



SCHOOL BEAT

An e-news update for school district staff

January 19, 2007

District News

Public input on superintendent search continues this month

The Seattle School Board and search consultants Ray & Associates continue their public meetings this month on what qualities the community feels the new superintendent will need to best lead the school district.

Community members are invited to share their thoughts about necessary traits and qualifications, and complete a survey at several of the meetings. Board members will use this information to develop a profile of desired characteristics. The profile will direct the search consultants as they recruit qualified candidates from across the nation.

Ray & Associates, which is assisting the school board, will facilitate the community meetings. Seattle Council PTSA is hosting the meetings; light refreshments and childcare will be provided.

Upcoming general community meetings are on:

Tuesday, Jan. 23

- 9 a.m. - Stanford Center, 2445 3rd Ave. S.
- 6 p.m. – lunchroom, McClure Middle School, 1915 1st Ave. W.
- 8 p.m. – lunchroom, Summit K-12, 11051 34th Ave. N.E.
(Amharic, Chinese, Spanish, Tigrigna translators available)

Wednesday, Jan. 24

- 6 p.m. – lunchroom, Madison Middle School, 3429 45th Ave. S.W.
(Chinese, Spanish, Vietnamese translators available)
- 8 p.m. – lunchroom, Aki Kurose Middle School, 3928 S. Graham St.
(Chinese, Lao, Oromo, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese translators available)

Separate meetings will also be held with district employees and with representatives of community organizations and associations. Individuals who are not able to attend the meetings are welcome to provide input by e-mail to superintendentsearch@seattleschools.org; by mail to Board Office, MS 11-010, Box 34165, Seattle, WA, 98124-1165; or by phone at 252-0040.

To ensure consideration as the profile is developed, comments must be received, or postmarked, by Wednesday, Jan. 24. Updates on the search process will be available on [the School Board Web site](#).

Facts on Feb. 6 bond and levy special election

- **The Capital Bond** proposition will replace an expiring levy. It will provide funds for the design, construction and renovation of school facilities, and improvements in infrastructure and technology throughout the district.
 - **The Educational Programs & Operations Levy** will replace the expiring 2004 levy and supports basic educational services not fully funded by the state.
 - Seattle School District has one of the lowest levy rates in the region. Of 10 local school districts in Puget Sound, Seattle has the third lowest levy rate at \$2.19 per \$1,000 of assessed house value.
 - Over the life of the school ballot measures, the tax rate will remain at or below current levels.
 - The money to operate Seattle Public Schools comes from multiple sources, with the largest share (58 percent) provided by the state and the second largest share (24 percent) provided by the local levy.
 - The Capital Bond measure includes a program to renovate or replace four high schools (Chief Sealth, Nathan Hale, Ingraham, Rainier Beach), two middle schools (Denny, Hamilton International), and one K-8 school (South Shore).
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Seattle School District joins lawsuit against state

The Seattle School District and the Seattle Education Association joined 12 other school districts, 12 other teachers associations, two families, and eight organizations in a lawsuit last week against the state to secure adequate and stable funding for the education of all kids in Washington.

“Although the State’s Constitution proclaims that it is the ‘paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders,’ Washington remains near the bottom in the United States in dollars per student (adjusted for cost of living), class size, chance for college, and other important measures,” Superintendent Raj Manhas said in his letter to staff.

Manhas said the decision to join in the lawsuit was based on two main reasons. First, district officials felt that the future of students was at stake – and action was required immediately. Second, the district felt that the state was making only incremental changes in funding – not the long-term funding strategies and structures the district needed.

You can find additional information about this lawsuit at the Washington School Excellence Web site, at <http://www.waschoolexcellence.org>.

Registration for Spring WASL opens for 9th-, 11th- and 12th-graders

Students in Grades 9, 11 and 12 who have decided to take the High School Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) must register by Feb. 9 at the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Web site, www.k12.wa.us/waslregistration, or by calling the toll-free number at 1-866-400-WASL (1-800-400-9275).

Students in Grade 10 do not need to register with OSPI since they already are registered to take the test through the district.

