit in my new “home office” and compose this community message, I am struck with just how much our world has changed in the last six weeks. With the closure of our schools through the end of the school year, our community of educators and learners have had to quickly create and implement a new way of educating our 3,000 students. Although this has not been an easy undertaking, I am pleased to report that our Distance Learning Plan is moving forward and we are seeing students connect with their teachers, continue to learn, and stay intellectually engaged. This is a stunning accomplishment and has only been possible because of the commitment and determination of our teachers, the grace and support of our parents, the dedication of our classified staff, the leadership of our principals, and the flexibility of our students. Our senior class of 2020 have been especially gracious, positive, and engaged with us as we navigate moving them forward in life and finding creative ways to celebrate them during this unprecedented event.

Over the past six weeks, we have delivered iPads and Chromebooks to our students and staff. Thanks to the generous voter support of our recent technology levy, all of our students and staff are equipped with devices that allow them to connect virtually to teachers and each other.

Although this has certainly been a challenging time for all of us, I am inspired by the teamwork and service to one another that I see daily in our Washougal community. Our school district is certainly rising to the challenge to collaborate, create, innovate, and nurture the joy of learning in the hearts of our students, even during this crisis. I am thankful for the opportunity to continue to serve in this exceptional school district. Even through crisis, we are all affirming our collective commitment to see our district Rise!

Sincerely,



Dr. Mary Templeton



CTE program donates PPE

After hearing about the critical need for personal protective equipment (PPE) for local hospitals, Margaret Rice, Washougal School District Career and Technical Director, knew local schools could help.

“I knew I had boxes of gloves, masks and eye protection sitting in my classrooms not being used that could be of assistance to them,” said Rice. “Our medical professionals are on the front lines working hard to help the sick, while trying to stay well themselves with supplies of PPE dwindling.”

With the support of WSD Superintendent Mary Templeton and Business Manager Kris Grindy, Rice reached out to Legacy Health to find out where to bring the items and then to her regional CTE peers to see if they were willing and able to donate their programs’ PPE to these medical centers. She received an almost immediate positive response and partnered with CTE Directors from Vancouver and Ridgefield School Districts to contribute 166 pairs of protective eyewear, 141 boxes of Nitrile gloves, 1,930 masks of various types, 13 bottles of hand sanitizer, and 2 boxes of tech wipes. 🍀

STEM kits *(continued from front page)*

“We expected maybe 30 families to sign up,” said Penny Andrews CH-S principal. “We currently have 180 families subscribed to get kits. That’s more than 300 students involved.”

The support from families and students has been amazing, according to Hickey. “Students are making thank you videos and sharing pictures/videos of their projects,” she said. “This is such a tough time for families right now and to be able to have something like this for the kids is such a blessing to a lot of our families.”

More than \$1,500 in donations have been raised to support this program, even when donations were never requested. “Each donation has left me in a puddle of tears because I wasn’t sure how we were going to fund the program using just my current science budget,” said Hickey. “At the beginning, the plan was to use funds that our Boosters set aside for our Family STEM Night, and since that event was cancelled, this was the next best thing.”

Hickey pointed out that students were learning so much more than, for instance, just the steps to build a catapult. “They are learning about angles and trajectory, and weight distribution, and stored energy, and I could go on,” she said. “A six-year-old student created her own experiment using different items to shoot from her catapult to see which would travel further based on their weight. This is a six-year old!” 🍀

Adapted learning

(continued from front page)

Although a large percentage of WSD staff are working remotely, essential staff are providing childcare, nutrition services, maintenance and grounds, building custodians and a few district office personnel are reporting to various school sites. "They do this work while adhering to the social distancing requirements and expectations," Hansen assured.

Inside Washougal school buildings custodians are completing work that they would typically be doing during extended breaks. They are stripping and waxing floors, cleaning carpets, and other deep cleaning. The maintenance and grounds crews are making sure that all building systems are running smoothly and maintaining all district grounds.

Distance learning

Teachers and school principals have been working since the statewide school closure started in March to create and implement comprehensive learning plans. Plan development began with connecting with families and deploying one-to-one technology for all 3,000 students. The second phase was focused on exploration of online learning platforms, assessing students' needs, and delivering lessons to re-teach content. Teachers are now into the third phase, which includes new learning for students delivered in ways that support students and families needs and abilities. These include face-to-face learning activities, self-paced lessons, and paper-pencil options for students and families with limited connectivity or a preference for that option.

"I applaud the creative ways our staff has reached out to students during this time of physical separation," said Assistant Superintendent Renae Burson. "Our buildings may be closed, but our schools are open, and our educators have a heart to serve!"

