



SCHOOL BEAT

An e-news update for school district staff

November 9, 2006

District News

Committee recommends national search for next Superintendent

The Executive Committee of the Seattle School Board will recommend that the board hire an executive search firm to conduct a national search for the next Superintendent of Seattle Public Schools, according to board President Brita Butler-Wall. The board will vote on the proposal at its next meeting scheduled for Nov. 15.

Superintendent Raj Manhas announced last month that he is stepping down at the end of the 2006-07 school year.

Butler-Wall said a board subcommittee, comprised of herself and board members Cheryl Chow and Darlene Flynn, would ensure that the public and other board members receive open and accurate information throughout the search process. The subcommittee will give regular updates to the community at its bimonthly board meetings and through the district Web site.

“We welcome input from all members of our community regarding the search process, candidate criteria, and specific candidates,” Butler-Wall said. “We want to express that we are especially appreciative that a longstanding civic leader is already mentioned as a possible candidate.”

The board will set up an e-mail address for comments and questions at, ‘Superintendentsearch@seattleschools.org’ and take phone calls through the board office at 206-252-0040.

“Our goal is to have the next Superintendent on board August 1, in order to allow a month transition with our current Superintendent, but that schedule is flexible. Through this process, we are confident that we will be able to select the best possible leader for our district.” Butler-Wall said.

Elevated lead levels found in water samples collected last spring

Results from Seattle Public Schools' ongoing water testing program show that lead levels in some of the water samples collected last spring are higher than the School Board-mandated standards of 10 parts per billion for lead content. Seattle's standard for lead is among the toughest in school districts nationwide – half of that allowed under U.S. Environmental Protection Agency guidelines.

The results indicated lead levels above district standards at 35 out of the district's 97 schools, involving a total of 323 water fountains and sinks. The samples were collected last May after the water had been shut off for several weeks to allow for arsenic tests. "Our experts believe that lead levels can build up when water stands unused in the pipes for many days," Superintendent Raj Manhas said. "During regular use when water is flowing normally, lead levels are expected to be lower than the district's standard."

Testing is under way to identify the cause of these results. In the meantime, the district will tape off the affected water fountains and put signs on sinks instructing students and staff not to drink the water until compliance with the standard is demonstrated. The district will also provide bottled water as necessary to assure students and staff have access to safe water. The state and local health departments have also been notified.

The list of affected schools includes: Adams, Alki, Ballard, Catherine Blaine, Brighton, Bryant, Coe, Cooper, Concord, Dunlap, Emerson, Franklin, Greenwood, Nathan Hale, Hamilton, Hawthorne, Highland Park, Lafayette, Lawton, Wing Luke, Madrona K-8, Maple, John Marshall, Nova (Mann), Orca @ Columbia, Schmitz Park, John Stanford International School, TOPS @ Seward, Washington, Wedgwood, West Seattle, Whitman, Whittier, Whitworth and Wilson Pacific.

Additional resources on the subject of lead in drinking water can be found at the following links:

State of Washington Office of Drinking Water
"Lead in School Drinking Water"

http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/Publications/331-255_4-17-06.pdf

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
EPA Lead information

<http://www.epa.gov/OGWDW/lead.html>

Public Health-Seattle & King County
Lead in Drinking Water

<http://www.metrokc.gov/HEALTH/tsp/water.htm>

To view individual school water reports, click on the following link:
http://www.seattleschools.org/area/facilities/WaterQuality/water_quality_reports.htm.

SPS-TV to broadcast two safety videos

Two safety videos that will help parents and caregivers protect children from sexual abuse will air on Seattle Public Schools Television starting Nov. 9.

The first video, *Your Child's Safety at School*, produced by the district's Safety and Security Department, uses poignant vignettes to show viewers how to teach their children key touching-safety rules. The video will air Nov. 9 to Dec. 21 at 7:30 a.m. Tuesdays, 9:30 p.m. Thursdays, 8 p.m. Saturdays, and 8 a.m. Sundays. The video will air Jan. 2 to Feb. 1, 2007, on the same times and days.

The second video, *What Do I Say Now?*, produced by the Committee for Children, offers information about sexual abuse, guidelines for providing a safe and caring environment for young children, practical examples showing how and when to talk to children about safety and touching, and guidelines for responding to a child who discloses abuse. The video will air Nov. 9 to Dec. 21 from 10-10:30 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays.

