

October 2019

PT SCHOOLS



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From the Superintendent by Dr. John Polm



It is hard to believe it is already October and we are well into the 2019-20 school year. I would like to take this opportunity to share a few highlights from last year as we look forward to the excitement ahead:

- Working closely with our PT Education Association and SEIU partners, we negotiated significant pay increases for all members.
- Salish Coast Elementary opened after 18 months of construction.
- The elevator project at PTHS began, and will be completed in the fall of 2019.
- We grew to over 80 community partnerships.
- Our HS students were State Champions in Knowledge Bowl.
- PTHS Student Odin Smith became the youngest R2AK finisher at 16 years and a few months.

Our district strategic plan (<https://ptschools.org/strategicplan>) captures the heart of our work with various goals and objectives under the broad areas of Teaching & Learning, Technology, Community Engagement, Wellness, Operational Stewardship and Learning Spaces. Our district is also working to meet the needs of all students through increased emphasis on social/emotional learning, and a close study of grading practices. Finally, we will be pulling together a long-range facility committee to take a deeper look at all campuses with a focus on the high school campus and its long-term needs.

Enrollment in our schools maintained levels just above budget, which means we developed a reserve that helped us avoid cuts for the 2019-2020 school year. Like many other school districts, we are experiencing a decrease in local funding due to legislated limits on local levy collection. We are eager to continue to provide quality programming that meets the needs of our students and community while keeping a keen eye on our revenues and expenditures in the years ahead. We strive to develop experiences to help students develop effective thinking, effective action, and effective relationships to prepare students for our changing world.

Port Townsend Maritime Academy Skills Center Opens

The Port Townsend Maritime Academy Skills Center opened for the first class of students this September. Students meet daily at the Northwest Maritime Center with teachers Kelley Watson and Sonia Frojen. On the first day of class, students were asked to work in small groups to build model boats that would safely carry a load from one side of the model ocean (a kiddie pool) to the other. Watson handed them an assortment of paperclips, pipe cleaners, rubber bands, sail cloth and dowels to build their boats with. At the end of the first week, students experienced the annual Wooden Boat Festival when it became their classroom, offering a hands-on immersion experience for students.

The Maritime Academy Skills Center program is focused on preparing students for on-the-water vessel operations jobs. Instructor Kelley Watson says, "It is an amazing group of students. It's incredible to be down on the waterfront, learning at the NMC and on the water. All of these maritime experts work and live there and we get to interact with them."

Students first on-the-water lesson was fixed seat rowing. Each student will experience the challenges of navigating a small boat before moving on to large vessels. Through the year-long program, students will earn a wide range of certificates:



Maritime Academy students on the first day of classes start a boat building challenge.

Wilderness advanced first aid, US Sailing Keel Boat Instructor, Basic Safety Training, and a WA State Boaters Card. This extensive training and certification will help students be ready for on-the-water jobs when they finish high school.

Students are excited for this unique program. "I like being in this class because it's hands-on and I like being outside. It's an incredible opportunity," said Maritime Academy Student Jack T.

The PT Maritime Academy Skills Center is made possible through a partnership between Port Townsend

School District, West Sound Technical Skills Center, and the Northwest Maritime Center, with the generous support of Wells Fargo. This West Sound Technical Skills Center satellite program is available to all high school juniors and seniors in Port Townsend and nearby school districts. This year, the program is serving 18 students, including students from Port Townsend, Chimacum, and Coupeville. Students are enrolled in a half day of classes and can earn English Language Arts, Physical Education, and Career and Technical Education credits. The remainder of the school day, students spend at their home district.



Students in David Kelley's Algebra class working on Algebraic functions in the Carnegie Learning math curriculum.

Carnegie Learning Math Curriculum Will Offer Blended Math Learning

The Port Townsend School Board adopted a new secondary math curriculum this summer.

Carnegie Learning was recommended to the School Board from the Instructional Materials Committee for adoption for middle and high school math. The curriculum offers a blended learning model that includes an instructional balance of in-class teacher-directed learning, and individualized computer-based coaching. This school year, 6th-8th grade Math and Algebra will be taught with the Carnegie curriculum, and Geometry and Algebra 2 will be taught using the new curriculum starting in the 2020-21 school year.

