



SCHOOL BEAT

An e-news update for school district staff

December 1, 2006

District News

Supreme Court to hear district's 'tiebreaker' rule Dec. 4

The U.S. Supreme Court will hear oral arguments Dec. 4 on the race-based "tiebreaker" rule that the Seattle School District has used to assign some students to high schools.

The district is arguing that there is educational value in diversity. Critics are contending that there is no compelling government interest in treating children differently based on their race.

A federal appeals court upheld Seattle's system, which allows students to choose among high schools. The district uses "tiebreakers" – including race, distance to the school and whether a sibling attends the same school – when too many students sign up for a particular school.

A group of parents, Parents Involved in Community Schools, challenged the racial tiebreaker, and the district halted the practice in 2002 as the case made its way through state and federal courts.

School board approves \$175,000 for Superintendent search

Merger of programs at Broadview-Thompson, Viewlands moves forward

The school board at its Nov. 15 meeting authorized a national search for a new superintendent for Seattle Public Schools and allocated \$175,000 to hire a firm with national experience to help conduct the search. Superintendent Raj Manhas announced in October that he will be leaving the district at the end of the 2006-07 school year.

The board plans to send out a request for proposals by mid-December, have a firm hired by the end of January, and the job announcement published and applications received by the end of February. The board plans to have candidates screened and finalists selected between March and May. Final interviews and selection will be made in June.

■ The board also approved the recommendation to house Viewlands Elementary's All Inclusion Autism Program with Broadview-Thompson Elementary and grow Broadview Thompson into a K-8 program.

District to expand popular international education program

Chief Academic Officer Carla Santorno outlined on Nov. 9 the district's five-year plan to expand Seattle Public Schools' nationally acclaimed international education program.

Santorno made the announcement at the 7th Annual Seattle Public International Schools Business Breakfast – an annual gathering of business leaders who support international education in Seattle Public Schools.

The international program is offered at John Stanford International School and Hamilton International Middle School, but Santorno said the district is looking to expand to five more elementary schools, one more middle school, and two high schools. Locations have not been determined.

Santorno said she hopes to have programs in place in two elementary schools by next fall. She cited the high demand for the John Stanford School, along with the need to prepare students for a global economy and culture. There is a waiting list of about 100 applicants at the John Stanford School.

Deadline extended for pre-registration, Sibling Early Assignment

The deadline for Kindergarten/New Student pre-registration and Sibling Early Assignment has been extended to Tuesday, Dec. 5.

Pre-registration began in October and is for kindergarten and new students in other grades entering Seattle Public Schools in September 2007. Families may pre-register in person at an Enrollment Center or the Bilingual Family Center. Families may also pre-register by mail or fax.

Sibling Early Assignment began in October and is for students applying for the entry grade at a school a sibling attends this year, and will continue to attend next year. Sibling priority is the top "tiebreaker" for assignment to oversubscribed schools. Entry grade siblings will get the same assignments as if they applied during Open Enrollment. Sibling Early Assignment is designed for families who know they want their early applicant to attend their sibling's school next year. This is not for families interested in applying for other schools. For more information, please visit the Enrollment Services Web site at: <http://www.seattleschools.org/area/eso/story.dxml>

SPS-TV airs videos on school safety and sexual abuse

Parents, caregivers and the community can learn more about school safety and sexual abuse by watching two videos now airing on Seattle Public Schools Television. The first video outlines plans and programs the school district has in place to manage emergencies; the second video presents guidelines for parents and caregivers to help

them protect children from sexual abuse.

The first video, *Your Child's Safety at School*, is produced by the district's Safety and Security Department. The video provides practical advice on how the district and community can work together to create a safe and secure environment for all students and provide for the best possible outcome in any emergency. It is the recipient of numerous awards, including: The Telly Award, Aegis Award, and Davey Award.

The video airs from now to Dec. 21 at 7:30 a.m. Tuesdays, 9:30 p.m. Thursdays, 8 p.m. Saturdays, and 8 a.m. Sundays. Beginning next year, 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 airs from now to Dec. 21 from 10-10:30 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Around the Community

Report recommends school reform, but no funds identified

Washington Learns – a committee of educators, business leaders and politicians chaired by Gov. Christine Gregoire – released a sweeping report Nov. 13 on recommendations to revamp the state's education system. The report did not include cost estimates or how the recommendations should be funded.

