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## 2002-2003 Calendar Schedule Change

Copies of the updated one-page calendar, including important changes to student days off, are available in schools, the District office, or on the District web site at [www.puyallup.k12.wa.us](http://www.puyallup.k12.wa.us)

# CONNECTIONS

Volume 8:2

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October 2002

## Students show gains, especially in writing, on State test

At Mountain View Elementary School on North Hill, fourth grade teachers have rewritten chapter tests in reading books substituting multiple choice questions with those that require students to answer with thorough, written responses. Second graders there routinely work with colorful, plastic cubes and other hands-on tools to help understand math concepts.

Across town at Edgemont-Hilltop School, on South Hill at Sunrise Elementary, and on the west end at Waller Road Elementary, teachers have also put a strong emphasis on writing and its direct correlation to students' success in answering math problems on the Washington State Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). The annual test requires students not only to get the right answers, but also to explain in writing how they solved the problems.

Similar stories of teachers working hard to

*"... Successful practices in the classroom have been built on over the years."*

*Norm Aune*

improve student achievement are being shared throughout the District this fall in elementaries, junior highs, and high schools as educators review progress made in student learning – especially in the area of writing – on the test given last spring. Educators are also examining the curriculum to determine how to help students in areas where they fell short of the standard.



**Second graders in Wendy Finney's class at Mountain View Elementary School use colorful cubes to learn math patterns. Fourth graders here made significant gains in math this year on the WASL.**

The 2002 WASL results show fourth, seventh, and tenth graders improved overall throughout the District in writing and are slightly ahead of the State average in the numbers meeting or exceeding the writing standard. The test, given to students each spring, also measures student performance in math, reading, and listening.

In writing, for example, Edgemont-Hilltop School jumped from having 37.5 percent of its students meeting or exceeding the State standard in 2001 to 70.4 percent this year. All of the District's high schools, including Walker High, also showed

growth in student learning in writing, as well as Aulen, Ballou, Edgemont, and Stahl junior highs. Ballou students attained the highest writing score among 44 schools in Pierce County with 75.9 percent of its students meeting or exceeding standard.

While junior highs and high schools had a lower percentage of students meeting standard in math this year, progress was seen Districtwide at the elementary level. Mountain View Elementary School, for example, jumped from 40 percent a year ago to 69.8 this year, and Waller Road Elementary School doubled its score from

25 percent of students in 2001 to 51 percent this year.

On a recent morning at Mountain View Elementary, second grade teacher Wendy Finney helped students understand patterns by having them stack colored math cubes in different orders. Students also learn patterning by using certain colors and number sequences in their daily calendar, as well as practicing with rhyming words in writing assignments.

At Sunrise Elementary, Principal Norm Aune says teachers and support staff have worked hard to develop sound reading, writing, math, and listening skills. Sunrise, which demonstrated improvement on this year's WASL in math, reading, and writing skills, has a substantial number of students on the free and reduced lunch program and a high student turnover, says Aune. "We do not have a lot of staff turnover, and that fact alone may speak to some of the progress ... successful practices in the classroom have been built on over the years."

While test scores such as the WASL are an indicator of student achievement, the District's new director of assessment says they should not be the only instruments used to gauge a child's progress in school. Bob Silverman encourages parents to look at the bigger picture of what they see happening both in the classroom and at home to get an accurate assessment of whether their children are working up to their potential.

Beginning in 2008, high school students will be required to earn a Certificate of Mastery by meeting the State standards on all sections of their tenth grade WASL in order to graduate.

**PUYALLUP SCHOOL DISTRICT  
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**District Mission**

In partnership with our families and community, we provide all students the best educational opportunities necessary to reach their full potential and become responsible, productive citizens of good character.

**Connections Editorial Policy**

*Connections* is published periodically by the Puyallup School District as part of a communications link between the district and the community. Its intent and purpose is to provide the Board and district staff a venue to inform community members about programs, goals, and activities of public education in the Puyallup School District. Please direct questions or comments to Karen Hansen, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, PO Box 370, Puyallup WA 98371 or telephone (253) 841-8703 or email [khansen@puyallup.k12.wa.us](mailto:khansen@puyallup.k12.wa.us). Responses, as appropriate, will be provided directly to those who contact this office.

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## Superintendent's Message

# Puyallup Schools . . . focusing on our students

Over the past several weeks, we in the Puyallup School District — our students and staff — once again found ourselves in the media spotlight. Whether you read the newspaper, listened to the radio, or watched television, you read or heard something about the Puyallup Schools.

As your superintendent, intense media attention is at times a concern to me . . . I worry that media reports may divert our attention from our mission — the education of our students. Upon reflection, however, I have come to realize that instead of diverting our attention away from our mission, the media attention can actually help us focus attention on what truly is important to our District and to our community.

The settlement of the Federal race discrimination lawsuit is a huge step forward in our efforts to ensure that each student and staff member in our District is treated with respect and dignity. The settlement provides the framework for our commitment to ensuring a safe and equitable learning environment for all students. Almost without exception, the people who have spoken to me about the lawsuit believe the Puyallup community values and respects diversity, and they expect their schools to reflect those same values.

Ensuring that this happens is an important and positive part of the settlement, and we are committed to incorporating these values into every school for all students. No student should dread going to school for fear of being teased, bullied, harassed, or discriminated against because of who they are. The settlement of this lawsuit allows us to focus on the future . . . to ensure that we are providing a safe, positive, and inclusive atmosphere for learning.

Negotiating a successful contract settlement with the Puyallup Education Association was important to all of us, and it took hard work from both the teachers and the District. Even though



**(From left) Superintendent Susan Gourley, preschooler Isaac Kaipainen, and Executive Director of Elementary Education Jane Queen are all smiles on the first day of school at Stewart Elementary School.**

we reached agreement and averted a strike, it saddens me that we cannot provide our employees with the compensation they earn and deserve. Even though our public speaks about the importance of education — even endorsing initiatives to that effect — we simply do not have the financial means to appropriately compensate our teachers.

Unfortunately, the District and the teachers have very little control over the amount of money available to them — a fact that brings intense frustration. Even though our teachers were at times discouraged with the lack of a contract settlement, I am extremely appreciative that the majority of them did not let this interrupt their teaching. Each day, our

teachers entered their classrooms prepared to do the best for their students. I thank them for “keeping our children first.”

We are glad to have the contract settlement. It is my hope that before we go into negotiations again, however, the State of Washington will have passed legislation providing adequate compensation for all our employees. As our legislators work toward that goal, I know that we in Puyallup will continue to build that relationship of trust and mutual respect that has long been a hallmark of our District.

Yes, the media has focused on the Puyallup School

District; and while it has been uncomfortable for some, that focus is directed at us for the right reasons. It brought attention — even national attention — to what is really important to us.

Puyallup is a community that cares deeply about its children — all of its children — and we are committed to ensuring that all students feel respected and accepted. I thank the media for telling the nation that Puyallup’s children — all of our children — are what matters most. In the words of a recent editorial in *The News Tribune*, our response to the issues we have faced have turned us “into a district of uncommon sensitivity.” And that is critical for all our children!

# Memorial service teaches valuable lessons

Saturday, September 21, I attended the memorial service for 13-year-old Mary Ianuzzi; she was an eighth-grade student at Edgemont-Hilltop School.

I did not know Mary. I had never met her or her family. So I listened carefully as the minister, family, and several others offered glimpses of Mary during that service.

I heard stories from a grandmother that revealed the loving and very quick-witted humorous nature of Mary. I listened to poems and other prose written and read by her closest friends and classmates; she had a "brilliant smile," emphasized one friend. And I was taken by the comments of Kathy O'Hanlon, assistant principal at Edgemont-Hilltop School, as she shared her memories of an all-too-short acquaintance with Mary; a sharing from which emulated love, caring, and compassion. It revealed the soul of this administrator and the faculty at Mary's school.

