



Photo Credit, Jan Boutilier: Point Wilson Lighthouse and Mt. Baker

Port Townsend School District No. 50

Superintendent Newsletter, Vol. 16-17, No. 3

October 7, 2016

A New Elementary School - One Step Closer



The Port Townsend Board of Directors has approved the design that was proposed and reviewed in their meetings in August and September. We are excited to be moving forward to the next phases of the project. The themes of flexibility and collaboration are center to the school along with the idea of indoor and outdoor learning as regular spaces used by students. Some of the “visioning” for the school included a school:

- Where connection with nature is always present
- With variable spaces/acoustically and otherwise
- Safe place to take risks
- Where students solve problems in the real world
- Where students are in and outside

We are working with Project Manager Kirk Robinson to help us stay on schedule and within budget. Our architecture firm is Integrus of Seattle.

School Safety - Great Shakeout...

Safe schools week is October 16-22, 2016 and Port Townsend is taking part in the statewide “Great Shakeout” drill on October 20 at 10:20 am. This is just one safety related drill taking place in the PT schools. Millions of people worldwide will practice how to drop, cover, and hold on during this widely recognized event. To read more see: <http://www.shakeout.org/washington/>.

Place-Based, Student-Centered Learning

Wikipedia states that place-based education seeks to help communities through employing students and school staff in solving community problems. The Port Townsend School District has made a firm commitment to the place-based framework, and we have been working with community members in a variety of projects and settings. Place-based education differs from conventional text and classroom-based education in that it seeks to understand the local community as one of the primary resources for learning. It is exciting to know that there are over 70 different partnerships currently in place through which this idea of “solving community problems” is alive.

There are many resources that help explain place-based learning or project-based education (PBE). One is http://www.promiseofplace.org/what_is_pbe/. The goals are three-fold. There is certainly a focus on academic standards and processes resulting in higher levels of student achievement. This resource states, “PBE boosts students' engagement, academic achievement, and sense of personal efficacy as stewards of their local environment and community. It also can re-energize teachers.” There is a connection in PBE that is designed to build strong ties between local social and environmental organizations within the schools and community. The goal, which may not be part of the goals of many schools, is to help energize and develop the economic development and social connections within the community. Finally, the idea of place-based, along with our maritime initiative, really builds tangible connections to the land, culture, and history of Port Townsend. These goals are designed to strengthen the educational programs in the schools and help the schools be a vital partner in enhancing a quality community.

Learning Walks

The principals, Special Education Director, and Director of Instruction are planning to take part in learning walks as a large group this year. This means we will be working together to deepen our understanding and recognition of quality instruction. Our lens is the CEL 5D+ Framework that is the foundation for our evaluation system for teachers and principals.

Teachers will not get feedback from these “big group” learning walks. The administrative team will be meeting prior to and just after the learning walk to calibrate our observations and thinking around quality instruction.

In addition, your superintendent will be observing classrooms with the building principal as regularly as possible. The emphasis on teamwork in terms of instructional supervision and leadership is intended to help us improve our knowledge and skills in observation, scripting, feedback, coaching and evaluation.

Maritime Discovery Schools ~ Director, Sarah Rubenstein



The Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce hosted the fifth annual New Teacher welcome last week. Our teachers heard about opportunities for partnership and the important role a strong school system plays in a thriving economy. Our Chamber of Commerce knows that the schools are a key part of meeting their goal to attract and retain young families in Jefferson County. (Image: Brandi H and Lois P outside Bldg 225)

District teachers participated in a successful Professional Learning on Design Thinking last Wednesday facilitated by Ann Raymond and Sarah Rubenstein. Teachers reflected at the end of a mini-lesson and collaborative project planning time that, “Design thinking improves student's engagement- gives them a reason for learning.”

Students can try out their thinking, make mistakes and then try something new. It's a beautiful iterative process." Many teachers noted ways that they will use some aspects of design thinking as they move forward with their project planning, "We are working to incorporate some of these ideas into our project with the 4th and 5th grade teams." Many teachers noted the usefulness of the team collaboration time, "We are all "on fire" with creativity today! We are changing it up this year..we want to keep it fresh for ourselves as well so that we will do a better job of modeling enthusiasm."

