



YOUR EVERGREEN SCHOOLS

April 2011
Vol. 35 No. 3



Evergreen Public Schools

RESPONSIBLE USE OF RESOURCES

EPA names Evergreen Public Schools 2011 ENERGY STAR® Partner of the Year

Evergreen receives honor second year in a row



Excellence in Energy Savings: (L-R) Evergreen Public Schools Energy Conservation Manager Dave Cone and Board of Directors' member Joan Skelton with ENERGY STAR Commercial and Industrial Branch Director Jean Lupinacci at the award ceremony for ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year.

efficiencies. From the beginning of the energy conservation program in November 2008 through the most current reports in January 2011, the district has saved an incredible \$3.35 million. In 2010 alone the district saved \$1.6 million.

“Working in partnership with ENERGY STAR

to manage our energy use is just good business,” said Dave Cone, Resource Conservation Manager for Evergreen

Public Schools. “By increasing our energy efficiency, we use resources wisely, save money on our energy bills, and reduce our carbon footprint. We look forward to seeing additional savings and efficiencies as we continue to examine all areas of energy use.”

For the second straight year, Evergreen Public Schools has been recognized for its efforts and has been named a 2011 ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for outstanding energy management and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. An ENERGY STAR partner since February 2009, the district has been honored for strategic energy management and a commitment

to save energy across its entire operation, resulting in significant energy and financial savings. Evergreen Public Schools is one of only two K-12 school districts in the country to be recognized with the Partner of the Year award. District representatives received the award at the annual ENERGY STAR award ceremony on April 12 in Washington D.C.

In addition to monetary savings, the award selection committee noted Evergreen’s continued reduction in energy usage district-wide, the additional ENERGY STAR certification of four schools (Heritage High School, Pacific and Frontier Middle Schools and Ellsworth Elementary School), and the district-

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Evergreen continues to see savings in the millions from its work to save energy and increase

21ST CENTURY EDUCATION

Robots secure grant for Burton Elementary

Burton Elementary School teacher Tony Ayala uses a robotics competition to launch successful campaign for a Washington STEM grant

Robotics started as an after school program at Burton Elementary School last year with 10 students led by teacher Tony Ayala. That group used two LEGO robotics kits to compete against several elementary and middle school teams in the 2010 FIRST LEGO League event at Salmon Creek Elementary School in Vancouver.

“We had to design a robot that would fix a heart valve,” explained fifth grader Rick Dyer. “Then we had to have the robot fix a broken leg and kick a soccer ball.” The LEGO kits come complete with motors and sensors, allowing students to design and program working robots to do a number of tasks.

The team from Burton won first place in the Best Robot Design category. That

got Ayala thinking about ways to expand the program.

Ayala said an opportunity presented itself at just the right time. “About the time we finished the FIRST LEGO League, I found out that the Washington STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) grant was opening. We ended up winning a one year grant.” The

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Robots Rule: Teachers Tony Ayala and Jeff Reed with students from Burton Elementary’s robotics club have been awarded a Washington STEM grant.

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ECRWSS
RESIDENTIAL PATRON

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Good news, bad news about district's budget continues to play out in Evergreen Public Schools



John Deeder
Superintendent

Have you heard the saying – I've got some good news and some bad news? Well, I've got some good news, some bad news, and suggestions on how you can help shape the news.

First the good news. Recently The U.S. Environmental

Protection Agency (EPA) named Evergreen Public Schools as a 2011 ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year for outstanding energy management and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. This is the second year in a row that we have been honored (see article on page 1.) This award represents more than \$3.35 million saved in energy costs since 2009. It is important to us that we use our resources wisely and by effectively managing our energy use, we are also having a positive impact on our bottom line.

The bad news is the district once again has to reduce our annual budget by millions of dollars due to severe cuts from the state. As of this writing, that number could be anywhere between \$13 and \$18 million. This is on top of the \$16 million we have already slashed over the past three years. For detailed information about

the proposed budget cuts, please visit the district web site at www.evergreenps.org.