In grief, one of Mary's friends expressed her inability to find purpose or reason in Mary's death. She, in her own way, spoke

for most of us, I'm sure. But no one tried to fix blame. The circumstances surrounding this tragedy defy the odds. It could not have been anticipated. I, too, found reasoning futile. Yet, it was this young friend's remarks that prompted me to share the following.



**Terry Asbjornsen**  
Vice-President  
School Board

As I sat in that service, I realized that when I received the call informing me of the accident, I did not ask about Mary's racial identity. I did not inquire of her or her family's religious affiliation. I did not probe into her social or economic status or her family ethnicity. None of these nor a myriad of other questions entered my mind. There might be an appropriate time and place for such questions. But Mary was one of ours. She was critically

injured. And at that moment, that which really mattered blotted out all other considerations.

Mary died about four hours after that call. I will remember Mary and with a renewed commitment I will rededicate myself as a Board Member to the reality that:

- We must never lose sight of the incredible worth of each of our students.
- Our task is to educate individual students; each one as unique as Mary.
- We are a District that is growing more and more diverse in, not only racial, but many facets of individual lives; a diversity that must be recognized and even when that diversity is chosen, the right to that choice respected.

To Mary's friend who asked "why?" please consider this: Mary's family asked us to celebrate her life. Perhaps we can do that best by asking how we can make every student feel valued. From what I heard, that's what Mary did.

## Students celebrate Johnny Appleseed Day

Students in first grade classes at Pope Elementary School celebrated Johnny Appleseed Day last month by having classroom activities about apples. Students became scientists as they learned the various parts of an apple, mathematicians as they weighed and measured the fruit, artists as they glued colorful squares of tissue paper onto an apple shape, and poets as they wrote about how apples smell, taste, sound, look, and feel. (photo from left): Hanna Carrington, Timothy Campbell, and Morgan Doran weigh and measure their apples.



## Strategic Directions set for 2002-2003

The School Board recently approved strategic directions — a set of goals — for the 2002-2003 school year.

These directions, which fall into three main categories, help guide the District toward its overall mission — the education of children.

### Strategic Direction 1. Student achievement will increase in all schools.

Each school will demonstrate incremental continuous improvement of literacy and math by reducing the number by 25% of students not meeting the reading and math standard on the WASL by 2004.

The District will decrease the student dropout rate by 15%.

### Strategic Direction 2. The District will insure equity and equal opportunity for all.

The District will diversify its workforce.

The District will ensure that all students will have an equal opportunity to participate in academic, athletic, and extracurricular activities.

The District will evaluate options for addressing overcrowded conditions in schools; plans for accommodating un-housed students in 2003-2004 and beyond will be designed and readied for implementation.

### Strategic Direction 3. The District will be accountable to its stakeholders.

The District will demonstrate accountability by reaching a 5% fund balance, exclusive of carryover commitments, by August 31, 2004.

The District will increase engagement of and communication with parents and the community in support of increasing achievement for all students.

# Volunteers help boost students' reading skills

Sixth grader Mike Gallatin is so excited about reading he now begs his teacher to call on him.

Gallatin used to struggle in reading to the point he says he avoided eye contact with his teacher when it came to reading out loud. But thanks to a Meeker Elementary School program for fifth and sixth graders, Gallatin and 16 other students received extra help in reading last year from eight community volunteers.

The Community Help at Meeker Promotes Success (C.H.A.M.P.S.) program, which is

*"I understand the words and how to say them. Now I love to read."*

*Tyler McGlothlen*

continuing again this year, boosts students' self-confidence and reading skills.

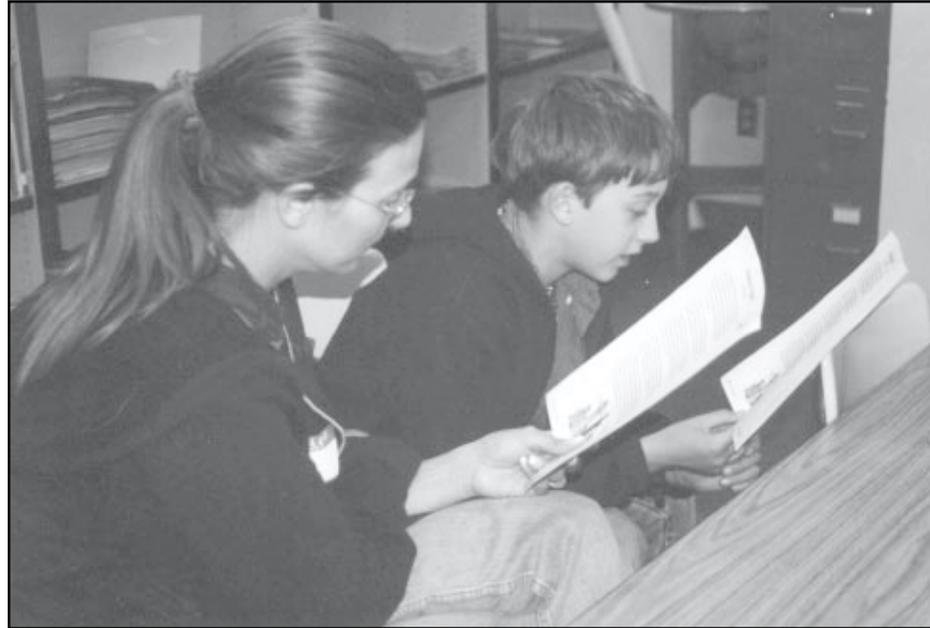
The program is paid for by I-728 dollars and allows Meeker to extend remedial education to all students in an individualized way. "I used to have a D- in reading," Gallatin said last spring. "But now I have a B and my parents are so proud of me."

There are similar stories from other students in the program, which meets four times a week. "The thing I am most excited about now is that I can read harder books," says sixth grader Manuel Vandermolen.

Tyler McGlothlen and Clint Montague, both sixth graders this year, went from low B's to A's last year — and both wore smiles to match. "I can read faster and for longer times," Montague explained.

"For me, I can simply read better," McGlothlen says. "I understand the words and how to say them. Now I love to read."

But the grade improvements are a small part of the program. The greater benefit, according to co-coordinator and Literacy Support Specialist Shelly Ampe, is the one-on-one help the students receive. For volunteers, she says their reward is simply



**Michele Henry, a volunteer last year with the Community Help at Meeker Promotes Success (C.H.A.M.P.S.) program, reads with Meeker Elementary student Clint Montague.**

seeing the students achieve while at the same time watching their self-esteem "skyrocket."

"We become their cheerleaders and day by day we are able to develop a relationship with these children," says Michele Henry, a parent volunteer last year. "It is a simple gratification to see them succeed."

Volunteers are on hand one day a week for about two hours and work with students on their school and various other reading assignments. They also help with students' social skills by simply talking with them and developing friendships.

"The volunteer time is only a small portion of the program. The rest of the week is instructional. Test scores aren't able to show the amazing personal growth these students make," says Michelle Cruckshank, Meeker sixth grade teacher and co-coordinator of the C.H.A.M.P.S. program.

Volunteer Jerry Forcier says, "I didn't have any children of my own. So I cherish the opportunity to come to Meeker . . . these

children are now able to read more fluently and it is a simple thrill just to see them do better."

Cruckshank says that the program has benefitted more than just the students who attend. "It is the fact that while the students are with the tutors working on their reading, their teachers are able to use their classroom time effectively, as well as making sure that all Meeker students are achieving academic excellence," she explained. "Also, since this is a program for fifth and sixth graders, it helps ensure a little extra help as they head into junior high."

Principal Anne Hoban agreed. "This program has allowed incredible improvement in our students' academic careers. It allows a strong adult role model for our students, makes a crucial difference in their lives, and gives them a self-confidence important at any age.

"I am proud of our staff and volunteers who help make this a success, but I am also very proud of our students who have stepped up to the plate and worked hard. They deserve to enjoy all their accomplishments."

## Student artists recognized at Fair

Congratulations to the following student artists and their teachers recognized at the Junior and Senior High School Invitational Art Show during last month's Puyallup Fair.