Our first team of high school teachers had a successful project planning and coaching session. They were able to work collaboratively, think about effective critique, and tune each other's projects. The projects they are developing are varied from a GIS mapping project to a garden development project.

The Fort Worden Leadership team met and is working on a procedure for the use of the rooms in Bldg 225. Classes will begin using the classroom in the coming weeks and will continue to meet as needed to ensure that the shared space is available for all to use. Special thanks to Brandi Hageman and Betsy Hart for their continued leadership and vision in making this space a reality, as well as to the Fort Worden PDA for their ongoing partnership and support.

From PTHS ~ Principal, Carrie Ehrhardt

This past week, on September 29, we had a large turnout of students and parents at our College Fair event, which was held in our PTHS gymnasium. That same evening, we had a well-attended Freshman Parent Open House, despite also having events at Blue Heron School. This week on Thursday, October 6, we are hosting a Financial Aid night for parents, to help them navigate the various aspects of filling out the FAFSA, which is now made available on October 1.

Ten PTHS teachers submitted grant applications to the Port Townsend Education Foundation (PTEF) last Friday. We are so fortunate to have the ongoing support of the PTEF, and the positive impact they have on our teachers and students, throughout the district.

Our ASB students are busily planning for our upcoming Homecoming events during the week of October 17. Preparations for spirit days, lip sync practice and poster making, royalty selection and dance preparations are already filling our calendars. ASB Advisor Lois Sherwood does a great job of keeping the kids on track and in budget with their Homecoming festivities.

Next Wednesday, October 12, PTHS administration will be attending a meeting at the Jefferson County Health Department on Youth Marijuana Prevention and Education Programs. Since the legalization of marijuana in our state, we have seen an increase of underage marijuana use in our community. Through our participation in this program, we will help to develop, coordinate, and implement a regional marijuana prevention and education program that focuses on prevention initiation and hopefully reduces marijuana use in youth.

The Blue's News ~ Principal, Matt Holshouser

Bikes, Bikes, and more Bikes –

Bikes galore here at Blue Heron School and we are having a great time riding and learning.



- National Bike and Walk to School – Wednesday, October 4th – We enjoyed (and do on a daily basis) 70+ bike riders each and every day here at Blue Heron School. The ReCyclery team were alongside on Wednesday morning to welcome kiddos and celebrate their riding to school, pass along a Clif bar to re-energize, and grab a ticket for a raffle for some great



complimentary ReCyclery cycling gear. Thank you ReCyclery Team and it is indeed great to see some many kiddos (and families) out there riding our streets and trails.

- PE Cass and Bicycle Safety – Additionally, all Grade 6 students are enjoying some great riding and rules of the road lessons via our PE classes here at Blue Heron. Please enjoy the below photo as well as watch for these adept riders out there on our local roads and trails. Thank you again ReCyclery Team for helping provide additional staff to make this a great learning and physical experience.
- BH Athletics – Volleyball & Football – Our BH Student-Athletes are enjoying some great success this season. We have both traveled away for a few matches as well as hosted some home court/field games. Please join us for some great Blue Heron Middle School Athletic competitions. All athletic calendars on up on our BH Website.

Grant Street News ~ Principal, Lisa Condran

Grant Street is excited to have the school year well under way. On September 22nd, Grant Street had its open house. Integrus Architecture came and showed families the plans for the new school and answered many questions. Families also shared ideas for the new school, such as having a drinking fountain on the playground to help students stay hydrated during recess.

Grant Street is also excited to have new PTA membership that helped with the open house event, making it very successful. These fantastic parent leaders are: Kassandra Swindler, President, Jessica Brittain, Secretary, Chiarra Klontz and Melanie Rowland, Co-Treasurers, Sarah Rubenstein, Membership and Communications, and I-Kwoan Harrison, Volunteer Coordinator.

