

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Superintendent Mike Stromme meets Kindergarten students on the first day of school.

## District prepares to break ground on new schools in 2016

### Todd Construction contracted

The Washougal School Board has awarded a pre-construction contract for General Contractor-Construction Manager (GC/CM) services to Todd Construction for the new K-5 elementary school and replacement of Jemtegaard Middle and Excelsior High School.

The selection of Todd Construction as the GC/CM followed a state-approved process that began with the district advertising a Request for Proposals, which were reviewed and evaluated by a six-person selection committee.

"The pre-construction contract is for the purposes of early cost analysis, construction feasibility, value analysis, scheduling and providing design input for the construction project," said Joe Steinbrenner, WSD Facilities Director. "Todd Construction is very well qualified to meet our needs."

Todd Construction is one of the leading contractors for educational projects in the Pacific Northwest, with more than 50 K-12 projects on their resume. Based in Tualatin Oregon, the company was founded in 1940.

The construction of these new schools is now in the planning, permitting and early design phase and are anticipating to break ground in the summer of 2016. This work is the result of funding from a \$57.67 million bond, which voters approved in February. The bond also included security enhancements to the foyers at all district schools, construction of a new transportation facility, as well as a series of other upgrades and repairs to existing schools.

### Bond project updates:

#### TRANSPORTATION

The schematic design has commenced. The pre-application package has been submitted to the City. A traffic study count is in process.



#### PICTURED: SITE LINE EVALUATION

Eight-foot diameter white latex weather balloons were set afloat and tethered as markers at Jemtegaard Middle School to complete a site line evaluation within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

The balloons represented potential roof heights to demonstrate that the proposed new elementary and middle schools will be either "not visually evident" or else "visually subordinate" to the surrounding landscape. This is in accordance to the scenic regulations in the gorge.



#### JEMTEGAARD & EXCELSIOR SITES

The schematic design plan has been completed and was approved by the WSD Board October 6. Cost estimates, based on the schematics, are being developed. The pre-application package has been submitted to the County.

#### ROOF & HVAC AT GAUSE & HATHAWAY

An envelope consultant has been hired to work with the design team and support and

supply design. Schematic design is complete and is being used for an estimate to confirm scope is within the budget.

#### SAFETY AND SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS

Draft schematic drawings were completed and shared with building principals to receive feedback. Interior door hardware bid package scope has been established with input from the locksmith and hardware consultant.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Hello parents, students, and patrons,

I would like to express my gratitude for a warm welcome to the Washougal School District this fall. I am continually impressed with the level of parent, student, staff and patron involvement in our schools. An example of this commitment is the support of school and community partners in the recent Washougal Community Resource Fair hosted at Hathaway Elementary. Dozens of partners, including local health services agencies, family support services, business partners, and youth programs gathered to provide outreach to the school community. The new Family Resource Center coordinator and planning team also included free childcare and dinner for families.



This level of planning and commitment to building programs and opportunities for children and families is a great example of the level of community ownership required to educate our children. It is a demonstration of how schools are the heart of flourishing communities where we unite to serve the future success of all students. The Washougal Community Resource Fair is one among many events that take place in the Washougal area that give young people and families the tools necessary to succeed.

Success for our students and families may look different, based upon each other's unique needs. It is clear the Washougal community recognizes this need and strives to continually reach out to help students realize their full potential and be successful as learners and future workers. It is encouraging to see so many people wanting to be an active participant in their community and in the lives of our students. I enjoy the strong sense of pride in the community and the willingness to jump in and get the work done.

In reflecting on the great service work in support of families and in light of the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday, it gives me pause to stop and be thankful for a supportive community that places student achievement and success at the center of our work. Best wishes to you as you gather with family and friends to celebrate this season.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Mike Stromme, Superintendent



Rotarians Molly Coston, Linda Haines, and Meridee Pabst presented dictionaries to third graders at Washougal schools.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Third graders receive the gift of words

THIRD grade students at Washougal elementary schools were presented their very own dictionaries by representatives of the Camas-Washougal Rotary October 13 and 14.