Student art work was on display in the mezzanine under the Grandstands and also was captured on digital video and shown in the Education Building:

Aylen Junior High School  
Cathy Piotroski, teacher  
Luke Barble; Austin Charest; Ashley Fent; Colten Keoyh; Kun Woo Lee; Conner Irick.

Kalles Junior High School  
Mary Bova, Jeanne Hendricks, teachers  
Cabrini Nguyen; Grace Mikoll; Alejandra Ramirez.

Stahl Junior High School  
Ruth Hamill, teacher  
Andrew Baernhard; Kelsey Jones; Kelly Leiferman; Kelly Leiferman.

Emerald Ridge High School  
Candace Loring, teacher  
Valerie Bartels; Jerad Beattie; Holly Chase; Rebecca Crane; Kim Garver; Ed Jagodensky; Joe Loring; Dustin Milner; Adam Taylor; Ashley Nicholas; Billy Englebeck; Al Bondy.

Puyallup High School  
Roy Nishiyori and Becky Lathrop, teachers  
Molly Goulden; Aaron Hushagen; Jenifer Ross; Kristie Anderson; Kara Cockle; Deborah Cughan; Paul Evans; Becky Hunter; LJ Leach; Karisa Mayer; Natsuho Omiya; Tara Ford.

Rogers High School  
John Tylczak and Debbie Munson, teachers  
David Baker; Alexandria LeBreque; Justin Ripka; Cheramie Nicole Rody; Falon Boole; Laurel Goetz; Brian Hall; Angela Johnson; Brett Klassen; Crystal Mahre; Holly Milender; Megan Rains; Merritt Riley; Jake Roskelley; Amy Furhman; Candace Greco.



## Puyallup Schools...

...Do  
The  
Puyallup!

Photos from left to right (top row): Carol Toulouse, Spanish teacher at Kalles Junior High School and the School District's World Languages specialist, Tang Yue, Chinese exchange teacher at Puyallup High School, and Laura Pruden, World Languages teacher at Puyallup High, greet visitors to the Education Building; Ching Wei Yap, of Meeker Elementary School, builds a straw tower; Peter Silvernale, a preschooler in Kitsap County, shows off his art creation; Ronald and Samantha Hruban, of Wildwood Elementary School, enjoy painting; Scott Knobon, of Mountain View Elementary School, uses gumdrops and toothpicks to build a tower at the Quest booth; Puyallup High School senior Jessica Howard helps fairgoers with art projects; (bottom row): Puyallup resident Tom O'Brien talks about Ezra Meeker with Shaw Road Elementary School students Elizabeth McKenzie, Taylor Evans, and Zachary Johnson; Shaw Road students Stephanie Reynolds and Jessica Hogue examine sea shells; Puyallup High School orchestra students perform under the direction of Todd Giltner, and Sunrise Elementary School student Matthew Showacy gets his hearing checked by school nurse Tess Wardle.

# State Auditor's office gives District top-notch report card

The State Auditor has reported the Puyallup School District had sound financial practices and complied with all laws and regulations to protect the interests of taxpayers as it managed its \$132 million yearly budget.

The Washington State Auditor's Office recently completed a three-month visit to the schools and administrative offices as part of its annual audit of the District's records. The most recent review focused on compliance with Federal and State law, and on money received and spent in the 2000-2001 school year.

"It showed we were in full compliance with Federal and State laws in how we ran our business, and our reporting was complete and accurate," says Shaun Taylor, director of business services. "This was an extensive audit that looked at anyone who touched money of any kind, and this District demonstrated

professionalism when it came to managing public funds."



Lynn Uglick

Lynn Uglick, the District's Accounting Manager who was a State Auditor for 23 years and the lead auditor for schools in Washington State, knows that is not an easy feat for a school district that ranks the tenth largest statewide.

"All the budgeting, purchasing, expenditures, and payroll were excellent," he said. "That was phenomenal. All District instructional and support staff did an outstanding job."

The audit examined areas representing the highest risk of noncompliance, misappropriation, or misuse of public money.

Different areas of the District are audited each year on a rotating basis over the course of several years.

The report examined areas such as: how well the School Board followed State open public meeting laws in conducting business and properly notifying its constituents; how accurately the District reported student enrollment and the number of students riding buses; whether there were any conflicts of interest among District officials, and whether school officials chose the lowest qualified bidder when contracting out work.

Additionally, the auditor studied the District's budget; payroll; purchases of goods and services; long-term debt; property taxes; cash and investments; Federal programs; and Associated Student Body accounts, which have a specific set of procedures to follow in fund-raising and other school activities.

At an administrative training in August, Taylor and Uglick identified several areas where staff can continue to strengthen reporting efforts. Those include how the District tracks employees' time on Federally-funded projects, and how it reports student enrollment and bus ridership. For example, accuracy in how many students ride the bus and where they are picked up and dropped off determines how much transportation money the District qualifies to receive from the State.

"The whole focus is on the kids' education," says Uglick. "Whenever we look at areas that can be improved, we ask ourselves, what does this do to help the students, and how does this lessen the burden on the school staff? The auditor is another set of eyes to help us continue to do our jobs well and continue to look for ways to improve."

# Laurie Patoff and Carol Drashil Educators recognized as Puyallup's Teachers of the Year

Educators Laurie Patoff and Carol Drashil have been recognized for their commitment to excellence in education by being selected as this year's "Teacher of the Year" for the Puyallup School District.

Patoff, a third grade teacher at Maplewood Elementary School in downtown Puyallup, has worked in education 16 years — the past eight of them at Maplewood, with one year away in 1996 to teach at a primary school in Australia. Before that she worked as a teacher at Wildwood Elementary School and at several California schools.

She has been actively involved in the development of innovative District curriculum, the organization of a "K-Kids Club" (elementary school version of the Kiwanis Club) that inspires students to do service projects in the community, the coordination of the school's biannual Reader/Author Day, and the organization of the school's Math Week and Math Night.

She has also provided staff development for teachers on math exemplars — math problems which involve problem solving and communication — and taught a staff training about the District's new reading curriculum.



**Maplewood Elementary School teacher Laurie Patoff helps third grader Bridget Taylor.**

"I find Laurie to be a nurturing, focused, and innovative teacher," says Principal Beth Millie. "She is organized, creative, has a sense of humor, thinks on her feet, excels in communication, and has great balance with a multifaceted job."

While Maplewood was under construction during its remodel in 1997-1998, Patoff developed architecture lessons that had students designing blueprints, constructing towers, and building toothpick bridges.

Patoff also arranged for the architect to speak to the class, did math lessons related to the remodel, read students books about architecture, and had fourth and fifth graders interview elderly people who attended Maplewood in the 1920s and 1930s, write biographies based on those interviews, then compile them in a Maplewood memories book.

Drashil has spent 27 years as a classroom teacher at Puyallup High School and the past eight years as a curriculum leader in the Language Arts Department.

In the late 1960s and as the youngest teacher in the department, she says she offered her view that the school should broaden its scope of literature choices and include more work by minority authors.

Drashil also has been an advocate for highly capable students and in the late 1980s helped establish Sophomore Honors English and Senior Advanced Placement English.

The Puyallup High teacher has been a leader in extensive reorganization of department curriculum and a facilitator and trainer in reading, writing, and the implementation of the senior experience, also referred to as the senior project, on both the building and District levels.



**Puyallup High School teacher Carol Drashil works with senior Rachel Heagle.**

Puyallup High School Principal Wanda Berndtson writes in a nomination letter that Drashil's 27 years as an educator have "given her sage experience, but have not caused her to tire from the profession. In fact, it would seem that Carol is more energized than ever before. Her drive to improve the curriculum and to help students achieve State standards is apparent in her commitment and involvement at Puyallup High School."

The recognition as 2003 Puyallup Teacher of the Year is part of the Washington State Teacher of the Year program established by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

A teacher from White River School District was selected last month as this year's regional Puget Sound Education Service District winner and will advance to the State level competition with a final selection to be made later this month.