- In other Grant Street News, teachers and students are excited to have the new Bridges in Mathematics curriculum. Bridges in Mathematics is a top rated curriculum, according to Ed Reports, an independent reviewer of a variety of curricula. To read more: <http://www.edreports.org/math/reports/index.html#?f=&o=0> Also according to Learning List, another independent reviewer of math curricula, Bridges in Mathematics at each grade level kindergarten through fifth grade addressed 100% of the Common Core State Standards in mathematics. To read more: <https://www.learninglist.com/>
- As part of Grant Street's ongoing professional development process, Ann-Healy Raymond, Director of Instruction and Technology, came to Grant Street on September 21st to help teachers at each grade level identify what are called power standards in mathematics. The term power standards refers to a subset of learning standards that educators have determined to be the highest priority or most important for students to learn. This will help Grant Street teachers to ensure the most important mathematical concepts are mastered at each grade level.

Assessment and Special education ~ Patrick Kane

Assessment:

Parents wishing to get more information about State assessment can go to various websites supported by OSPI. Please take the opportunity to learn more about State assessment and how it benefits your student.

NEW: Parent Tool - "WCAP: Keeping Washington's Students on Track for College and Career". This site contains a visual guide explaining the main parts of the Family Report (also known as the Student Score Report) document. Parents can use drop-down menus for grade, subject, and score range to access information about the knowledge and skills represented by student's scores, along with some sample items from Smarter Balanced. There is also a section containing links to other webpages with resources designed for parents. The website address is: <http://testscoreguide.org/wa/>

- Information for families about state assessments, scoring and reporting, parent information packets and procedures and guidelines for requesting to view their child's test can be found on the WCAP Portal

through the Students & Families Card in the General Information section:

<http://wa.portal.airast.org/resources/?section=1>

- Information to help families understand learning standards and assessments in our state are also available on the OSPI website at: <http://www.k12.wa.us/Resources/default.aspx>
- Information for parents on requesting to view their child's test can also be found at: <http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/StateTesting/StudentRecordRequest.aspx>
- Sample score reports are available here: <http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/StateTesting/ScoreReport.aspx>

Special Education:

Parents of a student with developmental disabilities please check the website for ARC of Kitsap and Jefferson counties. This website has great information regarding support for you, your child and family. There are support groups that you may find helpful as your child grows. Many programs are supported here in Jefferson County developed through ARC. <http://www.arckj.org/>

Food Services ~ Stacey Larson

Wednesday was Taste Washington Day; it was a tasty success. Jennifer Kruse and her Culinary Arts kids went to classrooms at Grant Street and sampled out local veggies. The menu had a lot of local veggies from Dharma Ridge and Red Dog Farms on it as well as kale harvested from the High School garden. We did a pear and apple taste test at Blue Heron with the Bosc pear winning out. October is Farm to School month; so keep an eye out for more taste tests in the cafeterias.

We had our first Garden and Food Service community informational night in the Blue Heron orchard last Thursday. It was a beautiful venue to share all the wonderful work that we are doing-the sunset was amazing and then once it was dark we had twinkle lights that illuminated the orchard. We will be having a few more info nights to spread the word as the school year goes on. Thanks to Jen Kruse's students for helping make some tasty treats and fresh pressed cider and Farmer Molly and Farmer Zack for talking to staff, students and their parents.

Support Services ~ Brad Taylor

Our maintenance staff is working with our technology staff and a vendor to try our four different types of surveillance cameras that will be placed in various locations at the High School in the next few weeks. After a two month trial, we will purchase and install the system that is most effective for our school..

We are also currently in the process of replacing all of the security pads in all of the entry doors at the high school. These are high-tech devices that will allow the school to reprogram the doors remotely. In this change out we will be putting a different core in each door to help us control the existing keying system that has lost its integrity over the years. This means previous keys will become outdated. Make sure to connect with the building administration for more information on building access.

The new Grant Street Elementary is well into the design drawing stage and will go out for pricing at the end of October. If anyone wants to see the building layout, a copy of the blue print is at the maintenance office.. There also is a 3D version of the schematic design posted on the district web page now.