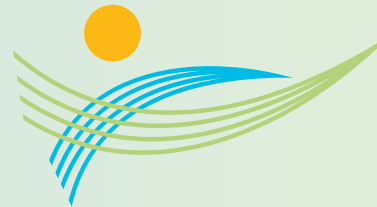


March 2021

PT SCHOOLS



Superintendent
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Operation Cohort: Small Groups & Schedules Are The Key to Learning Safely

The COVID-19 pandemic has added lots of new words — or variations to the meaning of old words — to education jargon. In our district, delivery of blended learning and distance learning could not work, without the use of cohorts. Cohort: A small group of students who stay together throughout the school day, including lunch and recess. By keeping students together in cohorts, the district is able to limit contact to the COVID-19 virus and reduce the likelihood of needing to fully close schools for in-person learning. Cohorts protect staff and students by limiting exposure and allowing for contact tracing, if needed. Creating and maintaining cohorts has been key to keeping Port Townsend's students and staff safely in our schools since September. School staff are working closely with the local health department to determine when the local data and state guidelines will allow shifts in this model to safely increase the amount of in-person learning for students.

Blue Heron Middle School

At Blue Heron Middle School students are separated into six cohorts per grade level. Two days a week, either Monday and Thursday or Tuesday and Friday, students who have chosen the Blended Learning model attend in-person classes with up to 16 peers in their designated cohort for all subjects. In a similar manner, students who are enrolled in the Distance Learning model attend Zoom classes with the same cohort. About one-third of Blue Heron's students have chosen distance learning only.

All students follow a weekly learning plan, called a playlist, for the days of the week that they are not attending classes and learning from home. Students can get help from their teachers via Zoom while completing their assignments from the playlist and following the weekly plan. Students who have been identified as needing extra support meet with staff members for small group intervention classes via Zoom. Additional in-person support from staff at Blue Heron is available on Wednesday for identified students.

Port Townsend High School

Two days a week, Monday and Thursday, all students participate in Zoom classes for all six periods. On campus cohorts are offered to students on Tuesday and Friday where students can receive additional support for learning. Students stay in groups of 16 and travel together to different classrooms, and sit together in designated distanced lunch areas to reduce exposure.

Each class has a playlist that has links to the week's lessons and assignments which students complete and turn in through Google Classroom. With this model of Zoom classes, and on-campus cohorts, all high school students are able to take the courses they need to meet their graduation requirements.

On Wednesdays, students needing extra support to complete their assignments can get help from Skillmation's network of volunteers and mentors for tutoring.



Kindergarten students in Ms. Nora's class attend their morning meeting.

OCEAN

As an Alternative Learning Education (ALE) program, OCEAN's students and their families meet with teachers to create the student's individual learning plan within the course framework of the program. This year, those teacher/student meetings have been conducted over Zoom, with family members supporting the student's distance learning at home.

For winter, students in 1st-8th grade studied the history and culture of ancient and modern Japan. With spring approaching, their focus has turned toward learning about plants and animals of the Salish Sea, including a field trip to the Marine Science Center.

High school students are reading the *Tempest* in English, learning about the human body in Biology, antiracism in US History and collaborating with the Benji Project and the Dove House in Health. The Bravo team, a partnership

between OCEAN and the Northwest Maritime Center, meets over Zoom, and in March started bi-weekly outdoor classes. Students are learning about rain gardens and plan to restore the rain garden at the NWMC.

Salish Coast Elementary

Similar to Blue Heron, elementary students attend two days a week and are part of a small cohort. Cohorts stay in their classroom together for learning and lunch. Students take recess together outside in their cohort groups, but in designated areas to prevent mixing of cohorts.

Students that are in distance learning are assigned to a distance-only program supported by a grade level teacher who provides whole class Zoom instruction, as well as having small groups for skill building. Both distance and blended learning students follow a playlist that provides a learning plan for the week.

Year-long, Forensic Science at PTHS

Since the beginning of the school year, Port Townsend High School science teacher Brandi Hageman has trained her sights on bringing the studies and application of forensic science home using local professionals.