The 56-page report, "*Washington Learns: World-Class, Learner Focused, Seamless Education*," took almost 18 months to complete and suggested dozens of recommendations the state should implement in the next decade.

Some of the recommendations include:

- offer full-day kindergarten at all public schools;
- establish a voluntary, five-star rating system for child-care and early-education programs;
- lower class sizes in grades K-3;
- upgrade and standardize math and science curriculum;
- include more scholarships for math and science teachers;
- make Washington Learns scholarship program available to low-income students, identified in seventh grade;
- have regular assessments of teacher pay in comparison with that in other states; and
- cap annual tuition increases at public colleges and universities at 7 percent with increased state support; and
- recommend a change for the K-12 funding formula by December 2008.

To learn more, read the full report at www.washingtonlearns.wa.gov.

Public Forum on Washington Learns

Hosted by Rep. Ruth Kagi, Rep. Marilyn Chase and Sen. Darlene Fairley

6:30-8 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 6

Shoreline Center Auditorium
18560 1st Ave. N.E., Shoreline

6:30-8 p.m. Monday, Dec. 11

Kenmore Junior High School-Cafeteria
20323 66th Ave. N.E., Kenmore

Members sought for physical education review committee

Seattle Public Schools is seeking members for the Physical Education Curriculum Review and Adoption Committee, which will recommend a physical education curriculum for K-12 students.

The district is looking for physical education teachers, classroom teachers, administrators, school nurses, health professionals, community physical activity professionals, community members and families to serve on this committee. This process is starting now and will continue through Spring 2007. Applications will be accepted through Dec. 15.

For more information about the process and to apply for the committee, visit the PE Curricula Adoption Web site at

<http://www.seattleschools.org/area/peadoption/index.dxml> □

Roosevelt teachers, students meet Pulitzer Prize-winning author

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Frank McCourt, who wrote the best-selling biography *Angela's Ashes*, and more recently, *Teacher Man*, visited Roosevelt High School on Nov. 21 as part of the Writers in the Schools program for Seattle Arts and Lectures.

More than 40 Roosevelt teachers are reading, *Teacher Man*, a memoir regarding McCourt's 30 years of teaching English in New York state. Some of the teachers attended McCourt's lecture at Benaroya Hall the same day and several students were chosen to participate in a Q&A with McCourt about the art of memoir writing. Roosevelt's 9th-graders will complete a Memoir Writing Project as one of their four major writing Cornerstones in their freshman year.

Celebrations

Two Ballard High School filmmakers win arts honors

The National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts recognized Ballard High School video students Kyle Seago and Mixtli Zavaleta for a portfolio of their work entered in the

Film and Video category of the association's Recognition and Talent Search competition.

Seago received a Merit Award and Zavaleta received an Honorable Mention for their artistic achievements and promise evident in their productions. Both students will receive a cash prize from the association. They are third year students in Ballard's Video Production Program and plan to study filmmaking in college.

Seago and Zavaleta produced work that was selected from more than 5,200 submissions nationwide. The NFAA Arts Recognition and Talent Search identifies and supports young talent in the areas of music, theater, visual arts, photography, writing, and film and video. Students submit a portfolio of work that is reviewed by a panel of filmmakers and educators.

Zavaleta has already won the Grand Prize at Temple University's national high school film and video festival for "Ave Rats", a short documentary about homeless youth in Seattle's University District. The production also received an Award of Excellence from the Northwest High School Film & Video Festival. Seago's short film "Exposed" also won an Award of Excellence from that festival, in addition to the prize for Best Student Short at the Maple Valley Film Festival last spring.

To see award-winning shorts by Ballard video students from the first five years of the program, join students and staff for "The 5th Anniversary Showing" in the Ballard High School auditorium at 7 p.m. Jan. 12. Admission is free, but a \$5 donation is suggested, with all proceeds supporting the school's Video Production Program

Auction and art show raises \$8,000 for John Muir Elementary

More than 300 guests, 70 works of art and 30 artists representing Seattle's hospitality industry mixed and mingled at the 3rd Annual Art of Hospitality Silent Auction and Art Show to raise \$8,000 for John Muir Elementary School Arts Program.

