

May 2018

# PT SCHOOLS



Superintendent  
**Dr. John Polm, 360-379-4501**

1610 Blaine Street,  
Port Townsend, WA 98368  
[www.ptschools.org](http://www.ptschools.org)

## Salish Coast Elementary opens September 2018

**C**onstruction of a modern, strikingly beautiful elementary school, designed to enhance the vision of a place-based, maritime-themed curriculum, is well underway. With 73 percent voter approval of the construction bond in 2016, providing a new elementary school is the community's most recent and visible means of honoring its youngest citizens.

Three key principles informed the design of Salish Coast Elementary School: connect the learning environment to the outdoors, make classroom spaces flexible and adaptable, and create shared opportunities and spaces for community use.

An inner courtyard with covered areas creates outside spaces that are intended to be an extension of the classroom. With a forested campus and developed kitchen gardens (as well as learning sites off campus) students will have greater opportunities for experiential, project-based learning and connection to place. Indoor spaces are also built to be flexible and adaptable over time. Many rooms have movable walls to enable large and small group activities. Designing a building with community connections in mind included bringing birth-3 and preschool programs such as Head Start and Early Start into the building, as well as continuing collaborations with the public library, public health and other programs and partners.

The two wings of the building are connected by a covered walkway at one end and a covered mud room



Drone photo of Salish Coast Elementary construction in March, courtesy of Mike Akers.

at the other end. A fantastic flying bridge above the plaza entrance to the school serves as the library. The inner courtyard is spacious and offers outdoor learning in a secure environment between the wings. The commons includes a community kitchen, teaching studio, and area for large group meetings as well as access to the kitchen garden area. Also, the gym, considerably larger and higher than the current gym, doubles as a music room with a stage.

Salish Coast Elementary is designed to support children, teachers and community members, using the district's K-12 curriculum, which strives to include craftsmanship and creativity, stewardship of place, citizenship and careers, leadership and self-reliance, economics and entrepreneurialism, and

### Hello, Salish Coast

The September date for a dedication ceremony and opening activities at Salish Coast Elementary School will be announced at later time.

### Salish Coast FAQs

With a project this large, questions have been raised by teachers, parents and community members. Public meetings, news stories, website updates and social media posts have all been employed as ways of keeping stakeholders and community up to date on the progress. A frequently asked questions (FAQ) link has been added to the school website: [http://grant-street.ptschools.org/salish\\_coast\\_ele/frequently\\_asked\\_questions](http://grant-street.ptschools.org/salish_coast_ele/frequently_asked_questions)

### Examples from the FAQs:

**How was the name of the school selected?** For a period of two months, community members, staff, parents, and students nominated names for the new school. More than 200 nominations were received. According to school board policy, names were to relate to geographic features or notable individuals. A committee of community members, parents and staff reviewed these nominations and made five final recommendations to the school board. The school board chose the name Salish Coast Elementary in a vote of four to one. The Salish Sea is the body of water that encompasses a vast marine area that includes Puget Sound. The Salish Coast represents where people gather after being on the sea, bringing coastal geography and culture together. Salish

**Grand goodbye for Grant Street, 5:30-7p.m. Friday, June 1, 2018.** Alumni, students, staff and community are invited to join together for food, games, celebration, sharing of memories, and a good old-fashioned assembly in the Grant Street gymnasium to say farewell to an era at Grant Street Elementary School.

community life and culture.

As a facility, the new building underscores the importance of functionality, longevity and relevance; it is sure to be a community asset. As an elementary school, it is intended to be the first place that connects our youngest community members to the larger world in important, inspiring and lasting ways.



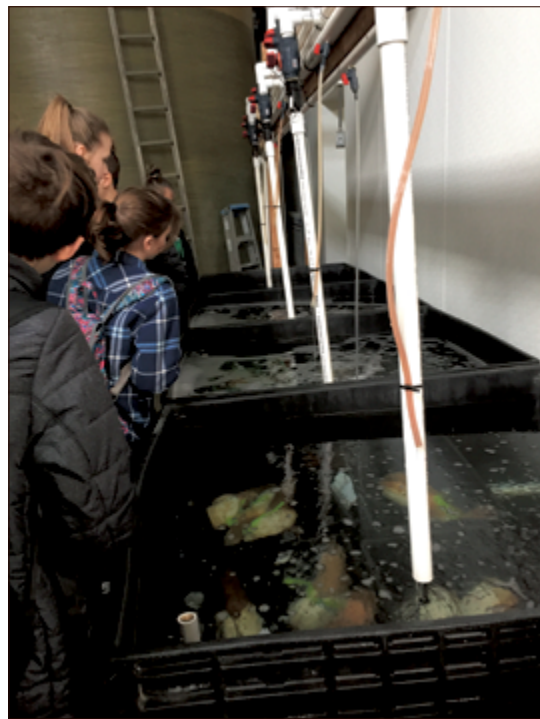


# Lessons from B-WET and ocean acidification

Through the support of a NOAA Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) grant, students across the district have been learning about ocean acidification. Fifth-graders started the school year with hands-on lab activities, introducing them to pH and acids. This spring, they had opportunities for more in-depth research.