In September, students learned from a series of experts starting with FBI Special Agent Ted Halla, speaking via Zoom from his Poulsbo office to talk about the FBI and Washington State Patrol Crime Lab. They also heard from Washington State Parks and Recreation Lead Law Enforcement Ranger and Park Manager Brian Hageman via Zoom who described the job of a park ranger and the effects of psilocybin mushrooms. Local connections to the field of forensics also included a presentation from Jefferson Healthcare Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Katie-Rose Fischer-Price who talked about forensic serology, sexual assault evidence collection and local resources provided by Dove House.

With the help of Deputy Coroner and Funeral Home Director Real Robles and Funeral Home Assistant and Removal Technician, PTHS Class of 2019 graduate Jamie Rogers, students attended a virtual field trip to Kosec Funeral Home to learn about autopsies and the crematorium in October.

Port Townsend Police Department (PTPD) School Resource Officer Jeremy Vergin, Jefferson County Sheriff's Sergeant Brandon Przygocki, and Washington State Patrol Trooper



School Resource Officer Jeremy Vergin and Junior Chris Lott'Melick driving the DUI Obstacle Course with the PTPD Gator.
Photo Credit: Brandi Hageman

Chelsea Hodgson talked via Zoom about effects of drugs and alcohol and later helped simulate a Driving Under the Influence lab on campus using the PTPD gator and DUI goggles.

A phone call in February from the Department of Fish and Wildlife Sergeant Kit Rosenberger turned up another opportunity. An illegally shot bobcat that had been confiscated from a landowner in Quilcene was available to the science class. Due to the distance learning schedule, most of the students

viewed the bobcat necropsy conducted by their teacher over Zoom. Sergeant Rosenberger was a Zoom guest the following week when he shared more about the incident which led to him to donating the bobcat, as well as specifics about how forensic science plays a role in his work as a wildlife officer.

Two (socially-distanced) field trips are scheduled for May when forensic science students will be bussed to the East Jefferson Fire Rescue (EJFR) training grounds to learn about the

forensic aspects of fire investigations. Students will rotate through stations with fire science professionals, EJFR Assistant Chief Brian Tracer and Everett Fire Department Investigator Barry Pomeroy, among others. They will learn about specialized techniques of evidence collection in cases of fire. Students will also be able to investigate, first hand, an 8-foot-by-8-foot-by-8-foot "burn cell" fire. The spring field trips are supported largely by grants from the Port Townsend Education Foundation.

AAUW Lends a Hand to Math Program

The Port Townsend branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) has been a long-time, steady partner in supporting student achievement, especially in the elementary grades. For years members have volunteered in the schools in a variety of ways to support learners. AAUW has provided math materials, in-class coaching, help with reading and funding an online learning program. Last year when COVID-19 hit, AAUW was quick to offer their help to keep students engaged and learning. Recognizing that many students needed additional support to continue developing math skills, the organization purchased individual math “manipulative” kits for them to have at home. These hands-on materials were chosen to directly reinforce the Bridges in Mathematics curriculum and are an important tool in building skills toward the Common Core math standards where students are asked to explain their thinking process through models.



Read to Rover Engages Young Readers



Another long-standing cadre of partners at Salish Coast Elementary are the two-legged and four-legged volunteers in the Read to Rover program who help support literacy for K-3 students. In a typical school year pairs of volunteers and their therapy dogs would visit Salish Coast library so students could read aloud and share their thoughts about their favorite books with a dog. In this way, with the dog's quiet listening skills and the volunteers' gentle guidance, K-3 students throughout the ages have gained greater confidence in their reading skills.

Adapting to the constraints of COVID-19 this school year, Read to Rover volunteers — human and canine — have had to enter into the world of Zoom to participate in Salish Coast's library storytime. Even though the format is digital, it is clear that these young readers, community volunteers and dogs are still able to make a positive connection. Students enthusiastically join these Zoom sessions so they can keep up with their reading to the dogs.

Celebrating Music in the Schools

"Music in the Schools" month was first organized in March 1985 by the National Association for Music Education as an opportunity to speak to the benefits of music in the classroom and to advocate for all students to receive music education. In Washington, music is defined as a core content area in our state's definition of basic education.