During the month of March, the district held a series of community forums and a webcast to share the potential cuts and gather input from parents, students and staff about their priorities. I would like to thank all who came out to hear first hand what we are up against in regards to next year's budget. The forums were well attended and I believe provided the opportunity for all who wished to address the school board and me to do so.

While many of the attendees were passionate about particular programs or services under consideration for elimination or reduction, I was extremely pleased by the decorum and civility demonstrated by the close to 800 people who came out to listen and speak to the issues.

During the school district's presentation of where we have made cuts to date and what we are considering for next year, the audience was attentive and respectful. When it came time for questions and comments, the testimonials were well organized, with all speakers clearly stating their point of view. Whether sharing heartfelt stories of how a staff member has made a difference in the life of a student or questions as to why some programs aren't on the list to be cut – there was no heckling or arguing. I believe all who wished to speak were given the opportunity to be heard.

As I have told every audience I have spoken to about our budget, there isn't one thing on the list of cuts that I want to see eliminated. However, the bottom line is cuts are necessary because of the declining support from the state and the governor and legislature's inability to carry out their constitutional mandate to fully fund basic education. With the cuts to public education that are being proposed in Olympia, we can no longer afford to do everything we have done in the past – we just don't have the funds.

Here's how you can help shape the news. Follow closely what is happening on a state and national level in regards to funding for education. Ask questions and write or call your elected officials to let them know how you want them to vote on specific bills and items in the proposed budget. School districts across the state are being forced to make cuts that are not good for our students. We need to all work together to find solutions to the current economic crisis that is having a profound impact on our schools.

I am proud to live and work in a community that so strongly supports education. No matter what the final budget is, your Evergreen Public Schools' Board of Directors and I promise that we will continue to give our students the best education we can afford to give and that we will provide them with the skills necessary to be world-competitive upon graduation.

21ST CENTURY EDUCATION

Shahala Middle School students sweep the BPA Regional Science Bowl competition

Knowledge, speed and strategy. Those are the three key components the winning team from Shahala Middle School credit for their first place win at the Bonneville Power Association (BPA) Regional Science Bowl competition. Eighth grade students Peter Lu, Eric Hou, Daniel Rodricks, Victor Chang and Ming Liu are the first students from Evergreen Public Schools to travel to the National Science Bowl competition in Washington D.C.

The Shahala team won all of their initial round robin matches and then headed straight into the elimination rounds and never stopped winning, said coach James Cantonwine.

Cantonwine said a significant factor in the win was based upon the students' high percentage of correct answers on bonus questions. They almost never got one wrong, and each bonus question was worth 10 points instead of four. Despite the emphasis on individual knowledge, the students are quick to give credit to one another. "We all sort of have our areas of strength," said Liu. "We're all good at physics and math, Daniel is good at earth and physical science, Peter is the captain of the team and Victor is really fast at the buzzer."

The Science Bowl is administered in a 20 minute match format. Students buzz in and answer questions about various science topics covering everything from life science and biology to earth science and physics. At the end of the match, there is a bonus question, which is the only question that students are allowed to collaborate on. Lu said much of their winning strategy this year had to do with Chang's speed on the buzzer and Rodricks agreed. "It's better to be fast on the buzzer and ring in, even if you're not sure of the answer," he said. On average the students estimate they met to practice once a week for an hour, most of their knowledge base was already there because of their natural interest in the topics.

That combination of knowledge and speed beat out 56 other teams, many who came from the best private and charter middle schools in Oregon and Washington. "Some of our stiffest competitors were teams from the International School of Beaverton or the Summa pull-out school in Beaverton," said Cantonwine. "Those are all students who were being bussed in. None of the students on our teams were on

boundary exceptions or coming from another area, so it was great to have a public, neighborhood school make such a strong showing."