To help students in their research toward understanding why ocean acidification is a local problem, more than 60 fifth-grade students and a dozen teachers and chaperones visited Taylor Shellfish in Quilcene. Taylor Shellfish employees gave the group a tour of the facilities where students were shown how shellfish develop from inception to adulthood. Effects of ocean acidification on the development of shellfish were highlighted in the tour. Everyone on the field trip walked away with a greater understanding of the environmental hazards of ocean acidification and its effects on our local economy.

Back at school, students continued studying the causes and effects of ocean acidification and produced their own research papers. Rene, a fifth-grader, explained that the whole grade studied ocean acidification for the last



Fifth-graders learn about aquaculture and examine the tanks at Taylor Shellfish.

three months. Each student chose an animal that could be affected by ocean acidification. Some students, together with their research, were highlighted on KPTZ, she said. According to Machaela, “The carbon dioxide from cars is causing ocean acidification. If you have a bicycle, use a bicycle.”



Fifth-graders enjoy a day sailing on the Lady Washington. Project supported by a generous grant from PTEF.

Thanks to a scholarship through the Grays Harbor Historical Society and generous funds from the Port Townsend Education Foundation, all Blue Heron fourth- and fifth-graders took a two- to three-hour sail on the tall ship Lady Washington (also known as the Interceptor from Disney’s movie “Pirates of the Caribbean”) in the first week of May. They studied 1700s maritime history and, in the case of fifth-grade classes, engaged in maritime math and knot-tying skills prior to the sails. On the sailing trip, students hauled ropes, sang sea shanties, were introduced to and interacted with different 1700s sea tools, and learned about trade, travels, and daily life of sailors on tall ships. It was a memorable experience that both connected students to our local wooden boat community and took them back in time.



## Salish Sea FAQs continued

is a native term that encompasses many peoples of the region; the belief is that it will be an inclusive name for the school.

### Who designed the building?

Community members, students and pre-K through grade 5 teachers and staff helped to create the vision for the new elementary school. Based on their vision statements, the architectural firm Integrus, of Seattle, created the building design. The building will have

a gate that closes the courtyard during the school day to limit access and ensure student safety. Additionally, there will be a limited number of entry points into the building to allow full supervision of those who enter and leave the school.

**What is the name of the construction company?** Absher Construction of Puyallup, Washington, is building the school. This construction company

has many years of experience building elementary schools.

### Who are the project managers?

Project managers are Kirk Robinson and Craig Sheets of The Robinson Company, based in Seattle.

**How are classrooms designed in the new building?** Thanks to state legislation, Salish Coast Elementary will have reduced class sizes in grades

K-3. This means that classrooms are designed to accommodate various class sizes, depending upon grade level. Many classrooms will have walls that open and close. Walls can close to provide a traditional single classroom, or open partially or completely, depending upon the needs of students and the learning activity.

For more information, please contact Katy Gaffney, 360-379-4501.





Blue Heron students learn to cook in an after-school program.

## Co-op sponsors school cooking club

The Co-op Cooking Club is a partnership between the Port Townsend School District and the Port Townsend Food Co-op that started with a group of community members getting together to talk about strengthening local food systems. One person noticed that it's hard to find adequately trained chefs who cook from scratch with local ingredients. With that, Stacey Larsen, food service director for the Port Townsend School District, expressed her interest in offering cooking classes to kids. In partnership with the Port Townsend Food Co-op, Stacey was able to offer a six-week cooking club for fifth- through eighth-grade. The program was offered at no cost and took place during early release Wednesdays. Since it was so successful, it will be offered multiple times next year.

Veteran chefs who offered to be instructors for the cooking club included Allison Hero from the Silverwater Restaurant; Aaron Stark, food service director at Jefferson Healthcare; and Stacey Larson from the school district. Thanks to the dedicated and talented volunteer chefs, the kids had a great time and learned how to cook the following healthy dishes: Homemade cheese and crackers (quinoa and almond); Eggs five ways, and how to debone a chicken; Vegan mac and cheese with broccoli tots; Salad with vinaigrette; Fun with oatmeal – from granola bars to overnight oatmeal in a jar; Homemade pizza and frozen fruit ice cream.

## Elementary math gets workout, out loud

Walk into any K-5 math classroom in the Port Townsend School District and you're going to hear an earful! On any given day, young mathematicians describe and share their thinking, model their strategies, and defend their answers with words, pictures and numbers. Loud and active classrooms are the norm as the district fully implements the Common Core State Standards and practices. Now in its second year, K-5 teachers are using the curriculum Bridges In Mathematics as a primary instructional tool. This curriculum helps students learn multiple strategies for approaching and solving math problems.

Teachers' work, of course, is integral to young students' successes in math, and the district also relies on competent volunteers to support teachers in math classrooms. One program, sponsored and funded through the local AAUW and UWF organizations, provides third-grade students with weekly hands-on math activities. Called Work Places, the program is mentored by AAUW members and community volunteers. In addition, on any given day, students can be seen engaged in DreamBox Learning Math, an interactive and motivating online math program. We thank our community partners for their support!