"The students love receiving their dictionaries and having that valuable resource to call their own," said Gause third grade teacher, Jim Schroeder. "Not only does it help them with spelling and word meanings, but they also discover that there is much more in dictionaries than that, such as information about US Presidents, maps, and other countries. They are always surprised to discover that the longest word in our language has over 1900 letters!"

### Board of Directors approves Public School Employees contract

AT the September 8 board meeting, the Washougal School District Board of Directors approved the contract between Washougal School District and the Public School Employees (PSE) of Washington Washougal Chapter/SEIU Local 1948.

The approved agreement is for a two-year period, from September 1, 2015-August 31, 2017.

The PSE is one of two unions representing Washougal School District employees, including most of the district's classified (non-teaching) positions.

"The bargaining sessions were very collaborative and inclusive," said Human Resources Director Marian Young. "Both groups were active participants with a mutual respect for each other and the process."

Under the new contract, PSE staff will receive a 3% state cost of living increase plus an additional 1.8% increase for a total salary increase of 4.8% in 2015-16. In 2016-17, staff will receive a 1.8% cost of living increase plus an additional 1.8% for a total increase of 3.6%.

### It's time to Stuff the Bus!

HELP support those in need in our community and encourage the friendly competition between Washougal and Camas School Districts as we Stuff the Bus. Drop off non-perishables at any Washougal school before the official weigh in December 4.

### Serving students with disabilities

We're committed to addressing the unique needs of students with disabilities ages birth through 21 residing within the district boundaries.

If you have or know of a child who you think might have a disability requiring special education instruction or significant accommodations at school, please call the Special Services Office, (360) 954-3020.

A screening for children ages 3-5 is set for January 22. To schedule an appointment, contact Diane Shortt (360) 954-3020.

# How the district decides when it's a snow day

IT'S hard to believe that winter is just around the corner, but it's time to prepare for the potential impacts of inclement weather on our schools and commutes. Many roads in the Washougal School District are at higher elevations, and when snow and ice hit our area, even the lower regions of our district can be unsafe for travel. The Washougal School District must make decisions regarding whether it's safe for students to be transported to and from school when these weather conditions are present.

On days when predictions call for snow and ice, Transportation Supervisor Jesse Miller begins driving district roads as early as 3:00 a.m., testing conditions to determine the safety for staff and students. He has to make a call by 5:00 a.m. so staff members will know about the decision before they leave for work.

Miller then calls the superintendent and makes a recommendation about whether it's safe to keep schools open or not. Options are:

keeping schools open on regular bus routes, keeping schools open and running snow routes, a late start, or school closure.

Washougal School District has roads that reach elevations up to 1600 feet. Gorge winds can also be a factor, causing temperatures to be several degrees lower in the east end of the district. In instances where only the higher elevations are affected by poor road conditions, snow routes are used.

The district calls a late start when it is suspected that driving conditions will improve once cars begin traveling on roads and breaking up the snow or ice.

School closure is an option only if it is determined that it is not safe for buses and cars to be on the roads or for students who walk to be traveling.

Miller says he is often asked why the district doesn't close only the schools at higher elevations while keeping the lower elevation schools open. There are several reasons why

this isn't feasible. Washougal High School covers the entire district and students come from all parts of the district to get there. Bus drivers and staff live across Washougal and beyond. If some roads are unsafe for buses and cars to travel, then it's unsafe for staff to get to work as well. In addition, closing some schools and not others would conflict with employee unions and contract regulations. If road conditions are unsafe, the best choice is to close all schools.

"We always make our decisions with safety in mind," he said. "There are always times when we would have made a different decision with the benefit of hindsight, but safety has to be our top concern."

## ABOUT OUR BUS FLEET:

- All buses have drop down "insta-chains".
- We have 52 buses, 26 of which are housed at the Bus Barn at 995 E Street. Another 26 buses are parked at Cape Horn-Skye Elementary.

## District uses state assessments to gauge learning and future opportunities

STUDENT scores from new Smarter Balanced state assessments given last spring are helping teachers and administrators plan for future curriculum and learning needs. Last spring was the first time Washougal students took the new tests, which are aligned to the Washington State Learning Standards in English language arts/literacy and mathematics for grades 3-8 and 11.

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Patricia Boles says the tests show that Washougal students scored above the state average in most subject areas. When compared with their counterparts across the state, districts of similar enrollment and demographics, Washougal students had a strong showing, especially in the area of English language arts at the elementary level.