## Meeting scheduled to educate parents on party drug effects

An information meeting for parents of junior high students concerning the ill-effects of Ecstasy and other club drugs, warning signs of possible use, and preventative measures that can be taken at school and at home will be held from 6:30 to 7:30 pm November 14 in the Puyallup High School commons.

Parents of students at Edgemont, Aylene, and Kalles junior highs have been mailed postcard invitations to the event, however parents of all junior high age school children throughout the District are invited. A similar meeting was held last spring for parents of students at Ferrucci, Ballou, and Stahl junior highs.

The meeting is being offered by the Puyallup School District in partnership with Horizon Treatment Services, Inc. Guest speaker is Kelly Richstein, drug and alcohol intervention specialist with Horizon.

Guidance counselors and nurses from some of the area junior high schools also will be in attendance, as well as Dr. Phyllis Ellermeier, coordinator of the District's Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Title IV Program.

Parents will have an opportunity to see what Ecstasy pills look like and how they are marketed to teens and pre-teens; side-effects and bodily harm caused by this and other club or party drugs such as GHB, Ketamine, and Rohypnol; how schools are responding to the issue, and how to educate youth about saying no to these and other drugs.

The stimulant effects of Ecstasy, which enable users to dance for long periods at clubs, parties, or "raves," may also lead to increase in body temperature, dehydration, heart failure, kidney failure, strokes, and seizures.

# Prevention efforts earn national recognition

School and community efforts in helping students make healthy choices concerning the use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and violence has won national recognition.

The Puyallup School District's Comprehensive Student Assistance Program for the Prevention/Intervention of Violence, Alcohol, Tobacco, and/or Other Drugs received honorable mention in July from the 2002 Honoring Outstanding Prevention Efforts (HOPE) Award.

HOPE is designed to recognize the achievements and promote the accomplishments of people and organizations leading the way in producing positive results with education-based prevention initiatives in kindergarten through grade 12.

In a letter to the District, the sponsoring organization says Puyallup received honorable mention for its program in the 2001-2002 school year because it recognizes the needs of and risks to youth in the

***"There is a lot of pride in what the community and schools can do together."***  
***Dr. Phyllis Ellermeier***

community and has developed a prevention strategy to address those needs and help youth make better, healthier choices.

Data from the 1998 and 2000 Washington State Survey of Adolescent Health Behavior, for example, show that more Puyallup School District students reported two years ago that they had never tried tobacco compared to 1998 (see adjacent chart). All students in grades six, eight, 10, and 12 will take the Healthy Youth Survey again this month.

The success of the District's prevention efforts is a combined and sustained effort of both the schools and the community, says Dr. Phyllis Ellermeier, coordinator of the District's Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Title IV Program.

Ellermeier says community agencies have

## More Students Reported That They Never Tried Tobacco

Grade	1998	2000	% Change
6	75.4%	86%	+10.6%
8	54.9%	68.1%	+13.2%
10	37.2%	51.8%	+14.6%
12	37.9%	46.8%	+ 8.9%

Data from the 1998 and 2000 Washington State Survey of Adolescent Health Behavior.

stepped in to provide help for students, and educators have provided parent education, counseling services for students, and in-class group work on various prevention topics.

"There is a lot of pride in what the community and schools can do together," says Ellermeier. Supporting organizations include the Puyallup Police Department, Good Samaritan Mobile Health Nurses, Horizon Treatment Services, Inc., and the Tobacco Free Puyallup organization.

Puyallup is the only school district recog-

nized from Washington State and is among 21 school and other public and private organizations across the nation featured in a book showcasing prevention program achievements. The book will be shared with prevention educators throughout the country to use as models for their own communities.

Ellermeier received a framed award certificate on behalf of the District and was recognized in July at the National Prevention Symposium in Seattle. HOPE is an annual award sponsored by United Learning – a provider of innovative K-12 prevention curricula, programs, and online activities.

## Giftmakers needs donations

Puyallup Giftmakers, a "kids helping kids" program operated by students in the Puyallup School District, is in need of donations. Program organizers are looking for any of these items:

New stuffed animals; new and nearly new toys for ages 4 through 14; coats (many of the District's families have children without coats); mittens and hats (many children have no warm mittens or hats for cold weather); stocking stuffers (new or nearly new); sporting equipment; gifts suitable for teenagers; holiday stockings, and books for ages 4 to 14. Items can be dropped off at Rogers High School or the South Hill Mall.

Puyallup Giftmakers is the District's program that helps needy families each December. Parents can leave their children with an on-site babysitter and shop for presents, which are toys and other items donated by the community. The two-day event served more than 300 families last year.

As no District funds can be used for this project, monetary donations are always appreciated. Checks should be made out to the Puyallup Schools Foundation and sent to Karen Hansen, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, at the Puyallup School District, PO Box 370, Puyallup, WA 98371.

## New report cards more thorough; use numbers instead of letter grades

Sixth grader Arianna Allahyar looked forward to the day when she would earn A's and B's on her schoolwork. But now that she has tried out a new report card system in which she has a specific set of learning goals and receives numbers instead of letter grades, she says learning is easier "because it's much clearer what I need to know in each subject."

When students like Arianna, of Brouillet Elementary School, understand what they need to learn, educators say it's easier for them to be successful in school and in life.

Teachers throughout the District say students are quickly adjusting to a new "standards-based" report card being tested this year at all 21 elementary schools in kindergarten through grade four. Fifth- and sixth-grade teachers can choose whether they want to try out the new format with at least five of their students or the entire class.

parents to give input about what they think of the new elementary format.

At this time there are no specific plans to change the reporting system at the junior high or high school levels. District officials feel it is important to fully implement the new grading system at the elementary level before launching any changes at the secondary level. A first step in addressing any changes at the secondary level would be to conduct an extensive review of research in this area.

Arianna's mother, Lee Ann, who grew up with letter grades says, "This is kind of a scary thing just because it is such a new concept. I'm very interested in seeing how this all checks out. If she can stay motivated and sees specific areas where she can continue to strive to achieve, that would be a positive thing."

The reason the new report card is called

### Standards-Based Progress Report Key

- 4 Student exceeds grade level standards
- 3 Student consistently meets grade level standards
- 2 Student meets some grade level standards
- 1 Student does not meet grade level standards

Parents who have been used to the traditional report card that used letter grades will see the new format next month during fall conferences. The reporting method has already been tested the past three years in kindergarten through grade four at Brouillet, Firgrove, Hunt, Wildwood, and Zeiger elementaries. It is also being used in several neighboring communities including the Bethel School District.

While younger grade levels have always been given numbers on their report cards, students in grades four, five, and six have traditionally received A, B, C, D, or F letter grades. If successful this year, the new standards-based system will be used with all elementary students next year. Opportunities will be provided for teachers and

"standards-based" is because under each main subject area such as math, reading, and writing are a list of standards, or specific academic skills, that students are expected to learn in that particular grade. These standards are uniform throughout the state and have been given the title, "Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALR's)."

One of the EALR's in fourth-grade writing, for example, is that a student "writes clearly and effectively." Beneath that listing on the report card is a list of specific skills students must attain by the end of fourth grade to meet that standard. Those include the use of style, conventions, correct spelling, legible writing, and ideas and organization. Parents will see



Fifth graders at Ridgecrest Elementary School work on math test in Justin Martin's class.

these EALR's and skills listed on the new report card with either a score of 1, 2, 3, or 4 (see chart accompanying this story for a definition of each number).

While some parents might be quick to compare a 4 to an A, a 3 to a B and so on, educators warn such comparisons couldn't be further from the truth. In fact, a student could get the equivalent of all the answers correct on most spelling tests, math papers, and other subjects, which on a traditional report card might have qualified for an A, but still only receive a 2 or 3 at the first fall conference.

