Winter Greetings,

Our days are lengthening and with that comes the anticipation of spring; however, we continue to remind our students, staff and community that winter is still officially on the calendar. As such, we should remain prepared for late starts or school cancellations if the weather should become a safety hazard for our community. Please remember to monitor the school district’s website and your email during the late night or early morning of predicted inclement weather. Those are the best ways to check school starting times and cancellations. Let’s hope we can greet second semester and spring without any interruptions to our school schedule.

Ballots have been mailed to constituents for the district’s Maintenance and Operations Replacement Levy and Capital Facilities Bond, with Election day being February 9. For families and community members wishing more information beyond what has been presented in community meetings, the district website offers a thorough description of what the levy and bond would pay for in our schools, including teaching staff, classroom space, safety upgrades, fine arts, athletics and field improvements. Read more about the proposed projects on our district website election information page.

Our students and staff benefit from the amazing support of the Olympia School District Education Foundation. Through its fundraising and generous donations, our fifth-grade students continue to enjoy outdoor education at Camp Cispus, opportunities to engage in the arts, innovative classroom instruction through its support of teacher grants, and a focus on families in need with the Principal Emergency Checkbook Fund. As one of its fundraisers, the Foundation and school district jointly stage a production featuring students, staff and community members. It is always fun, highly professional and a great opportunity for families to enjoy live theater. This year’s production is the musical “Honk,” based upon the “The Ugly Duckling.” Performances will be held at the Olympia High School Performing Arts Center on February 25, 26 and 27. Don’t miss this opportunity to cheer our students and staff. Purchase tickets here.

Finally, January concludes School Board Appreciation Month. We were proud to honor Eileen Thomson, Joellen Wilhelm, Mark Campeau, Justin Montermini, Frank Wilson, and student board member, Abby Westling, at a recent meeting held at Centennial Elementary. Our board is a highly dedicated and involved group championing our students in many ways; always exploring avenues to celebrate and improve our school district. Please join me in offering them a huge THANK YOU!

Enjoy these last few weeks of winter.

Sincerely,

Dick Cvitanich, Superintendent
High School Graduation Rates Reach Record Highs

The Olympia School District has a record high 89 percent of students who graduated on time in 2015 from among its two comprehensive high schools.

The graduation results are equally as impressive, district officials say, when looking at both Capital High and Olympia High Schools individually.

A record high 91 percent of Capital High School students graduated on time (in four years) last spring. At Olympia High, 87 percent of students met the on-time requirement, according to initial graduation rate data compiled by the school district.

Statewide graduation rates for 2015 are expected to be released in February; however Olympia School District’s results far exceed the last reported state data showing 77.2 percent of on-time graduates in the Class of 2014. The district also outpaces the national average of 81 percent, last reported for the Class of 2013.

Superintendent Dick Cvitanich said the record high graduation rates represent exceptional work on the part of students and staff.

“I am extremely proud of our students,” Cvitanich said. “The high scores and increasing number of graduates is a testament to their hard work, as well as to the dedication of our employees districtwide.”

Graduation specialists meet regularly with teachers and support staff to “ensure students don’t fall through the cracks,” Grant said.

Read more about the graduation rates on the district website.

Olympia High School AVID Students Start Community Service Legacy

This year’s seniors enrolled in the Olympia High School Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program chose to prepare hygiene and snack kits to give to the Olympia homeless community as their annual community service project. They named it the “Luv2Give” campaign.

Led by OHS teacher Deborah Harbord Ayers, AVID students gathered donations, created individual hygiene and snack kits and prepped them for delivery to Pear Blossom Place, a Family Support Center in Olympia.

On Wednesday, January 27, students delivered the items they had collected for the campaign. Natalie Moran, development director of the Family Support Center of South Sound thanked the students for their donations and provided them with an overview of the services offered to homeless families in Olympia. For more information or to see how you can get involved, please visit www.fscss.org.

After the donation and tour was complete, Ayers noted; “It is my hope that this project can be the legacy of the 2016 AVID class and that other classes follow suit in giving back to the community.”
Donors who contributed and helped make the “Luv2Give” campaign possible include: Dollie Cook, Kumiko Craig, Kaylla Donato, Howard Keck, Sharan Krieger, Sue MacDonald, Allison Puckett, Sergio Vasquez, Craig Warren, Claudia Wilde, along with Walgreens and Chap-Ship.

AVID is a college-readiness system designed to increase the number of students who enroll in four-year colleges. Although AVID serves all students, it focuses on the least served students. The formula is simple – raise expectations of students and, with the AVID support system in place, they will rise to the challenge.