Music is being taught in all grade levels this school year, even with modifications for blended and distance learning. Elementary students have music as part of their specialist rotation, with a focus on Orff rhythm instruments. All sixth graders have the opportunity to participate in a remote band or orchestra class and

learn an instrument. Seventh-12th-graders can choose to participate in band or orchestra. Music teachers have been able to bring in small groups for practice. For wind instruments practice can be held outdoors and socially distanced, while non-wind instruments gather indoors with masks and distancing.

All subject areas are having challenging time this year and music is no exception. Music teachers are working to find creative solutions to keep students engaged including the use of technology, remote teaching, community involvement and virtual ensembles. Currently, Blue Heron students are in the process of creating a virtual performance for the

school community that will include orchestra, band and vocal selections.

To celebrate, the Port Townsend School Board of Directors recognized Music in the Schools and its contributions to our school and community on March 18th. This included acknowledging Port Townsend High School students for its first-time, virtual concert fundraiser in December for the Kiwanis Backpack Program which provides food to those in need. While this year has required a different level of creativity and risk, the long tradition of musical excellence in the Port Townsend School District is going strong.





Maritime Academy is Outside School

If you've wandered through the Northwest Maritime Center's courtyard on a weekday morning the past 6 months, you've likely witnessed a hearty crew of teenagers hard at work, attending school in a pandemic. Fifteen students, split into two cohorts, have been attending a hybrid version of the Port Townsend Maritime Academy, and is an advanced Maritime Operations Career and Technical Education program run in collaboration with West Sound Technical Skills Center, the Port Townsend School District and the Northwest Maritime Center.

When asked "What it is like to attend school outside in a pandemic" the students' answers veered from "COLD" to "It's just so nice to connect with other people in this challenging time". As a collective crew of students, teacher Kelley Watson, and NWMC Captain Sonia Frojen would sum up our experiences this year in one word: "Grateful!" We are grateful to see each other's faces (even if they are always covered in masks), grateful when the sun shines (even if it's not as often as we'd like), grateful for getting out on the water, grateful to be gathering together during this crazy time, and very grateful for our bright orange rubber rain gear!

Since September this crew has been attending in-person classes two days a week, working with independent learning tasks two days a week, and attending one all class Zoom meeting a week. When students were surveyed on their favorite units, essentially they named all of them — rowing, outboard engine and inflatable use, our current tool use and winter maintenance. Second-year students reminisced about the keelboat sailing unit from last year, before we knew what social distancing was.

While knots were not mentioned as a favorite unit, they did come up among the most important skills learned so far this year, along with learning how to dress warmly.

Nearly half of the students are returned from last year, and several seniors plan to attend Tongue Point Maritime Academy in Astoria, Oregon. They have learned independence and confidence, found career pathways, learned knots, to work as a team, how to dress warm, how to appreciate this learning opportunity and each other. We've also laughed a lot, spent everyday outside, and clocked dozens of hours out on the water!

If you know a junior or senior who might be interested in this program it comes highly recommended from the current crew. Students wholeheartedly endorse this program, sharing that it's a great fit for students who like learning that is "hands-on, physical, active, outside, and applicable to real life".

Registration is now open for the Port Townsend Maritime Academy via West Sound Technical Skills Center at wst.smapply.org and space is limited. Sign up for the Port Townsend Maritime Satellite Program. While this year's program served 15 Port Townsend High School youth, the program is open to all local districts, including Chimacum, Quilcene, Coupeville, and others. Students earn 3 credits for the year long, half-day program in English Language Arts, PE and Career and Technical Education.

For more information about the Port Townsend Maritime Academy, please contact teacher kwatson@ptschools.org

Swimming in the time of COVID-19



A swim team without a pool? No problem! That's how the season started for Port Townsend High School Girls' Swimming. For the first week, the team did what swimmers call "dryland" workouts in the gym; shoulder and core exercises plus leg and arm exercises targeting swimming muscles. Thankfully, the pool opened for the team the second week of the shortened season. "Mmm, I love that smell!" was one of the first things said as the team entered their chlorinated aquatic venue.

The team practiced two hours each day, Monday through Friday, and traveled Saturday evenings to Port Angeles's Shore Aquatic Center for virtual meets to post regulation times; Mountain View Pool is not a standard length facility.

