



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

Port Townsend School District No. 50

Superintendent Newsletter, Vol. 16-17, No. 8

January 06, 2016

Quote

“It is by doing good that we become good.” ~ Jean Jacque Rousseau

Happy New Year!

My holiday break has included wonderful visits with family. I am thankful for the time, and as I think about coming back to school, I truly hope the break has brought renewal to everyone on staff.

We know that our students respond best when they have positive relationships at school, when their teachers are passionate about the learning activities, and when they (the students) find the learning to be relevant. As we get ready for the next part of the year, let's keep our focus on continuing to take small steps toward using strategies that focus on relevance to engage students in the essential learning activities we know they need. My advice is to slow down and make sure the last few weeks of the first semester is spent avoiding a rush to fit it all in. It is better to teach and connect students to a few things well than to cover the maximum amount of material superficially.

Instructional Material Review Committee (IMC)

One of the board committees that is starting up again is the Instructional Materials Committee (Membership is referenced in Board Policy 2020P). We plan to start meeting in February with an orientation. The meetings will be monthly (or less frequent if there are no reviews ready). Ann Raymond will be facilitating and is planning to reach out to members soon. The committee's scope of work is "...to establish and monitor such procedures as may be necessary for the selecting, adopting and discarding of instructional materials owned and used by the district." (2020P) The function of the committee is to ensure that materials are selected in conformance to stated criteria. There will be some budget for teacher representative's time. There will also be an annual budget designated for curriculum adoption that will help define the scope of the work.

Committee Membership includes but is not limited to:

- One representative from MS and HS
 - Two parents and/or two community members
 - District administrator and building administrator
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- School librarian

We hope to get commitments for 3-year terms from the teachers and parents.

Teacher Qualities

The idea of teacher effectiveness and teacher quality has been a popular topic over the past couple of decades. I recently ran across an article that discussed the topic (again), and I wanted to share one the author’s statements. He says, “Good teachers are those who remember being a student”. I like this thought. We often forget how we felt when we were a student in high school. (For some of us, it was a very long time ago!) He also states, “They hear themselves as their students hear them. They know which aspects of their subject might present a difficulty, which require to be grasped before which, and what their best students will be keen to know, and why.” These qualities of good teaching are a mindset. I tend to agree with Grayling; teachers need to know and empathize with their students. I lean toward the idea of *teacher quality* as a goal. I think *effectiveness* follows.

Reference: “What Makes a Good Teacher?” by A.C. Grayling in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, December 11, 2015 (Vol. LXII, #15, p. B4-B5).

Upcoming Survey - *The Center for Educational Effectiveness*

We are instituting a new survey instrument beginning this spring. Our partner is *The Center for Educational Effectiveness* and the survey provides the opportunity for staff members, students, and parents to weigh in on a variety of research-based school characteristics most associated with high performing systems. If you are interested in their website, see: <http://effectiveness.org/aboutcee.aspx>. I have some experience working with CEE staff and using their reports to help assess and guide school improvement initiatives. After reviewing our needs in Port Townsend, I feel this is a good solution to provide solid data for us to use over time. The survey is primarily taken online, but also has paper-pencil options for parents and primary students.

Projected timeline:

Survey	Time Frame	Method	Comments
Staff	February 15	online only	Student Early Release
Parent	March 27-31	online / paper	Conferences
Student - Grade 4 +	March 27-31	online only	Conferences
Student - Primary	March TBD	paper	Teacher assisted

The Educational Effectiveness Survey (EES) suite will provide foundational data on most of the areas-including Teaching and Learning, Community Engagement, and Culture. It will also enable us to gather perception data on our high priority objectives in each area: Teaching and Learning, Technology, Community Engagement, Facilities, Operations/Financial Stability, and Culture of Wellness.

HR/Payroll News ~ Repeat

As of February 1, 2017 ESD 114 Worker's Compensation Trust, located in Port Angeles, will move to ESD 113 Worker's Compensation Trust. ESD 113 is located in Tumwater, WA and will begin handling all new claim packets, wage information, benefit election forms, and letters to claimants. Kelly Early will be our new contact and will work closely with our payroll department. Employees will work directly with ESD 113 for all claim paperwork helping to reduce the workload we are currently experiencing. We're looking forward to a smooth transition in February.