BEX III bond proposes building improvements at seven schools

If approved by voters on Feb. 6, a six-year, \$490 million Building Excellence III (BEXIII) Capital Improvement Program bond will renovate or replace four high schools, two middle schools and one K-8 school, as well as provide for infrastructure and technology improvements throughout the district.

The Seattle School Board on Oct. 18 voted to put two funding measures on the Feb. 6 special election ballot – the BEX III bond and a three-year, \$396.5 million Educational Programs and Operations (EP&O) levy.

The Capital improvement projects proposed include work at Hamilton International Middle School, South Shore K-8, Denny-Sealth Campus, Nathan Hale, Ingraham, and Rainier Beach CTE.

Around the Community

Building Excellence Programs Oversight panel seeks members

Advisory committee to review, advise district on construction programs

Seattle Public Schools seeks nominations for five individuals to serve on its Building Excellence Oversight Committee. This community advisory group meets monthly to review and advise the district on matters affecting its primary construction program. Individuals serve a four-year term.

The district seeks individuals familiar with large capital program activities and representing one or more of the following areas: school district capital managers and planners, architects, construction managers, attorneys, contractors and subcontractors, and parents. Consideration will be given to individuals representing groups who have not historically been active or represented in district decision-making processes. A copy of the committee charter is available on the district Web site at

<http://www.seattleschools.org/area/facilities/recruitBEXOCmember.pdf>

Questions should be directed to Fred Stephens, Director of Facilities, at 206-252-0644. Nominations should be sent no later than Dec. 8, 2006, to the Seattle School District, School Board Office, MS 11-010, P.O. Box 34165, Seattle WA, 98124-1165

School district launches program to increase teacher diversity

To meet the increasing need for bilingual teachers in general and special education classes, Seattle Public Schools has formed a partnership provide a dual certification program for the district's paraprofessionals. Partners in the program are Seattle Public Schools, the Professional Educator Standards Board, Seattle Education Association and City University.

The program, designed by City University under the guidelines of the Washington State Alternative Routes Program, allows para-professionals to obtain their bachelors' in education with endorsements in K-8 Elementary and K-12 Special Education. The district would gain 21 new special-education teachers, many who have years of experience working in special education as para-educators.

Twenty-one Seattle Public Schools' paraprofessionals have already begun a two-year degree program this fall through City University.

"I am so pleased that we are partnering with these high-quality organizations on such a worthwhile goal – investing in our people, who are in turn investing their talent and caring by working with children the classroom," said Superintendent Raj Manhas. "Helping these employees earn their teaching certificates is a benefit to all involved, and the district couldn't have done it without the

collaborative efforts of these organizations.”

More than 100 different languages are spoken in Seattle Public Schools, and 24 percent of the district’s 46,000 students are bilingual speakers.

Celebrations

Secondary BOC teacher receives 2006 World Educator Award

The World Affairs Council, the leading foreign affairs organization in Puget Sound, awarded David White-Espin the 2006 Educator Award on Nov. 1 at its 19th Annual World Citizen Award Dinner.

White-Espin teaches at the Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center (Secondary BOC), a culturally diverse school where 34 languages and dialects are spoken. The school is designed as a preliminary educational portal that immigrant students attend to gain English proficiency or cultural orientation before transferring to another school.

In selecting White-Espin for the award, the Council described him as an inspiring teacher with a passion for preparing students for global citizenship. He founded the *International Rescue Committee Student Voices Project* for refugee and recent immigrant students and helped start the Global Studies Academy at Cleveland High School. He also formed a partnership with Global Visionaries to bring student groups to Antigua, Guatemala to engage in hands-on service-learning projects.

National educator trains staff at Interagency Academy

William McBride – a well-known national speaker, educator and author – trained and spoke to staff members at Interagency Academy on Oct. 13. The staff participated in an engaging training that focused on brain-based teaching and strategies to maximize student learning. McBride modeled effective and practical ideas and delivered a high-energy session to support Interagency's commitment to raise student achievement at all of its sites.

McBride is a former middle-level teacher and has contributed to a number of textbooks series in language arts, social studies, science and vocabulary development. McBride is known for his novel *Entertaining an Elephant*. His workshops are filled with practical, hands-on activities that teachers can begin to use immediately in their classrooms.

Huskies signs Roosevelt standout to national letter of intent



University of Washington women's basketball signed Roosevelt High standout Mackenzie Argens, a 6-3 forward, to a national letter of intent, UW officials announced on Nov. 8. Argens is ranked 15th among the top Western region prospects, according to GrassRootsSports.com.