Deployment of iPads and Chromebooks to all Washougal students was a big step forward in being ready to offer effective distance learning. Thanks to voter support for the technology levy, the district has devices for every student.

Approximately 25 classified employees, the entire IT staff, and a dozen or more transportation staff worked to prepare more than 1,300 devices for delivery to students



Kori Taylor, Charli Dawson, Kris Grindy and Bell Warren at the Rockwood Apartment food pickup site

at their bus stop. Each device was updated, per teacher instruction, with the necessary programs and pre-loaded applications for course work.

In order to maintain continuous learning for students that are having difficulty assessing materials on-line, elementary and middle school grade-level packets have been produced, printed and distributed. Initial packets were mailed to families to get them into the hands of students quickly. Subsequent packets have been delivered using weekly bus routes, which also provides an opportunity for students to return coursework to teachers for review and feedback.

Celebrating our graduates

Plans are underway to change the traditional graduation ceremony to a virtual celebration with the uncertainty of when Washington state's Stay Home, Stay Healthy order will be removed.

"My promise to you is this, we will celebrate you in a way that seniors have never been celebrated before," said WHS Principal Sheree Clark in a video message to students. "We will look to our students to help point the way on what this celebration will look like. Maybe we will be creating new traditions."

Additionally Clark assured seniors that keeping them on track for their post-high school goals remains a priority. "Whether your plans are for four or two year college, military, apprenticeships or a career, we remain committed to help you get there," she said.

Kindy registration now online

Kindergarten registration for fall 2020 will look a little different this year. The district has purchased online student

registration through Skyward.

Visit tinyurl.com/WSD-reg and follow the directions.

Providing meals to children

The sudden school closure disrupted the way Washougal School District is able to provide vital social services for children, such as meals. When school closures were announced, WSD staff took immediate action and food delivery to several Washougal locations began the following Monday.

In the first week, 2,400 meals were distributed. Participation steadily increased, and, so far, more than 18,500 meals have been provided to families in need.

"We could not do this work without a long list of superheroes coming together during this unprecedented time to provide these grab-and-go meals and provide a welcoming smile to the students coming to our sites," said WSD Business Manager Kris Grindy. "Nutrition services employees, led by Mark Jasper of Sodexo; bus drivers, led by Jesse Miller, WSD Transportation supervisor; and social distance coordinators are showing up daily to make sure our community is taken care of during the school closure." 🍃

Free Meal Delivery Info

Families are strongly encouraged to pick up meals, however, those who are unable to get to schools to pick up meals in person can request meal delivery to the child's home. To request delivery of meals, families must complete the online request form on the WSD website to get started. If unable to complete the form online, they should call the District Office at (360) 954-3000.



#WashougalRising

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Virtual track program hits the ground running

WSD Middle School track is being offered in a whole new way. Tracey Stinchfield, JMS Track and Washougal Middle School Cross Country Coach, and Megan Lambert, CCMS Track Coach, have invited students to participate in a virtual training program through www.washougalrunners.com.

"With so many kids feeling isolated and bored I was trying to think of ways to help them feel connected," explained Stinchfield. "Although the season doesn't look the way we had hoped and we are very sad that we can't get together to train, we would still love for students to have the fun and benefits that come from being active and being a part of a team!"

Although [...] we are very sad that we can't get together to train, we would still love for students to have the fun and benefits that come from being active and being a part of a team!

- Tracey Stinchfield, Track & Cross Country Coach

The website offers daily training workouts and a place where students can report completion of a workout. The current training program is to prepare for a 5k run in six weeks. It culminates on May 16, the day of the Washougal Schools Foundation Student Stride for Education fun run. "I think the kids are feeling like they're losing a lot right now," said Lambert. "So, to have something to do, to look forward to, and not feel like the track season is completely gone, is important."

Participation has started slowly but is growing. As the numbers increase, the coaches will be adding other fun elements to get more participants excited to be a part of it.

"Students can join in at any time and adapt and change the workouts to fit their needs," Stinchfield said. "We are asking students to let us know how their training is going. We will respond to them through email if they submit a workout. As the season continues, we will add ways for them to connect with each other and to encourage one another in their training." 🌱



ABOVE: JMS 6th grader Gracie Perry logs her workout

BELOW: JMS sisters Danica (8th) and Alyssa (7th) Stinchfield on a run

SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Mary Templeton

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cory Chase, President
Angela Hancock, Vice Pres.
Donna Sinclair, Legislative Rep.
Jim Cooper
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Online Board Meetings

May 26 & June 9

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

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