



SCHOOL BEAT

An e-news update for school district staff

September 29, 2006



District News

Hearings scheduled on second phase of school closures

Superintendent Raj Manhas on September 18 announced the second phase of the School Consolidation and Closure process and scheduled several public hearings in the coming weeks.

In the first phase of the process, the superintendent recommended consolidating or closing seven schools. In this second phase, the superintendent recommended to:

- close AS #1 K-8 (Pinehurst) and co-locate the educational program with Summit K-12;
- close Roxhill Elementary and reassign students to Arbor Heights and Gatewood elementary schools;
- close Pathfinder K-8 (Genesee Hill) and relocate Pathfinder to Cooper Elementary. Incorporate current Cooper students who wish to stay into Pathfinder program.

Detailed information about the recommendation is available at www.seattleschools.org. The following dates are school board meetings and site-based hearings where the public can comment:

- October 4, 6 p.m. – school board meeting, John Stanford Center, 2445 3rd Ave. S.
- October 5, 6:30-8:30 p.m. – site-based hearing, AS#1 K-8, 11530 12th Ave. N.E.,
- October 9, 6:30-8:30 p.m. – site-based hearing, Roxhill Elementary, 9430 30th Ave. S.W.
- October 10, 6:30-8:30 p.m. – site-based hearing, Pathfinder K-8, 5012 S.W. Genesee St.
- October 18, 6 p.m. – school board meeting, John Stanford Center
- October 24, 6 p.m. – public hearing on final recommendation, John Stanford Center

■ November 1, 6 p.m. – school board to vote on final recommendation, John Stanford Center

Interested speakers may sign up by calling the school board office at (206) 252-0040. Public testimony will be limited to three minutes per speaker and, at the site hearings, should focus on the school at which the hearing is being held.

Board begins discussion on student assignment, transportation

On Wednesday, September 27, the School Board held a work session to begin discussions regarding the current school-choice system and transportation. This initial work session was designed to clarify the board's beliefs and values regarding these programs and how student assignment and transportation can support every child reaching academic standards.

Comments from board members included the belief that Seattle's current student assignment system is overly complicated and costly. The board said families had a clear desire for a simple and easy-to-understand student assignment process. While cost-savings was highlighted as a potential positive for any changes, the board will look at several priorities when examining these systems.

There are no major changes scheduled for the near future and if any are made they are expected at least two years from now. Board members asked district staff to provide information on potential demographic shifts at schools if choices were limited and to research other school districts' plans. The board also directed district staff to explore ways to make the transportation plan more efficient and cost effective.



Cindi Williams, left photo, deputy assistant secretary for the U.S. Department of Education, recognizes Maple Elementary for its exceptional academic progress during a surprise visit to the school September 22. Superintendent Raj Manhas and Chief Academic Officer Carla Santorno deliver congratulations and flowers to Principal Pat Hunter and her staff.

Education official recognizes Maple Elementary for excellence

School among seven in the state to be designated 'Blue Ribbon School'

Cindi Williams, deputy assistant secretary for the U.S. Department of Education visited Maple Valley Elementary on September 22 to recognize the school's exceptional scores on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) and significant progress under the *No Child Left Behind* legislation. She also announced that Maple was among seven public schools statewide to be designated a Blue Ribbon School.

The surprise spirit assembly included a performance from the Franklin High School Band, a school-spirit slide show and special guests from the Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction, and Seattle Public Schools.

Maple Elementary's high achievement and dramatic improvement on the WASL is a model of success for the state and the nation. Ninety-one percent of the school's fourth-graders met reading standards, 82 percent met math standards, and 80 percent met writing standards. Approximately 65 percent of the students at Maple are on free and reduced lunch, 8 percent receive special education services and 35 percent are English Language Learners.

Around the Community

Gatzert Elementary Bookmobile encourages summer reading

During the summer, more than 25 staff members from Bailey Gatzert Elementary School volunteered at the "Gatzert Bookmobile" to encourage and motivate students and families to read.

The school teamed up with the International District Rotary Club for financial support and loaded up the school van with great books, an ice cream music box loudspeaker (to announce the bookmobile's arrival), and popsicles (for returned books).

The bookmobile went to Yesler Terrace Community and Pratt Park twice a week from July 1 to August 19 and checked out books to all community members.



Volunteers had a great time getting to know the neighborhood community and students from other schools as well as reconnecting with Gatzert students and their families. The community response was also extremely positive. It was particularly valuable this year because the neighborhood library was closed for renovation.