UW head coach June Daugherty said Argens was the first commitment in the class of 2007. "Her multitalented forward skills allow her to play both post and forward positions. Mobility, rebounding and being a long solid defender are some of her strengths that will be good additions to our team. Also, she is a leader with proven winner experience, earning the state title in basketball her freshman year at Roosevelt High School," Daugherty said.

Argens appeared in the movie documentary "Heart of the Game" that followed the Roosevelt High girls' basketball team for six years.

Four Seattle students win 'Scary Story' contest

Four Seattle Public Schools students won the "Scary Story" contest, sponsored by the Seattle Arts and Lectures "Writers in the Schools" program. Some of the young writers met with horror author Stephen King during his Nov. 1 visit to Seattle.

McClure Middle School sixth-graders Tess Schooler-Reed and Natalie Spitters; Center School ninth-grader Kate Heylman; and Ballard High School junior Sara Murphy won complimentary tickets to see King at Benaroya Hall.

Tess, Natalie, and Kate briefly talked with King backstage. He encouraged the young authors to keep writing. The students' terrifying tales were featured in the Benaroya Hall lobby and is on the Seattle Arts and Lectures Web site at http://www.lectures.org/wits_studentwork.html

Norwegian exchange teacher visits Sacajawea Elementary

Norwegian teacher Magne Asnes from Bergen, Norway, will visit Sacajawea Elementary and several other schools during November, according to an announcement from the Seattle-Bergen Teacher Exchange Committee.

Asnes will spend much of his time at Sacajawea, team-teaching with Mary Mills. Mills is the 2006-07 Seattle Schools exchange teacher, who will teach in Bergen this coming spring.

Coming Up

PTA/PTSA Legislative Roundtable

PTA and PTSA members from the Seattle, Northshore and Shoreline school districts will meet during a Legislative Roundtable Nov. 14, at Eckstein Middle School. State legislators will discuss what is anticipated for the coming legislative session. Members will be able to advocate for PTA policy positions and network with other child advocates. There will be refreshments, a panel discussion and up-close meetings with district delegations.

PTA/PTSA Legislative Roundtable

6-9 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 14
Eckstein Middle School
3003 N.E. 75th St.

Seattle Council PTSA General Membership Meeting

The Seattle Council PTSA general meeting will be held 7-9 p.m., Monday, Nov. 27 at the John Stanford Center auditorium. The meeting will deal with questions, such as: How do we move forward as an education community and how do we find common ground as advocates for children, families and education? Join the members as they examine recent developments, upcoming challenges and help shape a plan for advocacy. The meeting is open to all PTA members, but legislative chairs and levy captains are especially urged to join.

SCPTSA General Membership Meeting

7-9 p.m., Monday, Nov. 27
John Stanford Center
2445 Third Ave. S.

School Funding 101

Featured speakers Lisa McFarlane, president and co-founder, League of Education Voters and Rep. Jim McIntire, 46th Legislative District, chair of House Finance Committee, are scheduled to speak to parents, teachers and community members regarding levies, bonds, school funding, and other financial issues. The meeting will be held Nov. 15 at Bryant Elementary School.

Some of the issues to be discussed:

- Who decides how much money will be spent on education?
- How can we make sure all schools get what they need?
- Where do levies fit into the big picture?
- Do we get any federal money?
- How does a national law like No Child Left Behind affect our funding?

For more information, contact Janet Miller, at gerry-pollet@msn.com.

School Funding 101

7-8:30 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 15
Bryant Elementary School Library
3311 N.E. 60th St.

NCLB highly qualified requirements videoconference

The Washington Education Association and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will jointly conduct a K-20 videoconference Nov. 16 to update teachers and administrators on the highly qualified requirements of No Child Left Behind.

This telecast will feature a cast of individual teachers who will share their education backgrounds and teaching assignments in light of the highly qualified requirements. By hearing these real examples, teachers watching at the various sites will be able to personally apply the information. Forms for completing the highly qualified requirements will be available at the sites and participants will be able to ask questions of the presenters. The seating capacity is 40.

This event is not open to the community at large.

NCLB highly qualified requirements videoconference

4-5:30 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 16
Room 2776, John Stanford Center
2445 Third Ave. S.

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>

SCHOOL BEAT is an electronic newsletter covering district and school-based news and is published twice a month for the employees of Seattle Public Schools.