The program is "blended" meaning there are two components: teacher facilitated lessons and Mathia, an online learning platform that addresses individual student skill development. Classroom teachers, special education teachers, and Title/LAP math intervention teachers all

attended a two-day training with a Carnegie Professional Learning Partner in August before the school year began to learn how to use the new instructional materials.

Each part of the curriculum involves engaging students, developing math concepts and skills, and opportunities for students to demonstrate and apply new skills and concepts.

The Carnegie materials help teachers engage students with real-world examples, encourage students to collaborate, and help students leverage personal experiences to make learning real for them.

Both group and independent learning opportunities will help students get the specific 1 to 1 support they need and the social interaction that will prepare them for their future. The district wants students to really learn math, not just memorize it, so ongoing formative assessments

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Salish Coast Garden Receives Grant Support

Salish Coast Elementary received two grants to support a continued focus on garden and sustainability education. The Master Gardener's Foundation generously granted funds to support a drip irrigation system that has allowed the garden to thrive over the summer with regular watering, in addition to the hard work of Farmer Emily Hiatt and many volunteers.

For the 2019-20 School year the school has also been awarded a NOAA Ocean Guardian grant to support students learning about sustainable non-toxic and low-water gardening practices. The grant will support staff time and garden supplies to help expand into the undeveloped production garden

at the corner of Grant Street and Discovery Road. When the garden is completed, the production garden will provide fresh produce for the school cafeteria.

Students at Salish Coast will have regular garden class with Farmer Emily this school year. Students will have an opportunity to harvest produce, learn about compost, maintain the garden, and plant new seeds. One row of carrots planted over the summer is being left unharvested so that they will go to seed and students can practice seed collection. Students will engage in a wide variety of lessons in the garden including math, science, and art.



Students started the school year in Art class at Salish Coast visiting the garden for multimedia drawing.



Blue Heron students at the ANGLEs competition in July.

Galaxy Girls Compete at Regional Robotics Competition

Sixth grade students in Jef Waibel's STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) class prepared for the challenge throughout the school year. "Galaxy Girls," Claire Porter, Zoey Sonandre, Rowan Santerre, Sophia Petta, and Juliette O'Hara were selected to compete in the regional event at the University of Washington.

Students Tallulah Sebastian and Asa Lupton attended as a support team. The Blue Heron students participated in The Apollo Next Giant Leap Student (ANGLEs) Challenge Event on Friday, July 19th, 2019.

Students had to design a robot to move from the Landing Zone to move a "boulder," then proceed to the circle that matches the circle under the boulder to drop off the payload, then go back to the Landing Zone without going over any "craters." The simulated environment is designed to mimic what would be encountered on Mars by a rover needing to drop off the

payload and get back to the Landing Zone. The lander would have to be programmed to move to where the payload has to be dropped off, to avoid craters and to move large obstacles then move back to the Landing Zone.

Team member Juliette O'Hara says, "The hardest part of the challenge is programming the robot to move exactly where we need it to in the smallest amount of time possible. Our group is solving this challenge by doing research and asking others in and out of our group for help." She goes on to say, "As a group we were most excited to compete in Seattle, to spend time working on the robot and programming, and to stay in the university dorms."

At competition, the robot experienced some bluetooth connectivity issues, but the team pulled through. The Galaxy Girls won the Mission Patch, and their created design was made into stickers. Both Mr. Wabiel and the students plan to participate in future

robotics programs, after learning a lot from this year's competition.

ANGLEs is a national challenge celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 mission by giving students the chance to recreate the landing using drones and robots, focusing on making it accessible for underrepre-

-sented and underserved communities.

The event was organized by NASA's The Northwest Earth and Space Sciences Pipeline (NESSP), which is a collaborative K-12 education effort serving students, teachers, and their diverse communities throughout the Pacific Northwest.



Librarian Hilary Verheggen reads a story to library patrons at the summer program in the Salish Coast Elementary library.

Summer at Salish: Public Library Collaboration

Over the summer, school was out but the Salish Coast Library was open. Thanks to a collaboration between Port Townsend School District and the Port Townsend Public Library, the school library was open for eight Tuesday mornings over the summer.

Hilary Verheggen, from the Public Library, and Shannon Grewell, from the School District, were on staff at the school library on Tuesdays from 10 am-1 pm.

