

Community Connections

FALL 2023



Help us 'Stuff the Bus', pg.4

WHS students put construction skills to use for fire department



Eleventh grade students Gage Leavitt, Gavan McCallister, and Noah Wheeler constructed two prop rooms as part of a Career & Technical Education lesson.

Washougal High School students in the Career & Technical Education Construction Technology program applied construction skills learned in the classroom to build two prop rooms for a fire safety demonstration by the Camas-Washougal Fire Department. On September 23, the fire department set both prop rooms ablaze to demonstrate the effectiveness of residential sprinklers at the Health & Safety Fair Open House.

Eleventh grade students Gage Leavitt, Gavan McCallister, and Noah Wheeler constructed the two prop rooms after school on Wednesday, September 20. "The students came with all levels of experience and gained skills working as a team on a real construction project," said Ron Schumacher, Fire Marshal at the Camas-Washougal Fire Department.

"When our students realize that their skills are valued and can be applied to specific jobs, they gain confidence and get that much closer to decisions on their post high school career goals," said Margaret Rice, Director of Career and Technical Education.

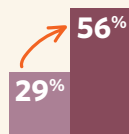
Return on Your Investment: Hands-on learning gets results!

2022-23 State Smarter Balanced Assessment



Outperforming the State

Washougal students outperformed the state average in 82% of the subjects and grades tested (14 out of 17).



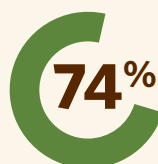
ELA Elementary Success

Hathaway saw a year-to-year increase of 27 percentage points in 3rd grade English Language Arts (ELA) scores.



Overall Improvement

Washougal saw year-to-year improvement in 70% of the subjects and grades tested.



Teacher Collaboration

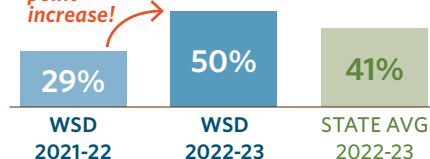
The Science team at CCMS outperformed the state average of 43% by 31 percentage points.

See our website for more details!

STATE ASSESSMENT RESULTS: MATH

% of 5th Graders Meeting Standards

21%
point
increase!



Math games: a hands-on approach to learning

Many of our teachers are incorporating Illustrative Mathematics techniques in their classrooms. "They utilize math games in all grade levels. You can see that kids are really engaged, and they come up with the learning themselves," said Brooke Henley, principal at Cape Horn-Skye Elementary School.



A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



Dear Washougal Community,

I am thrilled to share the latest updates on our ongoing journey towards educational excellence in the Washougal School District. Our commitment to providing rigorous classroom experiences, fostering student achievement, and cultivating job-ready skills remains unwavering. It's all thanks to our dedicated educators, enthusiastic students, and supportive families. Together, we are ensuring that each student is confident, and hopeful for their future by knowing, nurturing, and challenging all students to rise.

Rigorous Classroom Experiences: Our classrooms are buzzing with energy as teachers engage students in innovative, thought-provoking lessons. We believe that challenging academics prepare our students for a successful future. By encouraging critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity, we empower students to excel in a rapidly changing world.

Improved Student Achievement Data: We're proud to report that our students continue to grow in their understanding of essential learning skills. Recent assessment scores indicate remarkable growth in their academic performance, demonstrating their determination and our educators' unwavering support. WSD is outperforming the state in 82% of academic areas measured by state assessments, and in some areas of elementary math and English our students grew by 27 percentage points over one year. Our teachers and students are proud of the gains they have made, and they should be!

Job-Ready Skills: Preparing students for the real world is a top priority. We are enhancing career-focused programs, ensuring that our graduates leave with the skills, knowledge, and adaptability necessary for success in the workforce. We know that each student must be prepared for a successful next step, which includes the ability to critically think, communicate with others, appreciate across differences, and work hard. Our commitment to job readiness has never been stronger.

High Belief in Our Educators, Students, and Families: We firmly believe that collaboration between educators, students, and families is the cornerstone of our success. Together, we nurture a culture of trust, respect, and shared responsibility, creating a strong support system for our students.

Our journey towards educational excellence is ongoing, and we couldn't be prouder of the strides we've made. We hope you enjoy reading about some of the highlights of our student success in this newsletter. We thank our educators, students, and families for their dedication and unwavering belief in our vision.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary Templeton



SCHOOL BOARD CORNER

The school board will be focusing on two pillars of the WSD Strategic Plan 2025 during this school year. The board identified Effective Instruction and Stewardship of Resources as areas to focus on this year.

The board chose Effective Instruction as a goal to continue the progress teachers and students have made over the last year, as measured by the Smarter Balanced Assessment. During the Ends Report presentation, the board reviewed assessment outcomes from our schools, which include the district making gains in most areas. Year-to-year district assessment scores improved in 70% of grade and subject areas measured by the Smarter Balanced Assessment.

The board chose Stewardship of Resources to focus on aligning our staffing with student enrollment and bringing expenditures in line with the revenue available. Community members will be invited to participate in this process through a survey later this winter that gathers priorities as we work with district leadership to develop the budget.

The school board is continuing the Listening Tours that began last spring. The Listening Tours are an opportunity to talk with a board member, ask questions, and share ideas about our schools. The board valued the conversations with the community, and received valuable feedback about our schools and programs. The next listening tour is on February 13, 2024 from 3-4:30 PM at the Excelsior building, 1401 39th Street in Washougal. Visit our website for a full list of dates, times, and locations.



WASHOUGAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

#WashougalRising

SUPERINTENDENT: Dr. Mary Templeton

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Angela Hancock, President; Chuck Carpenter, Legislative Rep; Jim Cooper; Sadie McKenzie

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: Aaron Hansen, 4855 Evergreen Way, Washougal WA 98671, (360) 954-3050; Section 504 Coordinator: Connor McCroskey, 4855 Evergreen Way, Washougal WA 98671, (360) 954-3020.

Budget Corner: State funding leaves gap

Over the last seven years, our enrollment has decreased by 13.6%. Washougal experienced a significant growth in enrollment when families moved into the Sunset Ridge neighborhood in the early 2000s. As the last of that large wave of students graduates, our enrollment is projected to decline over the next four to five years.

Declining enrollment reduces state AND levy funding

As we serve fewer students, we receive less funding from the state, leaving a gap in teacher salaries that local funds must support. However, local levy funds are capped based on the number of students enrolled, and the decline in enrollment means that we will not be allowed to collect all of the levy funds voters approved in April of 2023.

In addition, the state only provides \$79,944 for a teacher but we spend \$100,850 on average. This is a \$20,906 gap between what we receive and what we spend to ensure a high quality education for every student.

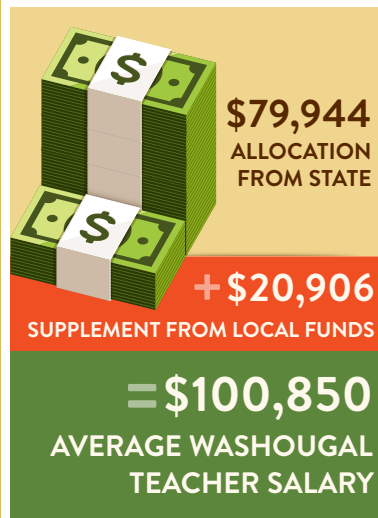
Less funding will require staffing and program changes

District leadership have made adjustments to staffing this fall to help address the funding gap caused by declining enrollment, but there will be additional changes needed for the next school year as well.

Supplementing with levy funds

Levies are crucial to supplementing our state funding through an election every three to four years. Thank you voters for approving levy funds which keep class sizes small, fund after school activities, and make things like student competitions and performances possible.

GAP IN STATE FUNDING FOR TEACHERS



We welcome your budget feedback!

December: The Governor proposes a new state budget for school funding. This is also when the school district begins our budget process with the school board for the next school year. Over the course of the year, we gather enrollment forecasts and staffing and spending needs which impact our budget decisions.

February: We gather community input through a survey on the budget based on the enrollment forecast. *We want to hear from you during this process!*

BOARD LISTENING TOURS

We're continuing our Board Listening Tours this year because they've been a useful way to hear from you. These events are an opportunity to talk with a board member, ask questions, share ideas about our schools, and provide feedback on the budget.

Dates:

- February 13, 2024 at 3:00-4:30pm, Excelsior Commons
- April 9, 2024 at 4:30-6:00 pm, Location TBD

SUPERINTENDENT'S ROUNDTABLE

Join WSD Superintendent Dr. Mary Templeton to learn about challenges in the district budget and some great news about student assessment data. Family members, staff, and community members are invited to listen, learn, ask questions, and provide feedback on the budget.

Dates:

- January 11, 2024 at 9:30-11:30 am, District Office
- March 19, 2024 at 6:00-7:30 pm, District Office

What are Washougal students looking forward to this school year?



"I'm excited to learn more math this year, because I love math."

- Jade Delgado (right) with friends Annatjie Busschau (left) and Emma Lynch (center) at Cape Horn-Skye Elementary School



"I'm most excited to learn more about college and get prepared for my next steps after high school."

- Amari Graham, Washougal High School



"I have so many favorite parts of school. I just love it. Field trips are always very, very fun."

- Cassidy Curtin (middle) at Columbia River Gorge Elementary School



#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

Mark your calendar for winter events

Stuff the Bus

Our annual Stuff the Bus food drive is going on now! Non-perishable food and household supplies may be donated at any Washougal school through December 1.

December Concerts

Nov 30 at 7pm:

CCMS Band Concert (Grades 6-8)

Dec 6 at 6pm:

Hathaway Music (Grades 2-3)
Cape Horn-Skye Music (Grades 4-5)
CRGE Winter Concert

Dec 7 at 6pm:

CRGE Winter Concert
Hathaway Music (Grades 4-5)

Dec 12 at 7pm:

WHS Choir Winter Concert

Dec 13 at 5:30pm:

Hathaway Music (Grades K-1)

Dec 13 at 6pm:

CRGE Winter Concert

Dec 14 at 6pm:

Gause Music (Grades 3-4)

Dec 14 at 7pm:

WHS Band Concert (All Bands)

Music programs and performances are made possible thanks to community support for the Washougal Educational Programs and Operations levy. Thank you voters!



Washougal High School students perform during the WSF STRIDE at Fishback Stadium.



Get involved! Volunteer in your schools

Volunteers help make great things happen in Washougal schools. Whether you are interested in supporting an event, coordinating educational activities, or helping a teacher in the classroom, there's a place for you. A background check is required. Scan the QR code below to learn more and get involved!