"There is still work to be done," said Boles. "These scores help us assess what's working and what we need to do in the future."

Boles says it's like comparing apples and oranges if you hold these scores next to last year's because it was a completely different test. By looking at how students are doing in districts of like-size, such as Ellensburg and Lynden, we can get a more accurate picture of how Washougal students are performing

compared with their peers.

Next, the district will take inventory of curriculum across all grade levels to assess its alignment with Washington State Learning Standards and Next Generation Science Standards, which have been adopted by Washington state.

Washougal teachers have seen success working in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) so they can share strategies across classrooms and grades. This key work will continue as will the use of instructional coaches across grades K-12. The district currently has math coaches at each grade level to provide specific mathematics support in all classes. The district also has English language arts and technology coaches to further support teaching and learning.

This fall, the district's English language learners will be using a new curriculum called Imagine Learning. This research-based tool helps identify students' individual needs and address specific language challenges.

"The data that we glean from these tests is very important and staff will spend time working in teams to ask questions about how to best meet learning goals so that all of our students succeed," said Boles.

## Help name our new elementary school!

HELP us choose a name for the new elementary school in Washougal! Per Board Policy 6970, acceptable names must:

Be after a person who have attained national or local prominence in the fields of:

- Education
- Arts and Science
- Politics
- Military Achievement and Statesmanship,

or be a past president or Washington state national senator or representative, or be after the geographic characteristics of the area in which the facility is located.

Each suggestion is required to have a brief description of why you believe this will be a good name.

Visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/New-K5-Name>, to fill out the electronic survey form. Paper forms are available at the District Office for those without Internet.

Deadline for suggestions is January 20, 2016. The School Naming Committee will narrow these suggestions to the top 3 – 5 and the School Board will make the final decision in April 2016. Please note that this process is only for the new elementary school. Jemtegaard Middle School will continue under its current name.





WASHOUGAL  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

4855 Evergreen Way  
Washougal, WA 98671

Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. Postage PAID  
Washougal, WA  
Permit No. 14

Washougal School District Patron  
Washougal, WA 98671



## Welcome, new teachers!

THIS fall the Washougal School District welcomes more than 20 new teachers to our classrooms! We are pleased that our district attracts such talented and enthusiastic teachers to continue the tradition of great, well-rounded education for our students.

Pictured left to right, back row: Evan Rumble, Tim Moore, Sally Hart, Jason Foster, Darin Kohn, David Hollingsworth, Eric Storm, Lori Higgs, Gail Anderson, Ashley Scuderi.

Front row: Hana Lapham, Christina McDonald, Kiley Harper, Kendal Vom Baur, Beverly Robertson, Annastasia Breithaupt, Ashley Becker-Nunley, Lisa Witherington, Samantha Dudley, Samantha Persinger.

Not pictured: John Harvey, EHS; Erin Hart, Hathaway.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### Don't miss the Festival of Trees Dec. 4-5

SUPPORT Washougal schools at this fun annual event which features beautiful pre-decorated Christmas trees for bid, a silent auction for gift baskets, raffle, live music and refreshments. On Saturday morning, enjoy biscuits and gravy and photos with Santa for just \$3 each.

Admission to the Festival is free. Raffle tickets available for purchase at the event. Tree and basket auction, Friday, Dec. 4, 4-7:00 p.m. and Saturday, Dec. 5 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Breakfast and photos with Santa, Saturday, December 5, 9:00 a.m.-Noon. All events take place at Hathaway Elementary.

WASHOUGAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
[www.washougal.k12.wa.us](http://www.washougal.k12.wa.us)

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when you "Like" us!*



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[www.facebook.com/WashougalSD](http://www.facebook.com/WashougalSD)

### Upcoming Washougal School Board Meetings

November 17, Gause Elementary

December 8, District Board Room

January 12, District Board Room

Meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. in the District Board Room, 4855 Evergreen Way, unless otherwise noted. All are invited!

**NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT:** Washougal School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employee has been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination: Title IX/ RCW 28A.640 compliance officer and Section 504/ADA coordinator, Allan Fleck, Director of Special Education.