Students can take the test for any combination of subjects but must register for each subject individually. Test dates are:

- Writing – March 13-15
- Reading - March 19-20
- Math – April 17-18
- Science – April 19-20

Passing the WASL in reading, math and writing is a graduation requirement beginning with the Class of 2008.

■ **9th-grade** - Students may choose to take the WASL early. **Students who choose to take the test should feel prepared to take and pass the test.** If students decide to take the test and do not earn a score high enough to meet the required standard, they will have used one of their five opportunities to take the test.

■ **11th-grade** – Students need to retake the WASL only for the areas they have not passed. Passing the WASL in science is not a graduation requirement.

■ **12th-grade** - Students may retake the WASL to earn passing scores. Scores will not be posted on student transcripts.

Mills selected as director of Department of Technology Services

Marjorie Mills, a veteran of the district's technology department for more than 22 years, has been selected as the new director of the district's Department of Technology Services.

Mills, with 14 years of management experience, was most recently the interim director of the district's technology department, where she provided leadership and strategic direction for long-range technology planning, including finalizing the technology component of BEX III.

Chief Operating Officer Mark Green said Mills will oversee all areas of the Technology Services organization – Systems & Programming, Network Operations, Networks and Telecommunications, Training and Support and Classroom Technology.

"I am excited that Marjorie will be at the helm of our technology department and will continue to align technology with our academic vision," Green said.

Taylor hired as interim Human Resources director

Laurie Taylor, a human resources director for a community college in Boston, has been hired as interim Human Resources director, and will serve from Jan. 29 to August 31.

“Rather than conduct a time-consuming and potentially unsuccessful search at this time, I have decided that it would be in the best interest of the department to appoint a highly qualified and experienced HR person in an interim capacity,” said Chief Operating Officer Mark Green.

“She has considerable hands-on experience in a number of HR areas, including labor relations, performance and misconduct, classification and compensation, payroll, equity and compliance, to name a few,” Green said. “I am excited that a person with Laurie's experience can join us so quickly and I am pleased to welcome her.”

Prior to her job at Boston, Taylor worked at the University of Washington where she had extensive personnel experience. Until Taylor's arrival, Harvey Deutsch will take on the interim director responsibilities.

Around the Community

SPS-TV broadcasts area high school basketball games

Symetra Financial has teamed up with 950 KJR Radio to broadcast area high school basketball games on Seattle Public School television (SPS-TV) starting Jan. 20.

The broadcast includes one boys and one girls game highlighted in the “Game of the Week.” Both games are taped the previous day (Fridays) and broadcast at 8 p.m. the next day (Saturdays). The broadcast is repeated at noon Sundays.

Upcoming broadcast dates scheduled are:

- **Garfield vs. Ballard at Old Lincoln High**, (Game Day: Friday, Jan. 19) Broadcast on Saturday, Jan. 20 and Sunday, Jan. 21
- **Cleveland at West Seattle**, (Game Day: Friday, Jan. 26) Broadcast on Saturday, Jan. 27 and Sunday, Jan. 28
- **Garfield at Franklin**, (Game Day: Friday, Feb. 2) Broadcast on Saturday, Feb. 3 and Sunday, Feb. 4

SPS-TV is available on Cable Channel 26 in the greater Seattle area Comcast cable system and channel 75 on Millennium Cable.

Symetra will also honor one outstanding “Symetra Student Athlete” for his or her performance on the court and in the classroom. The student athlete will be selected at the conclusion of each game and featured in a post-game interview during the broadcast. In addition, Symetra will make a \$100 contribution in the student athlete's name to his or her school's Parent, Teacher and Student Association fund.

Alternative middle school program comes to South Seattle

South Seattle families are invited to attend an open house to meet Orca staff and parents, see plans for the future K-8 Whitworth site, and hear about Orca's amazing alternative middle school program.

After years of planning, South Seattle will finally receive an alternative middle school program of its own. Orca's K-5 program will be moving from Columbia to Whitworth and expanding to a K-8, as part of the district's school consolidation plan.

The K-5 program will move to Whitworth over the summer; two 6th-grade classes will be added by next fall; 7th and 8th grades will follow in the next two years.

Families are invited to the following open house and school tours:

■ **Open House:** 7-8 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 8 at Whitworth Elementary School, 5215 46th Ave. S.