The Shahala team also has a high level of trust in one another's knowledge, enabling their strategy of quick buzz ins. "That emphasis on teamwork in competition is one of the best side benefits for the students," said Cantonwine. "These are very intelligent students who not only get an opportunity to show off what they know, but who are learning to work together and trust their teammates' knowledge. Utilizing one another's skills and counting on one another is important for life success, not just winning competitions."

Hou agreed, "Several of us have been in chess club and really enjoy competition, but in Science Bowl you really learn to respect your opponents and have great teamwork skills."



Science Bowl Sweep: Shahala Middle School students show off their trophy and banner after sweeping the competition at the Regional Science Bowl. They (and coach James Cantonwine) will travel to Washington D.C. to compete against more than 100 teams in the national competition.

The students hope that teamwork will pay off when they travel to Washington D.C. later this month for the national competition. The national competition will include more than 100 teams from across the country and, in addition to the Science Bowl matches, will require students to build a fuel cell car that runs on hydrogen. They also hope to see either President Obama or the First Lady, who read the bonus question at last year's competition.

Learn more about the competition by visiting: <http://www.energy.gov/sciencetech/sciencebowl.htm>

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Samantha Cahill honored with George C. Marshall Youth Leadership Award

Union High School senior encompasses humble leadership, academic excellence and athletic prowess



Humble Leader: 2011 George C. Marshall Youth Leadership Award winner Samantha Cahill with Vancouver Mayor Timothy D. Leavitt at the award ceremony. The Union High School senior is an AP Scholar with Distinction, captain of the varsity volleyball team and a member of the Clark County Youth Commission.

It would be difficult to find someone more deserving of recognition than Samantha Cahill. The Union High School (UHS) senior, who was selected as the 2011 George C. Marshall Youth Leadership Award recipient, is an AP (advanced placement) Scholar with Distinction, president of

the school's Honor Society, captain of the volleyball team and has served on the Clark County Youth Commission for two years. It would also be difficult to find someone more humble and less self-promotional than Cahill, whose life is characterized with a humility that according to her nominator, Clark County Youth Commission Coordinator Elizabeth Hill, is very similar to the namesake of the award she has received.

"Much of what is celebrated and remembered about George C. Marshall is that he didn't concern himself with singing his own praises," Hill said. "He was concerned with the best possible outcome for the country or for the endeavor he was assigned to deal with. That is a very apt description of Samantha. She willingly shares leadership and never seeks the spotlight. It is all about the outcome."

Over the past two years, Hill said that Cahill has more than exemplified that type of leadership. "Samantha Cahill has shown a special kind of leadership in her work with the Clark County Youth Commission. While far from the most outspoken person in our group, Samantha is at the center of projects because she is the person who reliably shows up and does the work needed. She shows this dedication despite having one of

the busiest schedules of any youth commissioner, with multiple competing priorities including her involvement in other service organizations and her dedication to athletics. In addition to that, there is her outstanding academic performance, of which other youth commissioners were unaware until she recently revealed that she was interviewed by Harvard and Yale and has a 4.0 GPA."

Cahill was selected from 24 other nominees from 13 high schools throughout Clark County. She received her award at a ceremony at the Marshall House on March 23rd. She will receive a \$2,500 college scholarship; a \$500 paid summer internship in the Fort Vancouver National Trust office; and the opportunity to participate in Celebrate Freedom events including Flag Day, Independence Day at Fort Vancouver and the Veterans Parade.

The Marshall Youth Leadership Award was created to honor the legacy of General George C. Marshall. Marshall was U.S. Army Chief of Staff during World War II, Secretary of State under President Truman and the 1953 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate. Established in 2000, the General George C. Marshall Youth Leadership Award is presented to a Clark County high school junior or senior, who demonstrates leadership, takes a stand for the rights of others, serves as a role model, shows initiative and motivates others to become involved. This award is one of the Celebrate Freedom programs organized by the Fort Vancouver National Trust.