Each week, Hilary provided a preschool storytime including read aloud books, songs, finger plays, flannel boards, puppets, and more. Both Shannon and Hilary answered questions, checked out books, shelved books, and interacted with children

and their families.

Throughout the summer, the program averaged about 30 attendees per session. This includes storytime participants as well as children and families who came to check out books and the school library after storytime had concluded. There were many families who were excited to come week after week to ensure that their five-year old children felt comfortable in the space, as they would be attending Salish Coast for the first time in September. Several parents also expressed that it made them feel at ease getting to see the space and meet some teachers before the school year started. Kids commented that they loved playing with puppets and

Math, cont. from pg. 2 >>>>>

demonstrate what students are (or aren't) learning and allow for adjustments to accommodate individual needs.

During the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years all secondary math teachers participated in the curriculum adoption process. Teachers studied available curriculum that are being used nationally and regionally. Teachers piloted lessons for a variety of curricula. Carnegie Learning was chosen after a yearlong process as the program that included procedural and conceptual math learning that will best support all learners. The curriculum selected will meet the needs of many different types of learners and different ability groups.

First Friday Activities: Wooden Boat Festival and More

The first Friday of the school year and the Wooden Boat Festival always go together. This year, high school sophomores participated in a day-long experience at the Festival. Students toured boats and attended workshops, but there were also some special activities just for them.

A maritime careers panel featuring a diverse group of people employed in the maritime industry shared what a typical day at their job was, as well as how they got started. The biggest advice echoed by many on the panel was to "show up on time, and do what you say you will do." Sophomores also participated in the annual high school cardboard boat building competition and race.

Given an hour, some cardboard, and

some duct tape they were required to build a boat that would take one person across the stand up paddleboard pool, and back again. Judges, Jan Boutillier, High School Secretary, and Buster Ferris, from Edensaw Woods, as well as a PTHS Alumni, awarded points in multiple categories to determine the winner. The top two teams won hats and screwdrivers from Edensaw Woods.

Many Salish Coast Elementary first and second grade classes spent a few hours enjoying the boat festival. Small groups of students toured boats, made their own boats, and painted fish shirts. The pirate boat was a favorite stop for these kids.

While the sophomores enjoyed a full day of learning at the festival, the rest of the high school classes were busy at their own activities. The freshmen stayed on the high school campus, engaging in fun sessions led by the Redhawk Mentors. Upperclassmen volunteer to be Redhawk Mentors which includes helping freshmen get acquainted with the high school, as well as support a positive culture at the school.

Juniors boarded charter buses headed to Olympia, to take a campus tour at The Evergreen State College. Students participated in an information session with an admissions counselor, and were able to ask questions about the college admission process. This was followed by guided campus tours in small groups and lunch on Red Square, the quad at The Evergreen State College. For most students this was their first time touring a college campus. "It's a great

way to start the year building class community with place-based learning outside the classroom," said high school teacher Julianne Dow.

High school seniors spent the morning touring local businesses and learning about local job opportunities. In the afternoon, they worked with Skillmation mentors, beginning to work on their senior projects. As a graduation requirement students complete a senior project that includes community service and an independent project. Each student is required to have an adult mentor in the community to support their work. Each year, the projects are presented to the community at the Senior Symposium held at Fort Worden. Through the diverse college and career activities, the First Friday activities each school year introduce all students to their post high school options, and help students begin planning for their future.

Library, cont. from pg. 3 >>>>>

blocks at the end of each storytime and following up with the really cool playground afterwards. A total of 239 visitors came to the library over the summer.

The library and schools have a long standing collaboration with a shared library catalog, allowing patrons to use one card to check out or request books from Port Townsend Public Schools, Port Townsend Public Library, and Jefferson County Libraries. All Port Townsend Public Schools students are issued a library

card at school, which can be used at either of the public library systems. The successful summer pilot program was just the beginning, and more collaborative programming is planned to be offered in the future, increasing access for students and families to libraries.

Starting October 2, 2019 the Salish Coast Library will be open on Wednesdays from 1-3 pm for families and students. Youth under 9 years old must be accompanied by a caregiver. Adults are welcome when accompanying a child.



Students test out their cardboard boats at the Wooden Boat Festival. Photo by Jan Boutillier



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