■ **School Tours:** 9:30-11 a.m., Thursday, Jan. 25, and Feb. 8 at Orca at Columbia, 3528 S. Ferdinand St.

As an alternative school, Orca both draws from and has transportation provided to families from the entire South end (south of the Ship Canal, including West Seattle). Enrollment is by lottery, regardless of distance.

For more information, call Orca at 252-6900 or e-mail orcak8@yahoogroups.com.

Washington Learns members to speak on education initiative

Only seven out of 10 students will graduate from high school in Washington state. Nearly half of all employers report they can't find enough qualified workers. Most people agree it's time to make changes, but can we agree on how?

Mark Friday, Jan. 26, on your calendar for a CityClub presentation on "Washington Learns: Lasting Change for Education?" at the Washington Athletic Club, 1325 Sixth Ave., Seattle.

Come hear from community leaders who participated in Washington Learns, Gov. Christine Gregoire's education initiative. Several members who helped shape the education recommendations now before the Legislature will answer questions, including Dr. Elizabeth Hyde, superintendent of the Bremerton School District; State Sen. Rosemary McAuliffe, D-1st District, and Bob Watt, vice president of government and community relations, The Boeing Company.

Registration is at 11:30 a.m. and the luncheon is from noon-1:30 p.m. This event is open to Seattle Public Schools employees, supporters and parents at a special rate of \$35. (CityClub members pay \$30, while the general public pays \$40). Payment is due by

Tuesday, Jan. 23. Register online at www.seattlecityclub.org or call 206-682-7395 to reserve a seat.

Celebrations

22 teachers earn prestigious board certification in 2006

Seattle teachers earn National Board Certification at record pace

Seattle Public Schools teachers are earning National Board Certification at a record pace with seven educators earning the prestigious certification (NBCT) in 2005, 22 earning the certification last year, and 30 more still taking part in the process. Seattle Public Schools currently has 43 board-certified educators.

To earn the NBCT honor, teachers must undergo an intensive yearlong introspective process, which includes creating a portfolio of work that documents their performance in the classroom and completing a series of tests that measure their knowledge in the subjects they teach.

Seattle teachers who earned their certification in 2006 were:

- William Anderson – Nathan Hale High School
- Andrew Bean – Fairmount Park Elementary
- Betty Brennan – Ingraham High School
- Julie Clayton – AE II at Decatur
- Joanna Forsyth – Washington Middle School
- Karen Grace – Roosevelt High School
- Amy Griffith – Bailey Gatzert Elementary
- Tricia Haney – Thurgood Marshall Elementary
- David Howell – Eckstein Middle School
- Jennifer Kovach – Franklin High School
- Margaret Lang – West Woodland Elementary
- Elizabeth McCormack – AE II at Decatur
- Melanie Olson – Washington Middle School
- Kerry Richter – On leave of absence
- Amy Schwentor – Roosevelt High School
- Lair Showalter – John Rogers Elementary
- Jennifer Smith – Roosevelt High School
- Onny Tabares – John Rogers Elementary
- Jeff Ursino – West Seattle High School
- Marcie Von Beck – Lowell Elementary
- Karen Weisman – Madrona K-8
- Peter Weschler – Roxhill Elementary

Teachers who want to find out how to join the growing numbers of National Board Certified Teachers, can attend a presentation at 4:30 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 30 at the John Stanford Center. The presentation is open to all K-12 certified staff with a minimum of three years successful teaching experience.

For more information on the presentation, contact Hilary Rosenfield at 252-0136 or e-

mail at hjrosenfield@seattleschools.org.

Seattle Education Foundation awards \$25,000 in grants to schools *Singing group Death Cab for Cutie donates \$9,700 to music programs*

The Seattle Education Foundation awarded \$25,000 in annual grants to schools for individual programs this year. Twenty separate staff members received amounts ranging from \$350 to more than \$2,400.

Recipients included teachers and staff at Aki Kurose Middle School, AEII @ Decatur, Ballard High, Dunlap Elementary, Graham Hill Elementary, High Point Elementary, Highland Park Elementary, Ingraham High, Meany Middle School, Olympic Hills Elementary, John Stanford International and West Woodland Elementary.