Kitchen News ~ Stacey Larsen

We are happy to have Joanne Mackey back at Grant Street. Big thanks to Melanie Shoop for filling in for Joanne. Melanie will be our new dishwasher and server at Blue Heron starting on January 5th. Yay!

We are now part of the USDA Fruit and Vegetable Pilot program. This means we will be able to use some of our USDA commodity dollars to purchase local/organic produce from Dharma Ridge Farm. Our efforts to stay local continues to be supported.

Finally, we are meeting with a group of parents from Leavenworth this coming Saturday to talk about the changes to our school lunch program and show them around the school gardens. Word is spreading about what we are doing here in PT, and it is very exciting!

From PTHS ~ Principal, Carrie Ehrhardt

Happy New Year and best wishes from the high school for a great 2017!

Drug and alcohol dependency counselor Tera Phillips has started her work as a prevention and intervention counselor at the high school. Tera will be here two days a week to work with students on a self referral or staff referral basis. Tera has worked in chemical dependency for the past eight years, in a variety of clinical settings. Her partnership comes to us thanks to support from our local Jefferson Behavioral Health (formerly Jefferson Mental Health) clinic.

Two of our students, Lydia Arthur and Miranda McClave, have been published in the 2015-16 Writers in the School anthology, "Across the Surface of Fear and Calm".

The high school is preparing to give the Washington State End of Course, mid-year exam opportunity to juniors and seniors who have not yet met standard on the biology and or algebra/geometry exams. Math will be given on January 19 and Biology will take place on January 25.

Athletics ~ Scott Wilson

With the new year upon us, we are officially into the regular season for both basketball and wrestling. Over the winter break, both the boys and girls teams competed in the annual Crush in the Slush Tournament held in our own gymnasium, but hosted by the PT Basketball Club—a non-school related club that supports youth basketball in Jefferson County. The Crush is their biggest fundraiser of the year. Teams from all over the state travel to Port Townsend to compete in The Crush. In year's past, teams from Australia and Canada have participated. Both Port Townsend teams played well, with the boys and girls each notching wins on the first day in front of a packed house. The season continues this week as the teams have contests against Forks High School (non-league) and Coupeville.

The Port Townsend wrestling team hosted rival school 2A Kingston last night—the final night of winter break—and held its annual senior night. The Redhawks won overall as a team, winning by 20 points. There were several strong individual performances and one particularly exciting match that had a Redhawk wrestler win in the final seconds of the match on a move that earned him 3 points. He won in spectacular fashion and brought the house to its feet. The entire team competes at a tournament in Kelso this coming weekend, which acts as solid preparation for post-season wrestling.

If you have not come across the winter sports poster and schedule, keep your eye out. It looks great and features several of our student athletes in the center. The poster is a collaborative effort that began with a partnership with The Leader newspaper under the direction of Scott B. and Jennifer James Wilson. The new owners of the The Leader have agreed to continue the partnership with our school. Local merchants have paid for advertising spots on the poster, with a percentage of the money earmarked for our high school athletics. The Leader donates a healthy check to Redhawk Athletics each sports season, and the posters go up all over town. If you would like to have one for yourself, please contact the high school office!



The Blue's News ~ Principal, Matt Holshouser

Happy New Year – Welcome to 2017!

We hope your 2017 new year is off to a great start. We are primed and ready to endeavor to enjoy a great 2nd half of this school year.

- Friday, January 20th – Marks the end of the 1st semester
- Thursday, February 2nd - 2nd quarter/1st semester – BH Student recognition assembly – BH Gym @ 2:15pm

PTMSC & 6th grade & Thank you PTMSC: As we wrapped up our December studies, our 6th grade students and teachers were able to enjoy a week-long learning opportunity with the Port Townsend Marine Science Center team. Everyone enjoyed and learned from the many biology, ecology and marine environment field-based lessons provided by the PTMSC team. We are grateful for the PTMSC collaboration and support.