Mohamed Roble, bilingual community liaison, far right, explains some of the activities at the Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center to a group of delegates from 14 countries. Principal Martin O'Callaghan, standing center, also explained some of the school's programs.

International delegation tours Bilingual Orientation Center

The Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center, also known as The World School, continues to attract international attention as education delegates from 14 countries visited the school on September 13 to gather information and exchange ideas.

Principal Martin O'Callaghan welcomed the visitors who came from Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Algeria, Bahrain, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, and Tunisia.

O'Callaghan described the unique aspects of the school while translators provided simultaneous translation in French and Arabic. The guests then toured the school and observed students learning English, making art projects, studying science, working on computers, and learning about Washington state history.

The highlight of the visit was a presentation by student representatives who answered questions about the school in English and in their native language.

Seattle Special Education PTSA forms, seeks members

A new PTSA, just for special education students, was formed over the summer to help build a successful parent, teacher, and community network throughout the Seattle School District.

The new Seattle Special Education PTSA, formerly known as SEAAC, is affiliated with the Washington State Parent Teacher Student Association and will benefit from the larger organization's guidance and resources.

The group's next general meeting will be 7-8:30 p.m., Wednesday, October 11, at Madrona Elementary School. Following a business meeting, speakers from the Seattle School District and the University of Washington's Special Education Department will speak about achievement testing, the WASL exam, and how they pertain to students with disabilities, their families, and their schools.

This meeting is open to all Seattle Special Education PTSA members or those interested in becoming a member. Any questions regarding this meeting or the Seattle Special Education PTSA can be directed to Nancy Speer at nancyspeer@comcast.net

To join the organization, send your contact information and a \$12 check to Chris Cady (treasurer) at 7010 32nd Ave. N.E., Seattle, 98115.

Celebrations



The community is invited to tour several renovated areas at Roosevelt High during its grand opening celebration September 30. The school is also holding mini class reunions during the day.

Roosevelt High celebrates grand opening September 30

The public is invited to the grand opening of the beautifully restored and renovated Roosevelt High School from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, September 30. In conjunction with the grand opening, the school will also be holding mini-reunions for all Roosevelt High alumni at different times and locations in the school.

Roosevelt High School Foundation, Associated Students of Roosevelt, RHS PTSA, Golden Grads, and RHS Athletic Boosters are hosting the grand opening.

The following is a schedule of events for the day:

- 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. – selected classrooms and common rooms open
- 11 a.m. – freshman football game on Wiper Field
- 11 a.m. to noon – mini-reunions for 1956-1969 classes in the gym, Room 189
- 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 1:30 p.m. – student performances in the theater, Room 158
- noon – women's volleyball practice in the large PE gym, Room 185
- noon – 1 p.m. – mini-reunions for 1970-1979 classes in the gym, Room 189
- 1-2 p.m. – mini-reunions for 1980-2006 classes in the gym, Room 189

Before the school is open to the public at 11 a.m., Roosevelt's Golden Grads (Classes of 1922-1955) are invited to a 10 a.m. reception in the Commons Court Yard; current and former staff members are invited to a 10 a.m. reception in the library.

The \$93.8 million renovation at Roosevelt was possible when voters approved a \$398 million Building Excellence II capital levy in February 2001. The Roosevelt project included an historic renovation of the 1922 and 1928 buildings; and additions to the north side of the main building to house a new gym, cafeteria and performing arts center. Bassetti Architects, the project architect for Roosevelt, collaborated with staff, students, and community members throughout the school design process.

Open House/All School Reunion

Roosevelt High School

11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Saturday, September 30

Roosevelt High School

1410 N.E. 66th St.

Chief Sealth principal receives award for outstanding leadership

Chief Sealth High School Principal John Boyd received a prestigious leadership award September 15, which included a \$25,000 grant to support the learning success of all students at the school.

Every year, the Alliance for Education presents the Thomas B. Foster Award for Excellence to outstanding secondary school principals and the schools they lead.

Boyd — a 1982 graduate of Chief Sealth — is in his third year as principal. Boyd was recognized for rallying the community surrounding Chief Sealth and helping strengthen community perceptions of the school. "His attention to academic achievement has contributed to double-digit WASL score gains from 2004 to 2006, as well as the establishment of an International Baccalaureate at Sealth, to be launched in 2007," according to the organization.

Boyd will be honored at the alliance's Annual Leadership Breakfast for Kids on October 26. For details about the event, visit www.alliance4ed.org.