"Basically students would be expected to reach the 3's and 4's in all areas by the end of the year, meaning they have met the grade level standards," says Sandra Jacobson, principal at Edgemont-Hilltop School. "Our kids are works-in-progress until that point. Throughout the year teachers are monitoring student skill development to help make sure they are on track to meet the standard by June."

Students will have multiple opportunities to demonstrate they have learned a specific skill, says Johnnie McKinley, professional development coordinator.

Teachers are being encouraged to use a variety of assessments, including written, oral, interviews, teacher observations of group or individual tasks, journals, and learning logs. All of these recognize that students have different learning styles, she says.

"Gone are the days of the traditional bell-shaped grading curve with teachers giving so many A's in a class, which varied from teacher to teacher and classroom to classroom," says McKinley. "Students don't compete against each other. Rather, it's a simple question of do they consistently show they can meet the standard?"



Johnnie McKinley

While the new system requires teachers to track student progress in greater detail, Rob Haugen welcomes the change. Haugen, a sixth-grade teacher at Brouillet Elementary School, showed his class the new report card and explained EALR's on the first day of school. And every day since, whenever they start a new lesson or activity, he has students identify what EALR or EALR's they are working on so they become comfortable and knowledgeable with their goals.

# Puyallup students, staff remember September 11, 2001

“Every little thing counts.”

That, says 11-year-old Jamie Whitman, is what people needed to hear on September 11. “Even if you do something small, it can help everybody.”

Whitman wrote her “Wish For Peace” on a blue paper star, which joined more than 350 other wishes written by fellow Karshner Elementary School students. The kindergartners through sixth graders walked through the neighborhood on September 11 and used string to hang their red, white, and blue stars, some of them sparkling with glitter in the morning sunshine, on the doors of their neighbors around the school.

Delivering messages of peace in the community was one of many ways students and staff in the Puyallup School District paused to remember lives lost on the same day a year ago. Dressed in a sea of red, white, and blue, students of all ages participated in school assemblies and ceremonies, planted trees, and performed acts of kindness.

“It’s such a hard day. You don’t want to scare or frighten the kids, but we have to remember those who lost their lives,” says Colleen Shields, principal of Karshner Elementary School. Karshner paired older students with younger ones as they walked several blocks around the school to hang the paper stars on neighbors’ doors.



**Waller Road Elementary School students and staff gather around 20-foot flag to honor victims of September 11.**



Puyallup resident Sue Gendreau was one of those visibly touched by the students’ kindness. Gendreau was taking care of her grandchildren September 11 when second grader Tyler Fields approached her front door with not one, but two stars. One read, “Our Country Stands Strong.” On the other he wrote, “God Bless America.”

“This is just so nice the kids would remember,” she said as she clutched the stars in her hand. She went on to explain how her son-in-law is an army lieutenant in Kuwait and how this day held special meaning for her. American flags poked out of flower pots on her porch, a sign in the window encouraged support for troops, and several plastic toy army tanks sat on a small table

next to the front door. Gendreau placed one of Tyler’s stars next to a green army tank and said she would hang the other in a special place inside the house. “Thanks,” she said. “I needed that today.”

Karshner students also remembered the day by planting next to the playground two European Hornbeam trees, donated by Vassey Nursery in Puyallup, to represent the twin towers. Sixth-grader Victoria Moser wrote a short essay, which she read over morning announcements. She wrote in part, “It’s strange that thousands of people you never knew existed, you loved so much. And hundreds of things you never even thought about is all you can think of.”

At Aylen Junior High School staff, students, and some neighbors gathered on the school track for a remembrance ceremony, and students read speeches from famous Americans. Similarly at Pope Elementary



**Karshner Elementary School student Tyler Fields delivers his wish for peace to Puyallup resident Sue Gendreau.**

School, students assembled at the flagpole, had a moment of silence followed by the ringing of bells, then listened as several students read short essays on courage.

Waller Road Elementary School flew a 20-foot American flag, and the school had an assembly which served as a kick-off to a school beautification project day planned this month to honor one of the victims of September 11.



At Stewart Elementary School, Sandi Ahlers’ fourth graders wrote letters to local firefighters, police officers, and military people. Prior to writing the letters, they talked about the definition of a hero. And at Ballou Junior High, seventh graders did acts of service and wrote about their experiences.

Shaw Road Elementary students, staff, and parents joined around a Sugar Maple, the state tree of New York, which was planted by last year’s sixth grade class and presented along with an inscribed plaque. After a brief memorial speech by Principal David Sollars, the community joined in a moment of silence, then a patriotic song.

As for Jamie Whitman, the fifth grader at Karshner Elementary who wrote a message of peace about the little things that help others, she left her star on a door with full confidence it would bring happiness to the person who found it. “I hope they read it and do something positive.”



## 7th Grade Camp

Seventh graders at Kalles Junior High School participated in a three-day orientation camp last month, including a fun day of team-building activities shown above, to prepare them for a successful junior high experience. Camp presentations and activities were designed to increase a sense of belonging and create a positive feeling toward oneself, others, and school. Activities included relay runs, adding a unique twist such as having to carry a classmate or balance an orange between two students' necks; walking with eyes closed in a line, hands on each other's shoulders, and moving different directions based on taps on the shoulder from the people behind; human pyramid building; and a special pipe hooked up outside to provide drinking water and, as demonstrated above by Assistant Principal Kevin Hampton, some extra cooling off. Throughout the camp seventh graders worked with team leaders made up of eighth- and ninth-grade students involved in leadership. Students also attended spirit-building assemblies in the gymnasium, went on a scavenger hunt to learn the campus, and on the final day invited their families to attend a school barbecue with food prepared by staff.

## Donors give children backpacks, supplies, physicals

A number of businesses, community groups, and individuals have donated school supplies and services to help meet student needs at the start of this school year.

Donors, who were recognized at a recent School Board meeting, included:

The local chapter of Take Off Pounds Sensibly (T.O.P.S.) has given boxes full of school supplies to the District the past five years to be distributed to needy students.

For the second year in a row, Puyallup's Costco store donated backpacks filled with school supplies for each student at Stewart Elementary School.

School Tools for Learning, a non-profit organization started last year by a South Hill resident whose husband is a firefighter, also donated numerous backpacks filled

with supplies to Waller Road, Firgrove, and Spinning Elementary Schools. The Pierce County Professional Firefighters Local 2175 helped pack the bags with supplies and then hand-delivered the bags to area schools. The firefighter's group also was among several in the area that contributed money toward purchasing the school supplies.

Bratrud Middleton Insurance in Puyallup also donated school supplies to Spinning Elementary School, and Starbucks on South Hill and a first-grade parent donated to Firgrove Elementary School.

The Church of Christ once again gave a substantial amount of school supplies to Meeker Elementary School.

Mountain View Elementary School's PTA donated crayons, markers, notebooks, paper, rulers, and glue to have on hand for students in need throughout the year.

Fred Meyer on River Road donated five outfits to Phoenix students who could not afford to purchase the school's new dress code attire. The company on South Hill also gave notebook paper to Stahl Junior High School students.

Several members of the medical community again donated their services by providing free or reduced cost physical examinations for Puyallup School District students who wanted to participate in fall sports but either could not afford one or had not been able to schedule a physical before the start of school.

Those professionals include: Dr. Don Russell; Dr. William Pollard; Dr. Ovidio Penalver; Apple Physical Therapy, Chris Seagrave and Lisa Schmitt; and school nurses, Celeste Cook, Meg Penalver, Audrie Shagren, and Joan Rowe.

# PHS graduate works as area pediatrician

For Puyallup High School graduate Brian Schoos, coming back to Puyallup was part of his career plans for as long as he can remember.

He always knew he wanted to be a doctor. In elementary school, he says he knew he wanted to deal with patients and work in an office setting. By the time he was in junior high, he knew he wanted to be a pediatrician.

Schoos, a 1989 graduate, has been back in the Puyallup community for two years serving as a pediatrician at the Woodcreek Pediatric Center. While he works predominately out of the Center's Bonney Lake office, he also makes rounds at Good Samaritan Hospital to check up on patients. He also routinely works one night a week at the Center's Puyallup office.