Winter Stringfest: Additionally, as we wrapped up our December studies and learning we also enjoyed a wonderful Winter Stringfest, Saturday, December 17th. Kudos to our wonderful orchestra director, Daniel Ferland, and orchestra students for a great workshop and performance day with a variety of musical professionals. Thank you as well to PTHS team for hosting the event and culminating performance on the PTHS campus.

Food Bank & Food Drive – 1,194 pounds collected: We enjoyed an excellent Blue Heron School Food Drive for those in our PT community that are less fortunate than so many of us. Campus wide we collected 1,194 pounds of food to donate to the PT Food Bank. Mrs. Schroeder's class lead the league with 494 pounds collected. Way to Go!



PT School District Survey for Efficacy: As we continually strive as an organization and school district to serve all of our learning community effectively.....we will be embarking upon a comprehensive survey throughout our learning community in which to ascertain some benchmarks for current efficacy and strategically plan for increased achievement in all areas of operational stewardship. Look for information in the next few months.

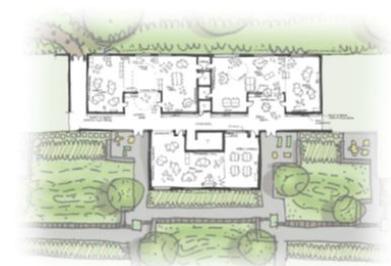
Girls Coding Club: We will be beginning an exciting endeavor here on the BH campus to inspire many of our young ladies in the field of Computer Science and Engineering. Our Girl's Coding Club will begin next week and every Tuesday after school many of our young ladies will be able to learn more about computer

coding, programming, and engineering. Thank you to BH Teachers Paula Collet, Amy Wilson, and Chris Neuman for serving as leaders for this great learning.

- Link for more detail - <https://girlswhocode.com/>

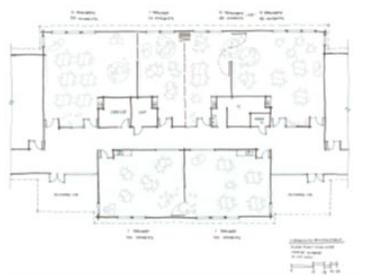
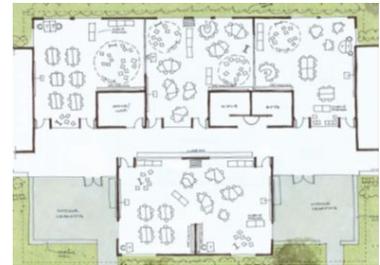
Grant Street News ~ Principal, Lisa Condran

Before the winter break, Integrus Architecture came to Grant Street to meet with staff who teach students from birth to fifth grade. They shared an evolution of the classroom learning environment design process to date, which is pictured below. All of these designs are based on the idea that there will be 17 students to 1 teacher in classrooms grades K-3 and 25 students to 1 teacher in grades 4-5.



The first iteration featured a unit with two or three 1800 square foot teaching environments with an emphasis on collaborative teaching in a shared space with moveable furniture. Integrus met with staff and revised the design to allow more flexibility in terms of the number of teachers sharing space for collaborative teaching. In this version, this unit was repeated three times throughout the building with three 1800 square foot teaching environments and three times with two 1800 square foot teaching environments to comprise the classroom learning spaces.

The second iteration featured three 1200 square foot teaching environments with moveable walls separating the spaces and two 900 square foot classrooms with a moveable wall separating the two classrooms. These walls could be opened or closed depending on the needs of the class throughout the day. In this version, this unit was repeated three times throughout the building as pictured below and three times as pictured without the additional two 900 square foot classrooms to comprise the classroom learning spaces. Integrus met with staff and others and received more feedback to plan for another revision.



The third version of the learning environment design incorporated options for smaller self-contained classrooms to allow greater flexibility for programs that might be better served in this manner. In this version, this unit which is two 1200 square foot, two 600 square foot, and two 900 square foot environments was repeated as pictured three times and three times without the two 900 square foot classrooms throughout the building to comprise the classroom learning spaces.