In the past 15 years, Foundation House and the Seattle Education Foundation have distributed more than \$400,000 to Seattle schools.

In a separate donation, the Washington-based and Grammy-nominated singing group *Death Cab for Cutie* gave the district \$9,700. This is the second time the group donated funds to the district. The group's first unrestricted donation was used to support classroom music programs.

Lafayette Elementary raises money in walkathon fund-raiser

Despite the wind and rain, Lafayette Elementary students participated in a successful walkathon in November to raise funds for special programs at their school.

The work started in mid-October when students collected donations and pledges. Then, on Nov. 1, students walked for 45 minutes with their classmates around an approximately one-fourth-mile track set up outside the school playground.

Students gleefully ran and splashed their way around the track while more than 100 parent volunteers worked together to make the yearly event a huge success.

"What I wanted to share with you that pulled at my heart strings was the esprit de corps that was felt at Lafayette that day. Everyone loved wearing the same shirt, taking a turn to get wet and run through the puddles, getting out of regular class, and having treats. Priceless! This, in my judgment, is a wonderful activity for the students to participate in supporting their school," said Judy McCoy, a special education resource teacher at Lafayette.

Each student, staff and parent volunteer received a specially designed walkathon T-shirt. Students had the opportunity to win prizes for the amount of money or pledges they obtained and for the number of laps they ran. But the most anticipated incentive for students has always been the Principal Challenge.

Each year, if students reach the walkathon fund-raising goal, Principal Virginia Turner volunteers to participate in a Principal Challenge voted on by the students. The annual PTA fund-raiser culminated on Dec. 5 as Turner and a group of staff dressed as pirates competed in a series of challenges during the awards assembly.

The swashbuckling staffers formed two teams and competed in challenges that included the badminton balance, crows nest basketball, cannonball launch and a pirate tug-of-war.

Aki Kurose teacher to teach middle-schoolers computer game design

Richard Dillon, a computer teacher at Aki Kurose Middle School, was awarded a \$1,500 grant from Foundation House to purchase game design software to be used to teach programming concepts.

Students will create arcade games using Torque Game Builder software. Dillon said he will use the software's training materials to have students create games of increasing difficulty. He will base his curriculum on those lessons.

In his grant application, Dillon noted that programmers are in high demand and colleges, such as the University of Washington, decry the lack of freshmen enrolled in the computer science department.

"Nationally speaking, there is a general dearth of people of color in the field of computer programming," he said.

Dillon said that more than 90 percent of Aki students are children of color and many of them love to play computer games. "My goal is to inspire children of color to pursue careers in the field of computer (game design) programming."

Sacajawea teacher to visit Norway as part of exchange program

This year marks the 12th annual Seattle-Bergen Teacher Exchange and Sacajawea teacher Mary Mills is this year's exchange teacher.

Mills will spend five weeks teaching and learning in the Bergen School District on Norway's west coast this spring. A Bergen teacher, Magne Asnes, visited Seattle Public Schools during November, and will act as Mary's host during her stay.

The Seattle-Bergen Teacher Exchange Committee will soon be announcing the application process for next year's exchange position. For more information, contact Mary Reece 252-7454 or mjreece@seattleschools.org.

Roosevelt student wins Follow-A-Leader essay contest

Zohal Sarwary, a Roosevelt High School senior, was one of the winners of Macy's 2006 Follow-A-Leader essay contest. She will spend a day with John Curley from KING-5 TV's Evening Magazine and receive a \$1,000 U.S. savings bond.

This program encourages students to begin thinking about their future by writing about a community leader they would like to follow for a day.

Innovative program at Denny increases student math success

The Seattle Foundation awarded the University of Washington's MESA (Math Engineering Science Achievement) program a \$100,000 grant to continue an innovative project at Denny Middle School that helps students succeed in math.

Denny was highlighted as a model school showcasing "best practices" that can be duplicated in schools all over Western Washington.

"We are very pleased by the quality of hands-on and exploratory math offered to students at Denny as a result of our MESA partnership, and we are honored to be selected as the partner school for this prestigious grant," said Denny Principal Jeff Clark.