The district strives to improve each student's mathematical fluency every day through engaging lessons and maritime place-based learning activities. Fluency provides children with tools and practice time so that they are



A volunteer and Grant Street student learn math together at Family Math Night.

flexible, efficient and accurate as they calculate mentally. Teachers also continue to evolve their understanding of math fluency through professional development funded by the McCarthy-Dressman Education Foundation. Over two years, this grant has provided more than 100 hours of teacher collaborative time learning in others' classrooms, developing projects and reading mentor texts.

A highlight of this year's math fluency work was Family Math Night in February. A lot of serious counting, calculating, and thinking happened when more than 100 students and their family members attended. Mathematics is alive and well in Port Townsend as we transition into our new Salish Coast Elementary.

### FRUIT AND NUT GRANOLA BARS

(Makes 12)

1 ½ cups oats  
¾ cup sliced almonds  
¾ cup pumpkin seeds  
½ cup pistachios  
1 cup pitted dates  
½ cup dried cranberries  
½ cup raisins  
½ cup honey

½ tsp salt  
1 tsp cinnamon

Heat oven to 350 degrees.  
Spread oats and nuts evenly on a cookie sheet and toast for 10-15 minutes. Cool.

Spray an 8x8 pan with cooking spray, line with parchment paper and spray again.

Boil the dates in 2 cups of water for 5 minutes, until soft. Drain

but reserve ½ cup of the cooking liquid. Blend water with honey until smooth.

Combine all ingredients in a mixing bowl. Mix and coat well. Transfer to pan and smooth the surface, pushing down firmly.

Bake 20 minutes. Slice into bars, space bars around the cookie sheet and bake 5 more minutes.

Cool and eat!

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# Salmon release project reaches its 18th year

With an increased focus on Port Townsend students learning through a place-based lens, the annual salmon project at Grant Street has taken on even greater meaning.

Few species are as iconic to the Salish Sea region as the salmon. In fact, according to the U.S. EPA Health of the Salish Sea Ecosystem Report 2017, "Salmon provide food for a variety of wildlife, from bald eagles to killer whales to grizzly bears." Further, "During their life cycle, salmon transfer energy and nutrients between the Pacific Ocean and freshwater and land habitats."

Because they are so important to the region we live in, Grant Street Elementary students have been studying the life cycle and habitat of the coho salmon for 18 years. Teacher Linda Morris began the project in 1999; Dorothy Stengel has led it since 2007. In the salmon project, kindergarten, first- and second-grade students raise 250 coho salmon eggs through the alevin and fry stages. They learn about the life cycle, habitat requirements, diet, predators and threats to survival of local salmon. In the process, students monitor water temperature (47-50 degrees F) water quality (pH comparisons between tank



**Grant Street students prepare to release young salmon along Chimacum Creek."**

and stream) and record growth from egg to fry. They teach salmon fry how to "strike" for food and then release them into a local stream in April.

Grant Street teachers collaborate with various state and local agencies on this project. The Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife issues an annual license to "plant" salmon fry and provides a tank and "bubble-bucket" for transporting fry. Hurd Creek Hatchery donates 250 coho salmon eggs through the Salmon in the Classroom project. Jefferson Land Trust provides access to Chimacum Creek and an indigenous plant

identification program. North Olympic Salmon Coalition facilitates a visit from Fin the giant salmon and organizes salmon games for kindergarten students. Finally, by connecting with salmon, Grant Street students begin to view themselves as stewards of their place in the Salish Sea ecosystem.

Carrie Clendaniel of Jefferson Land Trust said, "I have seen some former students in other settings (YMCA camp, for example) now, and can tell you that this experience makes a lasting positive impression. For us, that long-term sense of place is critical to the future of our conservation work."



## Port Townsend Education Foundation supports Port Townsend Public Schools

- 32,326 students have benefited from PTEF grants awarded since 2008.
  - Port Townsend High School juniors taking the PSAT exam increased from 44 percent to 69 percent as a result of a PTEF grant-funded test booklets.
  - There is one iPad for every 3.5 students thanks to PTEF grants.
  - 56 percent of teachers say that student writing improved after the Writers in the Schools program grant.
  - 12 PTEF community nonprofit partners have been impacted by awarded grants.
  - \$55,011 in grants were awarded in 2018.
  - Grant awards increased 544 percent from 2008 to 2018.
  - \$24,811 in grant requests were unmet in 2018.
  - 1,145 students are currently enrolled in the Port Townsend School District.
- A donation of just \$10 per month or \$100 dollars per year, per student, will continue to fund grants that provide essential enrichment in our schools.
- Please join us to sponsor each and every student to meet this need.
- Sponsor a student at [www.pteducationfoundation.org](http://www.pteducationfoundation.org).

## Kindergarten registration and orientation

Kindergarten registration is now open for the 2018-19 school year at Salish Coast Elementary School. For families who did not attend orientation in the spring, another orientation is set for 6-7:30 p.m., August 27. Please go to the school at 1637 Grant Street and pick up a registration packet, or call 360-379-4535 with questions. Families are encouraged to register as soon as possible to help the school plan for each child.



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