The fourth version of the learning environment used this same unit three times, but made some changes to two of the six units to increase the flexibility of the learning spaces even further. One unit was changed to allow kindergarten the option of smaller self-contained classrooms that can be expanded if chosen. The other change that was made was to turn one of the units that was originally a unit of two 1200 square foot classrooms and two 600 square foot classrooms (while still keeping one unit in this configuration) into four 900 square foot classrooms to allow more options for 4th and 5th grade expansion in the future.

Birth to Grade 5 staff are very fortunate to be working with this talented team of architects who are helping us build a beautiful new school that speaks to our vision established last spring of “fostering deep collaboration between students, teachers, community, and all staff” and creating a “safe, secure, and welcoming environment where students are encouraged to take risks and mistakes are appreciated.”

Math Informing Art...Art Informing Math – A Collaborative Project

Wanting to show the connectedness of mathematics and art, Wanda Leclerc, Grant Street Elementary Art Teacher, and Lisa Cartwright, PTSD's K-5 Math Coach, began collaborating last spring around the idea of school-wide, math-related artistic endeavors. What began with reviewing an article about balance/equality in relation to mobile art solidified into **MOBILE MANIA** at Grant Street in the month of December! An extra bonus was having Margie McDonald, a Port Townsend artist, collaborate with Ms. LeClerc and instruct all 350 K-5 students around the art of Alexander Calder, an important 20th century innovator.

Calder (1898-1976) invented the mobile which demonstrated a delicately balanced system of equivalent elements seeming to defy gravity. In the art room, students focused on the balanced system of equivalent elements as they made their own mobiles. Art and math combined to produce moving sculptures showing equilibrium. Students used the mathematical concepts of equal distances and equal weights to make several objects balance while dancing gently in the air.

Margie McDonald has been the artist in residence in the Port Townsend School District since 2008. She is a sculptor who makes biomorphic forms using wire and recycled scrap. Margie learned the value of math when she moved to Port Townsend in 1998 and worked as a yacht rigger for eight years.

Grant Street teachers were encouraged to make connections between students' classroom mathematics and their artistic endeavors around balance and equilibrium. The 350 mobiles created will be on display during Grant Street's spring artistic showcase. Thanks to Wanda and Margie for their work in creating this connectedness for the students!



Picture Info: Boy holding mobile is Aiden Glenn. Boy kneeling is Jackson Grieve. Both are first grade with Kaleen Steinke. Visiting artist is Margie McDonald.

OCEAN ~ Liz Quayle, Teacher

K-8 Poetry Sharing



Opening their poetry books, middle level and elementary students shared poetry they had written in various styles at Cocoa House celebration before the holidays. OCEAN Parent Carol Light shared lessons for the December poetry workshops, presenting Shakespeare's sonnets, Haiku, and the poetry of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Lewis Carroll. Students memorized classic poetry and shared their own writings to parents and fellow students.

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Fifth Avenue Rising Stars

Recognized for their theatrical contributions at OCEAN, PTHS, and Key City Public Theatre, two of our students, 2016 grad Noah Phillips and Junior Alivia Brass have been selected to participate in the Rising Stars program at Seattle's Fifth Avenue Theatre. Traveling back and forth and splitting weeks between

Seattle and Port Townsend, Noah will be working with the Stage Tech and Alivia will be doing Stage Management for the two-night March performance of the musical, "The Pajama Game".

Photography Show



All through January, high school level photography students in the Visual Arts class have samples of their talent on display in the lobby of the Bishop Hotel. Join us for their gallery opening on Saturday, January 7th, 5:30-8:00 pm.

Maintenance ~ Brad Taylor

MAINTENANCE:

Hydration stations are installed. All schools have at least one and they are proving to be very well used. Give thanks to both Justin Grey, who coordinated the plumbing, and to Robert Heck, who completed the electrical. The card locks at Blue Heron will be installed in the next few weeks again thanks to Justin's efforts.

OPERATIONS:

I want to thank all of you that helped with the events over the holidays; your sacrifice of time is much appreciated throughout the district. Scott Wilson and I are working on next year's events with two things in mind: trying to schedule less events on holidays, and helping the customer with their bottom line so more of the profits can go to their respective programs.