**Education Foundation Announces Annual Musical Performance “Honk!”**

The Olympia School District Education Foundation (OSDEF) is pleased to announce the 2016 musical selection by the OSD Players. Teachers, staff and administrators will perform “Honk!” on Thursday, February 25 through Sunday, February 29 at the Olympia High School Performing Arts Center.

The OSD Players musical has been an annual event since 1993; since 2005 all proceeds from the play benefit the OSDEF. The Foundation is a non-profit organization that supports classroom and tutoring grants, emergency funding for student needs and outdoor education.

Tickets are available now available [here](#), or by calling the OSDEF office at (360) 753-8853.

**Second Annual Technology Fair a Great Success!**

The second Annual Olympia School District Technology Fair took place on Saturday, January 23 and featured elementary, middle and high school students and staff sharing with the community the ways that technology is integrated into everyday teaching and learning. Highlights of the interactive displays included 3D printing from Olympia High School and Washington Middle School, robotics displays from McLane Elementary and Marshall Middle School, School of Rock from Capital High School, digital microscopes from Lincoln Elementary, coding demonstrations from Hansen Elementary and much more.

This year, five elementary and three middle school teams also competed in the first-ever “Student Technology Challenge.” Competing schools were asked, “What technology skill do you possess that your adult family members need to learn?” The winning teams were from McKenny Elementary and Jefferson Middle School. McKenny students shared their experiences teaching family members everything from creating PowerPoint presentations to using a TV remote. Jefferson students created a presentation on the “smart” use of smartphones that included topics on creating efficiency through the use of calendars, alarms and reminders, downloading “apps” for gaming and social media, and streaming services for multimedia like TV, movies and music.

A great big thank you to our Technology Team and all of our students and staff for your enthusiastic participation in this impressive event!
**Learn All About Kindergarten day is Saturday, February 20**

On Saturday, February 20, the Olympia School District will hold its annual “Learn All About Kindergarten” informational event starting at 10 a.m. at Capital High School.

If you know of anyone in your neighborhood that has a child entering kindergarten in fall 2016, please share this information with them and encourage them to attend.

The event begins with a welcome by Superintendent Dick Cvitanich and general overview in the school theater followed by an information fair until noon in the Commons.

During the event parents will learn about a variety of topics related to kindergarten and school in general, including how to register for kindergarten, kindergarten program options, riding the bus, and how to use the district’s Family Access student information system to stay updated on everything from grades to lunch accounts.

A reminder that children should be 5 years old by August 31, 2016 to be eligible to start kindergarten this fall.

The event is geared for adults of incoming kindergartners in the Olympia School District. Childcare is not provided.

Capital High School is located at 2707 Conger Ave. N.W. in Olympia.

**Remember To Vote in February 9 Special Election**

Ballots for the February 9, 2016 Special Election have been sent to registered voters and must be mailed or dropped off in postage-free ballot drop boxes by Election Day to be counted.

The Olympia School District has two measures on the February 9 Special Election ballot: a four-year Maintenance and Operations (M & O) replacement levy, which replaces one approved in 2012 that expires in 2016, and a $160.7 million school bond to address facility and safety improvements districtwide.

Learn more about Proposition 1 (Replacement of Expiring Educational Maintenance and Operations Levy) and Proposition 2 (Bonds to Construct and Renovate School Facilities and Make Safety Improvements) on our school district election information Web page.

Ballot drop boxes are open 24 hours daily and will continue to accept ballots until 8 p.m. on Election Day. View a list of drop box locations.

**In-person voter registration ends February 1**

Thurston County residents not yet registered to vote in Washington state can register in person through February 1 to participate in the February 9, 2016 Special Election.

In-person voter registration is done at the Thurston County Elections Division, 2000 Lakeridge Dr. S.W., Building 1, Room 118, in Olympia.
Special Election information
View more information about the February 9 Special Election voting requirements and other information on the Thurston County Auditor’s Office Elections Division website.

Marshall Middle School DLC Program Auction a Huge Success
The Marshall Middle School Developmental Learning Classroom (DLC) Program and counseling department recently partnered to build a bike for Garden Raised urban Bounty (GRuB). Students learned basic skills associated with bicycle mechanics and repair, but also the ideals of service and resource recycling while collaborating with and contributing to others in our community.

The finished bike was auctioned off December 17, 2015. Nearly 400 auction tickets were sold, raising over $400, with all proceeds going directly to the GRuB program. There will be a DLC assembly on February 5, 2016, where the DLC program will present the auction proceeds to members of GRuB.