The grant will support MESA's work with Denny's math department, which is piloting a two-period math option in which students take both regular math and MESA math. The grant funds classroom materials, field trips, and other resources. It also provides summer professional development classes for teachers.

Since its inception 24 years ago, MESA has built an impressive track record: 96 percent of Seattle MESA seniors go on to college, while 65 percent of African-American, American Indian, and Hispanic students enrolled in MESA's summer math and 9th-grade bridge programs earn at least a 3.0 GPA in 9th grade, compared to only 20 percent of their peers.

Coming Up

Help! I Have a Middle-Schooler

Here's your chance to hear some practical advice for families of middle-schoolers and/or soon to be middle-schoolers. The Eckstein Annual Campaign and PTSA have invited Dr. Susan Quattrociocchi, author of *Help! I Have a Middle Schooler*, to lecture on the subject, 7 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 23, in the Eckstein Middle School auditorium.

Quattrociocchi earned a B.A. in Sociology and an M.A. and Ph.D in Education — all while raising five children. A popular speaker and writer nation wide, she is a respected authority on the power of parental involvement and the educational/career needs of

young people. Her broad experience with youngsters prompted her to reach out to parents to let them know that they, not educators, have the greatest impact on their children's educational and career success.

Seating begins at 6:30. A \$5 donation is suggested at the door to support Eckstein.

Help! I Have a Middle-Schooler

7 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 23
Eckstein Middle School
3003 N.E. 75th St.

Strengthening Multi-Ethnic Families and Communities

Strengthening Multi-Ethnic Families and Communities, a Seattle-area parent education group, is holding weekly meetings every Thursday for parents of children ages 3-18. The families do not have to have a student in the Seattle School District to attend or participate.

Some of the topics discussed at meetings are: family values and roots, communication, finding creative solutions for discipline, and success in school. The program, dinner and childcare are provided at no cost. Interpreters are available and transportation is provided, if needed.

For more information on the program, call 252-7747, 252-3277, or 252-7108.

Strengthening Multi-Ethnic Families and Communities

5:30-8 p.m., Thursdays
Aki Kurose Middle School
3928 S. Graham

Seattle Public Library offers workshops on online research

The Seattle Public Library is offering one-hour workshops on online research for Seattle-area middle and high school classes. Workshops will be held at the Central Library, 1000 Fourth Ave., Starbucks Teen Center, Level 3.

The workshops are free but registration is required. Teachers or school officials must reserve a one-hour session during the Central Library's open hours at least three weeks in advance. Registration forms are available at the teen center and online at www.spl.org. E-mail completed entry forms to teencenter@spl.org or drop them off at the teen center.

There is a limit of 32 students per workshop and participating classes must be Seattle public or private middle or high schools. For more information on the workshops, contact the teen center at 615-4610 or teencenter@spl.org.

Online research workshop

Registration required
Central Library, Starbucks Teen Center, Level 3

1000 Fourth Ave.

2nd annual Pow Wow at Ingraham

Ingraham High School's Native American Club is holding its 2nd Annual Pow Wow Feb. 24, in which visitors can watch beautiful dancers in elaborate regalia and listen to several drum groups who will also be singing. Many Native American artists will have booths on site where visitors may purchase food and arts and crafts.

The Pow Wow will be held 1-7 p.m. in the school's Upper Level Gyms. For more information, contact Tina and Thurman Woods at 367-3730.

2nd Annual Pow Wow

1-7 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 24
Ingraham High School
1819 N. 135th St.

School and District Events Calendar

If you would like to know about current special school events, fund-raisers or other district events, go online to the [District Events Calendar](#) where you can see what's going on monthly at Seattle Public Schools or search for specific events by date, school and event type.

We Need Your Ideas

The Communications Office is always looking for stories on interesting classroom projects, inspirational people, or events in our schools to share with the greater Seattle community. We often highlight stories submitted by school staff for potential media coverage as well as district and community publications. For examples of stories we have published in the past, please visit this [link](#). We would like to hear from you. If you have a unique story to share, please send your ideas directly to goodnews@seattleschools.org.

In the News

For a sampling of this week's local newspaper stories on Seattle Public Schools, please go to <http://www.seattleschools.org/area/news/index.dxml>

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