John Muir student Kaesem Jackson drew the artwork for the invitation. Artworks from other students at the school also were on display at the event held at the Mayflower Park Hotel.

Under the direction of Principal Awnie Thompson and art teacher Susie Moriguchi, the school's Art Program teaches several hundred students – kindergartener through fifth-graders – the basics in drawing, painting, and ceramics.

Photo from left are: Stacia Williams, director of marketing, Mayflower Park Hotel; Susie Moriguchi, art teacher, John Muir Elementary; and Paul Ishii, general manager, Mayflower Park Hotel.



Madrona student attends MLK memorial ceremony in D.C.

Third-grader's essay was one of 50 selected nationwide

Holly Jean Dow, a third-grader at Madrona K-8, was a guest in Washington, D.C. for the Nov. 13 groundbreaking of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. Holly was chosen after submitting an essay on what Dr. King's dream for a better America meant to her.

The 8-year-old was one of more than 3,500 young students across the nation who turned in essays for the "Kids for King" National Essay Program, sponsored by the Washington, D.C., Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial Project Foundation. Fifty students who wrote essays were chosen to attend the ceremony on the National Mall.

About 5,000 other people attended the ceremony, including President Bush, former President Clinton, poet and novelist Maya Angelou, television personality Oprah Winfrey, the Rev. Jesse Jackson and several members of Congress.

The memorial will be situated adjacent to the F.D.R. Memorial and between the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials. The memorial is scheduled to be completed in 2008. For more information about the memorial, visit www.buildthedream.org.

Two employees honored for work with minority contractors

Two school district employees have been honored for helping women and minority contractors through the Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) program at Seattle Public Schools.

- Silas Potter, the district's HUB coordinator was honored Oct. 18 with the Walle Ralkowski Award for his dedication and commitment to diversity in contracting. Potter received the award from the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle (ULMC)/Contractor Development and Competitive Center (CDCC).
- Fred Stephens, the district's executive director of facilities, was also recognized Sept. 16 with the Crystal Eagle Award from Tabor 100, an association of business professionals, during its Captains of Industry Gala. The association's Business and Legislative Committee awarded Stephens the award for economic development in relation to public contracting.

The HUB initiative was launched last May when Stephens and Potter worked on enhancing the district's policies to involve the small contractor community. Soon after putting a plan in place, the district began working with ULMC/CDCC. Within the past nine months, the district has awarded about \$12 million worth of work to HUB contractors. Of that, \$4.6 million went to minority business contractors, \$3.8 million went to women contractors and \$3.8 million went to small businesses.



Garfield High School students, left photo, from left, DaNia Thomas, Marita Phelps and Alisha Blood practice using pipettes, specialized laboratory devices used to measure and transfer small amounts of fluids during experiments. Cleveland High School students, right photo, from left, Ronnisha Spinks and DeSean Wilson also practice using the pipettes.

Seattle high-schoolers attend ‘Hutch High’

Students take a peek inside renowned cancer research center

Students from Cleveland and Garfield high schools, and Summit K-12 were given the unique opportunity Nov. 9 to learn about science, do some hands-on skills and take a peek inside one of the world’s renowned cancer research centers.

The students were part of about 230 students from 23 Washington high schools who visited the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center campus in Seattle as part of its annual “Hutch High” program.

Once a year, the Hutchinson Center opens its doors to high-school students and teachers from invited schools throughout Washington to the world’s leading research center where students isolate and spool DNA, learn the art of micro-pipetting and use a germ-revealing black light to test their skills at hand washing.

Students also toured working laboratories and sat in on lectures from some of the center’s scientists about cancer-causing bacteria, HIV/AIDS, sickle-cell disease and early detection of cancer.

The Hutch High program is offered to sophomore-level biology and science students only and there is no cost to students.

The program is funded by the ongoing legacy of Seattle philanthropists Sam and Althea Stroum. In 1999, the Stroums established a \$100,000 endowment, ensuring that thousands of teenagers would be exposed to science for years to come.

Seattle employees celebrate American Education Week

Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility

Seattle Public School employees celebrated American Education Week Nov. 12-18 with a theme highlighting the importance of bringing together teachers, school staff, parents, students, and communities in a unified effort to build great public schools.