"I knew eventually I would make my way back to Washington," Schoos says. "I love it here."

Schoos, 31, says it is fun to be back in his hometown and see all of the people he grew up with. "But to be able to help take care of their children — it is a nice thing that not many people get a chance to do."

Schoos did his undergraduate work at Northwestern University in Illinois, majoring in Human Communication Sciences with a focus on learning disabilities.

He then worked the next four years toward his MD at St. Louis University in Missouri, followed by three years doing a residency specializing in Pediatrics at Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

Through some friends, he heard about an opening at the Woodcreek Clinic. He says the past two years have been a joy, and every day presents a new challenge. "A child can surprise you on a daily basis," he says. "But the part I really enjoy is the continuity of care I am able to provide to the patient and their family. I get to watch them grow up, and after I treat them, I get to see how it turned out. This is the ideal

job and place for me," he says.

Schoos and his wife Katy, who works as a pediatric physical therapist in Kent, had their first child, a son, last month.

The pediatrician says he is able to look back on his Puyallup School District experience fondly and says he would have loved to have taken any of the medical classes that today's high school students are offered.

His advice to students is to find and take classes that interest them. "In fact, those students who are thinking about medical school should keep in mind there are so many other applicants that all took the same classes and have the same grades. If you have something that sets you apart, then it is more likely that you will stick out. Plus it can only make you a more well-rounded person and give you a bigger variety and a broader scope."

Ultimately, Schoos says students should "do what they are passionate about and what makes them happy."



**Dr. Brian Shoos examines Camden Purteman as mother, Paula, looks on.**

## Emerald Ridge High receives recognition

The National School Counselors Association, in partnership with the United States Army, has named Emerald Ridge High School the recipient of the 2002 National Planning for Life Award. The award recognizes exemplary career guidance programs nationwide.

Career Specialist Michael Sein-Ryan learned at the end of the school year that Emerald Ridge had been chosen for the national award as an outstanding high school model in the country.

Features of the Emerald Ridge program specifically noted as excellent include:

the daily advisory program with an early focus on post-high school planning; individualized conferences among advisors, parents, and students; sophomore job shadow experiences; an emphasis on leadership and community service for all students; planning events such as the Prepare Fair; a three-year emphasis on portfolios; a culminating project; and strong leadership and commitment at both the District and building levels.

In announcing the award, the School Board recently recognized Sein-Ryan and former Principal Linda Quinn.

## Announcement

The Puyallup School District is in the process of reviewing its activities, services, and programs to identify and eliminate any barriers to full participation by all otherwise qualified persons regardless of any disability. If you are aware, or become aware, of any such barriers to access or to communication associated with any of the school district's programs, services, or activities, please notify the Americans with Disabilities Act/Section 504 compliance person for the Puyallup School District: Caroline Lacey, c/o Puyallup School District, P.O. Box 370, Puyallup, WA 98371, (253) 841-8645.

## Traffic Safety Education classes

The Puyallup School District will be offering traffic safety education classes this fall, winter, spring, and summer. Classes are held after school from 2:30 to 4:30 pm on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Cost for the class is \$280. For more information, contact David Requa at (253) 841-8711, ext. 6507.

## Students compete at skating tournament

Five years after winning her first USA Roller Speed Skating national championship, Stephanie Brader, a 2001 graduate of Rogers High School, again captured the top prize, this time as the Elite Senior Ladies National Inline Speed Skating champion.

Brader also anchored the NW Region's All-Star ladies team to a second place finish at the championships held July 20-27 in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Other Puyallup School District students who competed in US Nationals included Markus Charboneau, Rogers High School; Ricky Wollman, 2001 Puyallup High School graduate; Holly Raynor, Kalles Junior High School; and Misha Averill, Stewart Elementary School.

# Meet the District's newly appointed school leaders . . .

The following people have been selected to fill leadership positions this year, including elementary and secondary principals and District administration posts. Other school leaders were announced in the August *Connections*.



## Assistant Superintendent K-12 Education

**Sandi McCord** is the District's new assistant superintendent of K-12 Education. McCord comes to Puyallup from the Orting School District, where she served as superintendent since

1996. She has also served in numerous administrative positions in the Federal Way School District and the South Central School District in Seattle. In Federal Way, she served as assistant superintendent for Central Area Schools and K-12 instruction, and assistant superintendent for elementary education. In South Central School District, she served as assistant superintendent, director of curriculum/instruction, elementary school principal, and reading specialist. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees and administrative certification from Central Washington University, with a continuing administrators certification from Seattle Pacific University.

## Director of Assessment

**Bob Silverman** has been named director of assessment. Silverman comes to Puyallup after serving with the Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in Assessment, Research, and Evaluation. He also has held various positions at Cornell University, the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, and the Alaska Department of Education. He has his bachelor's and master's degrees from Johns Hopkins University.



## Assistant Director of Career and Technical Education

**Shelly Calligan** is the District's new assistant director of career and technical education. Her previous positions include serving the past two years as vocational director in the Fife School District. She also served as a vocational administrative intern in Bethel Public Schools, a vocational department chair and a work-based learning coordinator at Spanaway Lake High School, and a teacher in the Bethel School District and in Australia. She began teaching business education in 1972 at Sequim High School. Calligan has her bachelor's and master's degrees from Central Washington University.



## Assistant Director of Special Services

**Danette Sack** is assistant director of special services. Most recently Sack was the Director of Special Needs at Shanghai American School in China. She was assistant principal at Firgrove

Elementary School in 1998-99 and an education specialist, an administrative intern, and a resource teacher in this District. She has her bachelor's and master's degrees from Pacific Lutheran University.

## Assistant Director of Special Services

**Leon Johnson** has been named assistant director of special services. He comes to Puyallup from Grand Coulee Dam Schools, where he served 11 years as special services director. He also served as a principal and teacher there. He has his bachelor's degree from Central Washington University and administrative credentials from both Central and Eastern Washington universities.



## Firgrove Elementary School

**Stacey Gailey** joins the leadership team at Firgrove Elementary School as its new assistant principal. Gailey served last year as a principal intern at Firgrove Elementary School and worked there two years as a special education and Title 1 Remediation

teacher. Before that she taught special education at Riverside Elementary School. She has her bachelor's degree from Gonzaga University, and earned her master's degree in educational leadership and principal's certification from City University.

## Pope Elementary School

**Mike Healy** is this year's new principal at Pope Elementary School. Healy comes to this District after serving 27 years as a principal in the Sumner School District, most recently at Liberty Ridge Elementary School. He began his administrative career in 1972 in Lake Washington School District as principal of Ben Franklin Elementary School and started teaching in 1967 in the Seattle School District. Healy has his bachelor's degree from Pacific Lutheran University and his master's degree from Western Washington University.



## Riverside Elementary School

**Valeria Smith** is the new principal at Riverside Elementary School. Smith has served the past two years as this District's assistant director of special services. Before that she was a principal at Ayles Junior High School, a principal at Woodland and

Spinning elementary schools, and a vice principal at Ridgecrest Elementary School. She began teaching in this District in 1970 at Stewart Elementary School and taught elementary and junior high classes until 1987. She has her bachelor's degree from Central Washington State College and her master's degree from Pacific Lutheran University.

## Ballou Junior High School

**Gerald Denman** is the new principal at Ballou Junior High School. Before coming to Ballou, Denman served as assistant principal at Emerald Ridge High School. Two years prior to that, he worked as dean of students at Kentridge High School in the Kent School District.

He also served several years before that as that school's head girl's basketball coach and traffic safety department coordinator. From 1990-94, Denman taught physical education and traffic safety, coached the girl's basketball team, and was assistant coach for the school's football and track teams. He began teaching physical education and history in 1985 at Lochburn Junior High in the Clover Park School District. Denman has his bachelor's degree from Central Washington University and his master's degree in educational administration from City University.