A typical high school swimming season is 12 weeks including postseason

competition; the COVID season was just seven weeks. Rather than trying to fit seven dual meets and three postseason meets into an already shortened season, coaches in the region elected to post times from virtual meets with an ongoing Top 20 for each event. As expected, powerhouses North Kitsap and Port Angeles garnered the majority of the rankings but the Redhawks held their own. A Regional Cumulative meet completes the season. With preliminary results posted, of the team's 20 entries 15 qualified to move on to the Consolation/Finals Championship. The team has some swimmers and relays looking to place in the top three overall.

High school swimming is much more than fast swims and rankings. Swimmers bristle at the notion that swimming is an individual sport; the girls consider themselves a team in every sense of the

word. It does not matter whether they come from Chimacum or Port Townsend High Schools, Running Start or home-school; they support each other, push each other to go faster or just hang on during hard sets.

Swimmers asked what traditions would continue given that social distancing meant there would be no team breakfast or sleep over, no competitions with other teams and therefore no cupcake deliveries to the opponents after meets. Several traditions like blankets presented to the seniors, superhero warmups, and a lot of fun continued and, to the team's credit, they adapted. The girls enjoyed underwater pictures with hats, shirts, and mermaid tails — even more fun posing upside down. Taking a line from a team cheer, Coach Peter Braden challenged the team to warm up or cool down like a Pizza, Hotdog,

Taco, and Spaghetti (see the PTHS in that set?) admitting he had no earthly idea what may transpire but he had fun watching what the girls came up with.

Reflecting on their experience, Coach Braden observed, "This season was really about getting the kids in the water and having fun; improving technique and times was part of that and everyone posted best times in this crazy short season. But the real deal is conquering a set or stroke you thought wasn't for you and supporting each other throughout the season."

Assistant Coach Shannon Minnihan summed it up nicely, "Yes, it was a bizarre and short season but it's one the girls will remember fondly because they were in it together."



Kindergarten Registration

Now open for the
2021-22 School Year

Virtual Family Info Night

April 29, 2021
6pm



Scan for more information

Visit: salishcoast.ptschools.org

Email: larthur@ptschools.org



Port Townsend Education Foundation

The Port Townsend Education Foundation (PTEF) awarded \$24,986 in grants to Port Townsend School District for the spring grant cycle, bringing the total funds provided for the 2020-2021 school year to \$48,480. Funds were allocated based on the merit of the grant requests submitted by teachers to support our students today and invest in their futures. The grants also support teacher innovation, critical during this pandemic year. The classroom enrichment and curriculum-based projects supported by these grants will impact students 3,608 times this year alone, with many benefiting students for years to come.

One project taking place this May is the Forensic Aspects of Fire Investigation. Funds will be used to support a field trip for Forensic Science students who will travel to the East Jefferson Fire Rescue training grounds to learn about the Forensic Aspects of Fire Investigations. Students rotate through stations with Fire Science professionals to learn the specialized

techniques of evidence collection in fire cases. Students will investigate, first-hand, an 8-foot-by-8-foot-by-8-foot “burn cell” fire constructed from materials partially funded by Hadlock Building Supply. These field experiences will give students an increased understanding of fire science, fire investigation and the professions related to fire investigations.

The PTEF website at www.pteducationfoundation.org provides a summary of all the grants awarded this fall and spring—they are a testament to the creativity and tenacity of our teachers, as well as the generosity of our community.

► The new power drawbar on one of the Tormach 70M 3-axis milling machines at PTHS is being tested out. Purchased with a grant from PTEF in the fall, the drawbars make it safer and more efficient for students to change tooling while manufacturing their own computer-generated designs, giving them additional real-world experience using the CNC milling machines.



Non-discrimination statement

Port Townsend School District No. 50 does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, immigration status, national origin, age, honorably-discharged veteran or military status, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, marital status, the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. The district provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and all other designated youth groups listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society. The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination:

Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator for State Law
(RCW 28A.640/28A.642):
Amy Khile
1610 Blaine Street
(360) 379-4603 • akhile@ptschools.org

Title IX Officer:
Laurie McGinnis
1610 Blaine Street
(360) 379-4602 • lmcginnis@ptschools.org

Section 504/ADA Coordinator:
Shelby MacMeekin
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