Way to take the initiative Marshall DLC program. This is an awesome project for an awesome cause. GRuB is very lucky to have such dedicated, generous students in their corner!

OSD Unveils Visual Arts Pilot Program
The Olympia School District has recently unveiled a visual arts pilot program in elementary schools throughout the district. This is a new initiative backed by Superintendent Dick Cvitanich with 10 teachers working on the pilot in five district elementary schools. This is a docent led program with support from students from the Evergreen State College.

Kirstin Holstrom, OSD visual arts pilot creative director, is leading the visual arts program. Kirstin is one of our amazing third-grade teachers at Centennial Elementary School. Olympia has such a rich, talented arts community. If you have a friend or colleague, or know of a retired classroom teacher who may be interested in supporting this project, please contact Kirstin directly.

The curriculum is being used in this pilot program is called ‘Deep Space Sparkle’. You can find out more about this curriculum here. The goal is to have this program in all classrooms by next year. Make sure to keep an eye out for student artwork from the visual arts program at Arts Walk this spring!

Three OSD teams earn their way to the Washington State FTC Championships
On Sunday, January 17, the FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) South Sound Inter-District Championship was held at Wilson High School in Tacoma, WA. The Olympia School District fielded 10 competitive teams out of 30 teams competing from around the South Sound.

Team 9877, the Olympia High School Care Bears, earned their way into the semifinals as the 3rd seed alliance captain. Capital's team 9876, The Countdown, was the 4th seed alliance captain. Team 8546 from CHS, Ultra Violet Catastrophe, was picked to join the 2nd place alliance.
When all was said and done the OHS Care Bears, the Avanti Mutants and the Refs moved on to the FTC Washington State Championships. Best of luck!

The Washington State FTC Championship is Saturday, January 30 at the ShowWare center in Renton. The robotics competition will start around 11 a.m.

If you would like to see a video of this year’s FTC competition click here.

**Capital HS Graduate Meets With Senator Fraiser**

Capital High School graduate Andrea Cailliet recently had the opportunity to meet Washington state Sen. Karen Fraser to discuss state testing requirements. Cailliet was unable to graduate last year due to the science EOC exam graduation requirement. Legislation was recently passed to postpone this graduation requirement, which in turn allowed Cailliet to graduate from Capital High School as she had fulfilled all other necessary graduation requirements.

Capital High School counselor Jenny Morgan said, “I am so proud of Andrea. Her work ethic, positive attitude and perseverance led to her graduation from CHS. She is an advocate for all students in this state and provided important information for Sen. Frasier regarding state testing mandates.”

Congratulations Andrea. Way to advocate for yourself and others to reach your goals!

**Pioneer Elementary Bake Sale**

A book called “The One and Only Ivan” by Newbery Award winner Katherine Applegate, has inspired students at Pioneer Elementary School. As a result, they worked together to organize a bake sale to raise awareness about the plight of endangered species, raise funds, educate students about global circumstances and promote this great read. Student organizers were third graders Abigail Erickson, Samantha Sacks, Lauren Juergens and Breanna Blanton. The bake sale was their idea for a culminating project after reading the book. Other students quickly got involved including fifth graders Joshua Kuo, Lucy Clarke, Jackie Harris and Abby Danielson.

This fictional book is based on the true story of an African silverback guerilla and baby elephant that were placed in a shopping mall in Lakewood, Wash. in the 1960s. History shows that the children rallied to Ivan the Gorilla’s defense. Pioneer students exhibited the same sense of justice as they decided to split the proceeds of the bake sale, totaling $956.68 between two foundations.

The first foundation is The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, for fostering orphaned babies due to primarily the ivory trade. The second is Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International, dedicated to protecting these endangered species.

Pioneer students are so excited to read this book, and they feel good about their international activism and protecting intelligent species, which have no voice and big hearts. They have made history come alive at Pioneer and they can’t wait to get their hands on this great book!
Mark Your Calendar - Upcoming Dates

• Second Quarter Ends - January 29
• ES, MS & HS Grading (Half Day) - January 29
• Board Meeting (Knox) - February 1 at 6:30 p.m.
• ES & MS Collaboration (Half Day) - February 3
• Mid-Winter Break (No School) - February 15-16
• Kindergarten Roundup (Capital HS) - Feb. 20 at 10 a.m.
• Board Meeting (Roosevelt ES) - February 22 at 6:30 p.m.
• HONK the Musical (Olympia HS PAC) - February 25-28