## Ballou Junior High School

**Mark Brouillet** is the new assistant principal at Ballou Junior High School. Brouillet comes to Ballou Junior High after serving one year as an administrative intern at Puyallup High School. Before that he was a teacher at Puyallup High and an elementary physical education specialist. Brouillet also coached water polo and managed the Puyallup High School pool. The new Ballou assistant principal has his bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University Hawaii and his master's degree from City University.

# Elementary, secondary, and administrative posts



## Ferrucci Junior High School

**Krista Bates** is the new assistant principal at Ferrucci Junior High School. Bates joins the Ferrucci leadership team after having spent one year as assistant principal at Eatonville Middle School in the Eatonville School District. Before

that she worked as an administrative intern and administrative assistant at Ballou Junior High School. She also taught several years prior to that at Stahl and Ballou junior high schools. Bates has her bachelor's and master's degrees from Pacific Lutheran University.

## Edgemont-Hilltop School

**Sandra Jacobson** has assumed the principalship of the Edgemont-Hilltop School on North Hill.

Jacobson worked there last year as assistant principal. Before that she was lead administrator for the Tri-Transition Program, an assistant principal at Edgemont Junior High School, an assistant principal at Ballou Junior High School, and a District science coordinator and teacher. She began teaching at Ballou Junior High School in 1985 and continued teaching until 1993. Jacobson has her bachelor's degree from Western Washington University and her master's degree and administrative certificate from the University of Puget Sound.



## Edgemont-Hilltop School

**Kathy O'Hanlon** joins the leadership team as assistant principal at Edgemont-Hilltop School. O'Hanlon comes to Edgemont-Hilltop School after having spent one year as an administrative intern at Ballou Junior High School. Before that she

taught at Ballou and Stahl junior high schools, Rogers High School, and Sunrise Elementary School. She began teaching in 1984 at Spring Valley Montessori School in Federal Way. She has a bachelor's degree from California State University, Hayward and a master's degree and administrative certification from Central Washington University.



## Emerald Ridge High School

**Casey Cox** is the new principal at Emerald Ridge High School. Cox assumes the new post after spending two years as the school's assistant principal. He also was Emerald Ridge High planning principal and an assistant vocational director in this

District in 1999-2000. His former positions include serving as assistant principal at Puyallup High School from 1997-99, and various administrative and teaching jobs at Yelm High School. He has his bachelor's degree and master's degree from Washington State University. He earned his administrative credential from Central Washington University.

## Emerald Ridge High School

**Conchita Oliver-Moore** joins the Emerald Ridge High School leadership team as one of the school's new assistant principals. She spent the past two years working as assistant principal at Tumwater Middle School. Previous positions include serving as assistant principal at Lincoln Middle School in the Pullman School District and administrative intern at Spanaway Lake High School in Bethel School District. Oliver-Moore has a bachelor's degree from Millsaps College in Mississippi, and two master's degrees — one in journalism and mass communication from Iowa State University and another, in education administration, from Pacific Lutheran University.



## Emerald Ridge High School

**Anne Chambers** has also been appointed an assistant principal at Emerald Ridge High School. She comes to Puyallup from the Marysville School District, where she served one year as an assistant principal. Before that she worked in

the Puyallup School District as an administrative intern at Emerald Ridge High School. Chambers' previous experience also includes teaching special education in the Puyallup School District and at Chief Leschi Middle School. She has a bachelor's degree from Texas Woman's University, a master's degree from Eastern Washington University, and an administrative credential from Seattle Pacific University.



## Emerald Ridge High School

**Dan Hull** has been selected as one of Emerald Ridge High School's assistant principals. Hull joins the leadership team at this school after spending three years as assistant principal at Clover Park High School. Before that, he did his administrative internship at Yelm High

School. He has a bachelor's degree from Eastern Oregon University, a master's degree from City University, and principal credentials from Central Washington University.

## Rogers High School

**Mario Casello** is a new assistant principal at Rogers High School, where he served last year as an administrative intern. Casello's previous experience includes teaching at Rogers High School since 1998. The new assistant principal has his bachelor's degree from Western Washington University and his master's degree from Central Washington University.



## Rogers High School

**Brian Lowney** joins the leadership team at Rogers High School as an assistant principal. Lowney comes to Rogers after completing his administrative internship at Emerald Ridge High School. He has also taught there the past two years and served as an assistant football coach and advisor of the FBLA/DECA programs. He earned two bachelor's degrees -- one in business administration from University of Washington and another in business education from Central Washington University. He also just completed his master's degree in educational administration from University of Puget Sound.



## Puyallup High School

**Joan Forseth** has been named assistant principal at Puyallup High School. She comes from the Tacoma School District, where she was a middle and high school counselor since 1991. Her previous experience also includes teaching at the middle and high school levels in Tacoma. Forseth has a bachelor's degree from Central Washington University, a master's degree from Pacific Lutheran University, and her principal credential from Seattle Pacific University. She also is a registered nurse.



# Communities in Schools program helps students succeed

Beginning this month, first graders at Stewart Elementary School are getting extra one-on-one help from volunteer reading tutors.

Also new this year is a tobacco diversion program for youth throughout the District caught violating the State's tobacco law. Instead of paying a court fine or facing school suspension, students can become educated about the harmful effects of tobacco, complete research and writing assignments about tobacco-related issues, perform community service, and get help in kicking the habit.

Stewart's volunteer reading tutors and the District's tobacco diversion program are under way this fall thanks to Communities in Schools (CIS) of Puyallup, which officially opened its doors last May with the hiring of part-time Coordinator Kimi (Ginn) Rabun.

Rabun's hiring comes nearly a year after the program kicked off with the formation of a

local CIS board of directors of school, business, governmental, and community representatives. The board has been mapping out ways that schools and the community can partner to help students succeed.



**Kimi (Ginn) Rabun**

In addition to building community partnerships by speaking to various Puyallup area businesses, service organizations, and community groups, Rabun has applied for grants, solicited funds from local corporations, and coordinated fund-raising activities to secure needed resources to sustain programs.

Fred Meyer on River Road donated clothing to support a new dress code this year at the Phoenix middle school program, and Costco of Puyallup gave each Stewart

Elementary School student a new backpack filled with school supplies. Old Country Buffet also is providing free meal tickets and certificates of achievement as incentives for young readers in Stewart's Werlin Reading Teams (WRT) Program.

"There are a lot of good intending people who want to make a difference in kids' lives," says Rabun.

The WRT Program is designed to improve reading skills by pairing each student with a volunteer tutor. In this year's pilot program at Stewart, tutors volunteer one hour (1-2 pm) once a week on Tuesday or Wednesday and are assisted by on-site Reading Coordinator Susan Whipple. The plan is to expand the program next year to include grade two, then add grade three the following year.

The other program Rabun helped launch this fall is Tobacco Intervention, Education, and Support (TIES). Students can

select a diversion-based program in lieu of suspension or a court citation fine. Called a "Fix-it" ticket, it is hoped the program gives youth more information about the health dangers of tobacco products and enables them to begin to make healthier choices, says TIES Coordinator Mark Thomas.

Rabun has had close ties with the Puyallup School District since 1998 when she began offering a variety of diversity services. As owner of an educational services company that provides diversity-focused programs and training, Rabun has given staff trainings and cultural tours focusing on diversity and done storytelling about celebrating differences.

While CIS of Puyallup pays Rabun's salary, the School District provides her office space on the second floor of the Education Service Center.

*For more information on Communities in Schools, contact Rabun by phone 840-8917 or email [krabun@puyallup.k12.wa.us](mailto:krabun@puyallup.k12.wa.us)*

## Avanza preschoolers design glass butterfly mosaic

A colorful glass butterfly mosaic designed by preschool children and a local artist is a new addition this year on the outside entry to the Avanza program's portable classroom housed on the Zeiger Elementary School campus.

Zeiger Principal Brian Fox was on hand for last month's dedication ceremony marked with smiles and laughter from the children. The mosaic is clearly visible to elementary students who exit the west side of the Zeiger building to go to and from classes in the row of portables that end with the Avanza program. Avanza, which means moving forward, is one of the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Programs (ECEAP) under the umbrella of Pierce County Community Action, Child, and Family Services.