Heroes in the Classroom kicks off 2006 season

Twenty-four teachers from 24 schools are being honored this month and the following months as "Symetra Heroes in the Classroom" for being outstanding teachers in Seattle Public Schools. The Seattle Seahawks, Symetra SM Financial, and Vulcan Inc. are sponsors of the project for the 2006 season.

The project also provides funding to help teachers offset some of the personal out-of-pocket expense of equipping students with much-needed supplies and reading materials. The project hopes to raise more than \$40,000 during the season to help cover some of these costs for teachers.

Three teacher Heroes – Gina Gerlitz of Hamilton International Middle School, David Posner of Meany Middle School, and Mary McDaniel of Wedgwood Elementary School – were the first teacher Heroes of the year. They were recognized on the field and in front of a sold-out Qwest Field crowd during the Seahawks home-opener against the Arizona Cardinals. The teachers also received in-class awards during earlier presentations from program partners.

Following the regular football season, program partners will also host all 2006 teacher Heroes at a banquet to be held at the Seahawks headquarters.

“Public school teachers are often the unsung heroes of our community—making a positive difference every day for thousands of kids,” said school Superintendent Raj Manhas. “Symetra, the Seahawks, and Vulcan recognize the importance of these teachers, and we are delighted they are honoring public school teachers in such a unique and meaningful way.”

Coming Up

Bailey Gatzert School to receive grounds improvements

Between 200 and 300 volunteers on September 30 will improve the grounds at Bailey Gatzert School as part of an organization’s Community Enhancement Project.

Improvements will include better landscaping and pathways at building entryways; construction of outdoor seating walls; renovation of the baseball field; development of a regulation-size soccer field, painting of exterior trim and doorways; re-surfacing and striping of the basketball courts, and general landscaping improvements.

The Washington state chapter of the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties, which selects a project every year to show their commitment and support for the local community, heads the project.

Community Enhancement Project

8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Saturday, September 30

Bailey Gatzert School

101 E. Yesler Way

Maple Elementary to celebrate remodel, dedicate new buildings

The staff and students of Maple Elementary School invite the community to the dedication and celebration of the remodel and construction of several structures at the school.

Among the guests will be descendants of the Maple family, who will present a tree to the student council officers. Former principals, alumni, and Seattle School Board Director Cheryl Chow will also attend the ceremony.

At 2 p.m., the Franklin High School Lion Dancers will perform, followed by a Filipino folk-dancing troupe. Guests will be treated to a slide show, refreshments and a tour of the school.

Remodel and dedication celebration

2 p.m., Thursday, October 5
Maple Elementary School
4925 Corson Ave. S.

Education Summit planned for October 13 and 14

An educational summit has been scheduled for next month to bring together community members, organizations and Seattle Public Schools leaders in a conversation about educating children and developing a community action plan to meet their needs.

Organizers said the focus of the 2006 Educational Summit on Raising Standards and Closing Gaps is to unite individuals and organizations for the education of all children in Seattle Public Schools.

The summit – to be held October 13 and 14 at Mercer Middle School – will feature speakers from across the nation, including this year's National Teacher of the Year, the Superintendent of OSPI, leading education consultants, and top leaders at Seattle Public Schools.

Full registration for both days, meals included, is \$75. Basic registration for the two-day workshop, without meals, is \$30. For additional information, contact Dr. Betty Howell Gray at bgray@seattleschools.org or Dan Coles at dcoles@seattleschools.org.

2006 Educational Summit on Raising Standards and Closing Gaps

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Friday, October 13 and Saturday, October 14
Mercer Middle School
1600 S. Columbian Way

Nationally known mathematics educator offers free seminar

A dynamic speaker and nationally known educator will meet with parents, teachers and administrators on October 16 to offer recommendations on how they can support a quality mathematics program in schools.

Dr. Ruth Parker, founder and CEO of the Mathematics Education Collaborative, will facilitate the free event from 7-9 p.m., at the Roosevelt High School auditorium. Some of the topics she will discuss:

- How to help your child reason with numbers
- Why numerical reasoning is so important
- How to recognize quality mathematics programs
- How to better prepare children for algebra
- What mathematics skills are essential to the workplace of today and tomorrow

Parker is offering a second, invitation-only session on October 17 with key decision-makers in which they can respond to the ideas presented the previous evening.

Mathematics and Our Children's Future

7-9 p.m.

Monday, October 16

Roosevelt High School

1410 N.E. 66th 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 click [here](#).

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.