The National Education Association historically recognizes the third week of November as American Education Week. During the week, schools highlighted events and activities encouraging the importance of family involvement, honoring the contributions of school support staff, enhancing understanding among educators and community leaders, and increasing appreciation of school substitute employees.

The school board also celebrated American Education Week with a proclamation honoring public schools, the value and importance of learning, recognizing the efforts of education employees, and thanking the community for their support and partnership

Coming Up

Seattle Council PTSA meeting

Because of inclement weather, the Seattle Council PTSA has been rescheduled to Monday, Dec. 4. School Board President Brita Butler-Wall and Superintendent Raj Manhas will share their perspectives.

Members will be discussing ways that the organization can work to support school funding from state, local and private sources. The discussion will also identify other issues that concern members to determine the direction of its advocacy work in the coming months. The council will be seeking a consensus on priorities from PTA representatives and requests that each PTA organization be represented.

The meeting is open to all PTA members, but legislative chairs and levy captains are especially urged to attend.

Seattle Council PTSA meeting

7–9 p.m., Monday, Dec. 4
John Stanford Center auditorium
244 Third Ave. S.

The Bite of Hale

Nathan Hale High School's Diversity Club will be presenting *The Bite of Hale* on Dec. 7. The evening will be filled with food, fun and entertainment. Tickets are 50 cents, which is redeemable for small portions (or "bites") of food available at tables for one or several tickets.

The more food you want to try (or the hungrier you are) the more tickets you buy. Plates, napkins and utensils are available at the ticket table.

Sample of tables from last year were: Mediterranean, Filipino, East African, Japanese, Scandinavian, Vegetarian, Italian, German Polish, Mixed Ethnicity, and Irish/Southwest

The Bite of Hale

6–9 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 7
Nathan Hale High School
10750 30th Ave. N.E.

Annual K-8/Middle School Conference

Dr. Mary Ehrenworth – a national literacy consultant, as well as a staff developer and researcher for Teachers College, Columbia University, where she is deputy director of the Reading and Writing Project – will be the keynote speaker at the K-8/Middle School Conference scheduled for March 16 at Eckstein Middle School.

She is the author of many articles and books, including: *Testing Realities: Preparing Students for High Stakes Literacy Exams*; *The Power of Grammar: Unconventional Approaches to the Conventions of Language* co-authored with Vicki Vinton; and *Looking to Write: Students Writing Through the Visual Arts*.

The conference will focus on instruction, differentiated for all participants, and be directly related to the district's and building transformation goals. The agenda will reflect the spirit and practice of past middle school conferences while incorporating the work the district is doing around aligning instruction in literacy and math across the school system.

Annual K-8/Middle School Conference

Friday, March 16, 2007
Eckstein Middle School
3003 N.E. 75th St.

T. T. Minor Japan Art Show & Family Night

T.T. Minor Elementary School will be hosting a Japan Art Show and Family Night on Dec. 14. The Seattle Kokon Taiko drum troupe will start off the event by leading the

crowd to the school cafeteria where students will read haiku and teach guests about the Japanese arts (visual, dance, sushi).

Funds raised during the event will help residents in the Darfur region of western Sudan where there is an ongoing armed conflict, killing thousands of people.

Japan Art Show and Family Night

6–7:35 p.m., Dec. 14
T.T. Minor Elementary School
1700 E. Union St.

School Board meetings

The school board will have its next regular meeting 6-9 p.m., Dec. 6 at the John Stanford Center. Call 252-0040 to sign up to testify. Agendas can be accessed at www.seattleschools.org/area/board/agenda.htm. Seattle Public School Board meetings are broadcast live on the Seattle Public Schools education channel - Channel 26 on Comcast or Channel 75 on Millennium. For a complete broadcast schedule please refer to the Seattle Public Schools Web site: <http://www.seattleschools.org/area/ibc/index.dxml>

School Board meeting

6-9 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 6
John Stanford Center
2445 Third Ave. S.

Superb Books and Savory Chocolate

Come and learn more about the Seattle Reading Council and upcoming literacy events – all while enjoying a delectable chocolate buffet, and listening to noted Seattle Public librarians share their best pick new children’s books. Teen Services Librarian Hayden Bass and Children’s Librarian Jane Lopez-Santillana, from Seattle Public Library’s