RESPONSIBLE USE OF RESOURCES

School finance 101

Evergreen Public Schools' budget comprised of five separate funds

As Evergreen Public Schools works through the projected 2011-12 budget shortfalls, a common question that comes up surrounds the confusion of building a new Health and BioScience Academy while the district talks of funding shortages. The quick answer is there are five funds in the district for expenditure, each with its own revenue streams, and legal authorities.

The largest fund, which receives the majority of attention is the General Fund. The General Fund is where all normal operating expenditures occur. Each student who attends Evergreen Public Schools generates revenue from the state to pay for the various services they receive throughout the school year. These funds are supplemented by the local Maintenance & Operations Levy, and categorical state and federal revenues. When you think about the day-to-day operations of a school, all expenditures for these things are in

the General Fund. It is in the General Fund that a potential shortfall of up to \$18 million could occur this next school year.

Another fund that school districts utilize is called the Capital Projects Fund. Expenditures in the Capital Projects Fund are for the acquisition of land or existing buildings, construction of buildings, purchase of equipment, making capital improvements as a result of energy audits, remodeling of existing facilities, and other Capital renewal projects such as roof replacements, carpet replacement, technology, and system replacements. The Capital Projects Fund is primarily funded through voter-approved bonds, and state-matching revenues. It can also be funded through impact fees or non-voted debt, which can be issued up to a certain percentage of the previous year's state and federal revenue divided by the district's property value. The Health and BioScience Academy is being funded

through special Federal Stimulus Bonds. These funds can only be used for legal Capital Projects, and therefore are not funds available to help with the projected General Fund budget shortfall.

The Associated Student Body (ASB) Fund is a third fund in Evergreen. Expenditures from the ASB Fund are for optional non-credit extra-curricular activities such as athletics and student clubs. The money to support the ASB Fund come from students purchase of the school ASB card, student club fundraisers, and gate receipts from sporting events. Governance of each school's ASB Fund is handled by its elected student council. However, oversight is ultimately provided by the Evergreen Public Schools' Board of Directors.

The Transportation Vehicle Fund is the fourth fund in Evergreen. This fund is exclusively for the purchase, and major repair of school buses. Districts are required to generate

local revenue either through a Transportation Vehicle Fund Levy, or by transferring money from the General Fund in order to purchase a school bus. Once the bus has been purchased, the state then provides dollars over the busses depreciation life cycle to replace the bus.

Finally, the last fund that Evergreen Public Schools operates is a Debt Service Fund. This fund is established to make payment of principal, interest, and other expenditures related to the redemption of outstanding bonds. Annually, the district gives direction to the Clark County Treasurer regarding what local Debt Service Fund needs are related to making these principal and interest payments on outstanding bonds. The authority to collect a Debt Service Fund is realized when local voters approve a bond measure. These funds can only be used for the things mentioned earlier, and cannot support a shortfall in the General Fund.

QUALITY EDUCATION

Clark County Skills Center's Construction Technology students help build elementary students' math skills

High school students teach math lessons to fifth-graders at Endeavour Elementary School



Model Home: Using a small-scale model Skills Center student Jed Powell demonstrates how to calculate the area on a wall.

Teaching volume, area, the Pythagorean Theorem and how to apply basic math in a house building process to elementary students may seem daunting, but not for three local high school students. Clark County Skills Center students Carson Dodge (Union High School), Jed Powell (Hudson's Bay High School), and Ben Nelson (Washougal High School) are building more than a house in their Construction Technology 2 class. These dedicated young men are breaking down how math fits into the process of home construction and teaching it to Toni Johnson's fifth grade class at Endeavour Elementary School.

About once a month since November, the three high school

students have created lesson plans around a mathematical concept and then taught it to the elementary students. A few weeks after each lesson, the Endeavour students visit the house construction site to see the math lesson in action. The fifth-graders have seen firsthand how math can be applied and has given the Skills Center students a valuable opportunity to learn how to explain what they're doing.