CAPITAL PROJECTS:

We are now setting up the next two months of meetings with staff and the Port Townsend Building Department in regards to the new school being built on Grant Street. The goal is to be into permit by mid February. This project is hitting a very high pace as we race for the end of the school year and the start of construction.



Library and Curriculum News ~ Ann Healy-Raymond

The Port Townsend School District and Port Townsend Public Library continue their strong partnership. Recently, community member Debbie Jahnke wrote a blog article to the Port Townsend Leader sharing her support of the continued collaboration. Here is an excerpt from her blog:

"One of the many wise decisions made for the new school design at Grant Street was to provide some sort of multipurpose school/community space that could be used at least some of the time by the public when school is not in session. The library, commons/cafeteria, and gymnasium are sited such that the remainder of the school can be readily secured from this space. Play fields are also intended to be on the Grant Street side of the school and will be available for public use when school is not in session. These decisions will make possible some desperately needed community space on the west side. But back to the exciting library collaboration: when our public library director and public school library director began to explore the idea of going beyond shared catalogs and looking at more fully integrated libraries, they discovered that they were out there on the leading edge of an extremely timely and popular concept. So they are bravely leading the way, informing other interested groups in much larger districts about the process and progress underway. After participating in relevant state and national meetings, they

gave a joint presentation at the most recent PT Public Library Advisory Board meeting to detail the efforts thus far.”

Here is a link to the rest of the blog article-

http://www.ptleader.com/blogs/great-expectations-great-outcomes-library-collaboration-success-benefits-everyone/article_bc533e4e-c966-11e6-beb1-5cb9017bdf47.html

Melody Sky Eisler (Director of Port Townsend Public Library) and Ann Raymond will convene a District/Community group to explore the ways in which the new elementary library can support families and the Castle Hill community. Melody and Ann have studied the ways collaborative libraries have functioned in other communities, and brought the concept to study sessions at library conferences where librarians across the state have helped us think through the questions and possibilities regarding a school/community library. While we have information about what has been done in other communities, it is clear that the new library will have a vision and use a model that is uniquely suited to our district and community.



Our district Science team has met regularly for a number of years to discuss science instruction and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). This team, and many teachers, recognize that there is a need for a K-5 curriculum that is more aligned to the NGSS, and that might better integrate with our Maritime and place-based learning initiative. As a result, we will convene a Science Curriculum Review Committee, consisting of representatives from K-5, principals, and community members, who will do an abbreviated review and recommendation for a K-5 Science Curriculum to be completed this spring. The committee's recommendation will go to the Instructional Materials Committee (IMC) for review and then to the Board for approval before the end of the school year. You will see updates of the progress of this group in this newsletter as the work progresses.

Technology Training for Education

Our first district-wide technology training of the 2016-17 school year is just around the corner. Our January 11th training will focus on the Google Suite of applications (now called G-Suite). Our district will move to using Gmail and Google Calendar beginning in the 2017-18 school year. This training will provide the first of at least three opportunities for staff to learn more about Gmail and Google Calendar. Students and teachers are already using many of the G-Suite applications with their students. Students complete assignments on Google Docs and submit them electronically to their teachers. Teachers use Google Forms to create quizzes and elicit feedback from students about their learning.



Several staff members have offered to facilitate the training for their colleagues on January 11th. This illustrates the positive collaboration around technology that will help us continue to learn together. These staff members' willingness to facilitate training is a testament to their professionalism and a positive climate we are growing across the district. Thank you to this year's Technology Committee members: Amy Wilson, Ben Dow, Betsy Hart, Joy Wentzel, Liz Quayle, Lois Polley, Peter Braden. Also thanks to the following staff members who will have agreed to help facilitate on January 11th: Don Olivera, Kate Wenzl, Denise Aiden, Mary Colton and Kim Montgomery. Results of our technology survey showed many other staff members who are willing to facilitate technology learning in the future.

Our training will be held at Blue Heron, and will begin at 1:15. Teachers need to bring their laptops to the training; Chromebooks will be available for those who need one. The afternoon of training is designed to provide individualized learning to meet learners at all levels of experience.