The 4 x 4 foot mosaic, made from recycled glass pieces and smooth glass beads, contains images of children on a rainbow bridge, the words "Vamos Adelante," or going forward in Spanish, 2002 for the year it was made, and a variety of colorful designs mixed throughout. Preschoolers received help on the project from Mauricio

Robalino, an approved artist through the Washington State Arts Commission. The mural was funded with a grant from the Pierce County Arts Commission Artist in Residence program.

"We are very excited to have had Mauricio, who is also bilingual and such a positive role model for our children," says Carlota Sontoyo-Goodman, Avanza teacher and family support specialist. She says the artist spoke both English and Spanish to the children last spring as he taught them to make pencil sketches of the design, then glue the glass pieces onto the wood board.

Many of the preschoolers are born in Mexico, she says, then come to the United States in their early years with little or no English skills. "They are like the butterfly emerging into a new life here," says Sontoyo-Goodman.

Avanza's mission, she says, is to preserve the language and culture of Hispanic children during their immersion into a new culture. The 12-year-old program serves 18 preschoolers from the Puyallup and Sumner areas from late August through late May.



**(Left to right): Top row: Artist in Residence Mauricio Robalino, MiaAmada Iraheta, Leslie Sotelo, and Grecia Gonzales. Bottom row: Miguel Morales, Mario Fierro, and Manuel Ochoa.**

# District runs out of room to add more portable classrooms

*This is the fourth in a series of articles on the student housing situation in the Puyallup School District.*

Sixth grader Devin Edwards' favorite part of the school day is learning math. Her least favorite time — at least on rainy days — is lunch. This is Devin's fourth year in a row being housed in a portable classroom at Pope Elementary School, and she says it's a challenge keeping the food from getting soggy when carrying trays to and from the lunch line on wet days.

As one of the District's largest elementary schools with nearly 800 students, Pope — like its neighboring schools that have surging enrollment — relies on using portable classrooms to create space for the overflow of students from the main building. More than 300 students, for example, are housed in portables this year at Pope, however school records show few of them spend more than two of their seven elementary school years in the outdoor units.

For years portables have been used to create more classroom space at nearly each of Puyallup's 31 elementary and secondary schools. Now, however, District officials say they have run out of room to



**Pope Elementary School students carry their lunch trays back to their portable classroom (from left): Melissa Quintana, Brianne Mitchell, and Kayla Reynolds.**

add units at schools in high-growth areas that need them the most. In some cases sewer or drainfields can't support the additional stress. In others, adding more students would exceed the main building's capacity to support them in areas such as restrooms, plumbing, and the gymnasium. And in still others, playground space

would be cut back or entirely replaced with the additional structures.

"It's easy for people to simply say add more portables, but the fact is, we are limited in what we can do," says Rudy Fyles, director of facilities. Puyallup has 205 portable classrooms, and about 20

percent of the District's 20,000 students — one in five — are housed in the detached units. Portables are about the same size as regular 900-square-foot classrooms, and most have modern features such as cooling systems, carpeting, and cabinets.

More than half of the District's portables have been installed in the past decade, and Puyallup leads the way and, in some cases, has double the number of portables compared to neighboring school districts with similar enrollment.

That, says Fyles, "is testament to the growth that this District has experienced in recent years and is projected to continue over the next 10 years."

With little or no space left to add portables to schools that are at or over capacity, a 42-member committee that has been meeting since last spring is looking at other ways to create more room for students through at least 2006.

The Student Housing Task Force expects to have a proposal to the School Board by the end of next month. New school construction has not been an option in recent years as voters rejected a bond proposal in 2001.

## Junior High "Builders Club" beautifies school, community



**Ferrucci Junior High School student Jessica Henning prepares to plant a shrub with the help of Bruce Tilley, owner of The Garden of Eden Nursery.**

A small group of dedicated students and teachers gathered in front of Ferrucci Junior High School in August with one goal in mind — to beautify their school. "We want to make the school more welcoming for the new students," says ninth grader Tera Scott.

The new "Builders Club," which began meeting over summer, was inspired by an idea from Terry Knowles, teacher and Cougar Club advisor. "I wanted to have a service club at the junior high level that anyone could belong to," says Knowles. From that suggestion, four students began meeting to discuss projects that would improve their school and the community.

As one of their first projects, the club decided to replace some unsightly trees planted in five concrete planters in front of the school's

entrance. "The trees are the first thing people see when they come to our school," says Nicole Russell. "They really don't make a good first impression."

Having no particular skill in the area of replanting, the group turned to Bruce Tilley, owner of The Garden of Eden Nursery in Puyallup. Tilley donated five Old Gold Junipers to the project and lent an hour of his time in August to advise the group on the planting and upkeep of the shrubs and some white accent flowers.

Ferrucci Principal Mark Vetter says, "I'm excited that our Ferrucci students will have the opportunity to learn and grow from this experience. The entire community benefits from the Builders Club, but more importantly, students are learning valuable lessons of citizenship and caring."

## Ridgecrest hosts summer reading camp

A group of Ridgecrest Elementary School students had an opportunity to attend a summer reading camp thanks to a grant by the Exxon Corporation.

The goal of the grant program was to motivate and encourage a select group of students to keep reading to maintain their skills over the summer. The 20 students who attended two evenings a week for two weeks had an opportunity to read aloud, have story time and snack, and do writing and art activities.

Books were available for checkout, and children were encouraged to participate in a two-part homework plan. This included daily reading time to and/or with a parent, as well as spending time working on an individualized homework assignment. Gift certificates were awarded to children who had accumulated the greatest number of homework points.

Staff gave pretests and post-tests to the children, and gains were "good to significant," says Barbara Frye, one of the camp teachers. "Staff and parents are encouraged by the commitment and enthusiasm demonstrated by all."

## Elizabeth Wesley Award Winners



Nine high school students from the Puyallup School District have been named winners of this year's Elizabeth Wesley Youth Merit Incentive Award for their achievements during the 2001-2002 school year. The Elizabeth Wesley Youth Merit Incentive Award Committee recruits and identifies African American students with academic and leadership potential and recognizes them for their academic achievement and community service. Students were honored along with those selected from other area school districts during an awards celebration last month in Tacoma. The nine winners are (photo on left): Emerald Ridge High School winners (back row, from left), Ponce Durr Jr. and Zachariah Franklin (front row), Niecy Moore, Brianna Appia, Lawrence Smith, and Nicolle Tonasket. (Photo on right, from left to right): Puyallup High School winner Justin Terry, and Rogers High School winners Lauren Parris and Ryon Addison.

## Schools install new play structures

Students at Mountain View, Ridgecrest, Karshner, Sunrise, and Stewart elementary schools are enjoying new playground equipment this fall thanks to fund-raising efforts by their buildings' parent teacher associations.

At Ridgecrest Elementary School, more than 25 people, including teachers, parents, and community volunteers, worked this summer to complete the first phase of a new play structure. The double slide and interactive climbing area replaces an old, wooden play structure. The PTA held a read-a-thon to help raise money for the project, expected to be completed this spring.

Stewart Elementary School students also had the chance last month to begin climbing on their new play structure. The school held an auction, collected donations by doing gift

wrapping at Borders Books, and sold engraved bricks that run between the shared entry of the new school and Karshner Museum.

Last year's outgoing sixth grade class also held a car wash to help purchase a piece of the Stewart Elementary equipment, and several businesses and private donors contributed.

Brick inscriptions will continue to be sold through December as plans are to also add a kindergarten play structure at the new school. Price for Stewart families and community members is \$30 for the first line of the brick, \$5 for the second line. Business prices are \$50 for the first line, \$5 for the second line. Brick inscriptions can be purchased by contacting the school at (253) 841-8743.



Ridgecrest Elementary School staff and parent volunteers help assemble a new play structure over the summer.