"The greatest benefit (for fifth grade students) is the real-world connection," said Johnson. "Math is a scary subject for many people and it doesn't need to be. Projects like this make it much more interesting and make students want to learn more."

Endeavour student Khristian Thomas said, "I like math, but it can be confusing at times. My favorite part is learning about the different parts of the house and then to be out there (at the building site) using the math that we've learned."

The idea was the brainchild of Skills Center teacher Lance Landis. "We wanted to link math directly with what we're doing every day to show these young students the application," he explained.

The next step was getting the right students involved. Landis identified students he knew were not only excellent students themselves, but who would function well as teachers. "The students selected

came with strong demonstrated leadership abilities. They have certainly grown throughout the year, but they had a good base to start with."

He chose well. Dodge, Powell, and Nelson have embraced the challenge wholeheartedly. "It's a good experience figuring out how to teach things," said Powell. "We ended up building a scale model with the younger students to show the house building process so they could better visualize."

"We're also good at team teaching," said Dodge. "We all bring different things to the table, and if one of us stumbles there's

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On-Site Learning: Skills Center student Carson Dodge answers questions from Endeavour Elementary School students when they visit the building site where Skills Center students are constructing a house.

21ST CENTURY EDUCATION

Five Evergreen Public Schools hosts students from Taiwan for cross-culture experience

For the sixth year in a row, Evergreen Public Schools welcomed students from Taiwan for a two week visit in the district, forging lifelong friendships between Evergreen students and their peers from across the Pacific. This year, two separate groups visited, one from the King Car Education Foundation and one from Chung Hsing Junior High School.

The Taiwanese students attended Hearthwood and Columbia Valley Elementary Schools and Cascade, Covington and Shahala Middle Schools, paying for their own meals at the schools and the transportation costs to get there. As a gift to their host schools, both groups of Taiwanese students conducted after-school culture camps at each school to teach the American students Chinese dance, yo-yo, calligraphy, basic language and music. While here, the students stayed at local hotels, but had the opportunity to see what it is like to live in an American home through a weekend homestay.

The valuable cross-cultural experience between the American and Taiwanese students is why the district and the Taiwanese organizations involved are eager to have

the program continue. As part of the district's ongoing pursuit to provide students with a world-competitive, 21st century education, nothing compares to the opportunity to forge understanding and friendship with students from another nation.

Both Hearthwood and Cascade were new to hosting exchange students, but are eager to have the Taiwanese students back in their schools. "It was a great experience for our students and staff," said Cascade Principal Gary Price. "We could not have imagined that it would go as well as it did, but our students grew very close with the Taiwanese students in the time they were here. It was a great opportunity for students from both cultures to get to know one another."

Hearthwood Principal Scott Munro added, "We saw students who do not normally participate in after-school activities happily engaged, and our all-school assembly on the first day of the Chinese New Year was a huge hit! The experiences students at Hearthwood had during the two week visit are ones everyone should enjoy at least once."



Photo courtesy of ©2011 VIDINGHOFF Photography

Taiwanese Talent: A King Car Education Foundation student demonstrates the popular ribbon dance during King Car's farewell performance. Both Taiwanese students and American students from the culture camps showcase their skills during the event.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

IQ Credit Union campus branches: Prepare students for work in financial institutions

Students at Evergreen and Union High Schools are gaining valuable experience through a partnership with IQ Credit Union, which has campus branches that help translate classroom learning to real life- and can lead to employment outside of school.

Students enrolled in the Banking and Financial Services and accounting classes get the opportunity to put their knowledge to use in a true financial setting since the campus branches are fully operational. Students work in the credit union during their lunch periods and at Evergreen, also offer a convenient room service option for teachers who need to make deposits. The campus branches also offer students and staff the convenience of a financial institution right on site.

“IQ used to be Clark County Schools Employee Credit Union and we were only for school employees,” explained Yelena Lyashevskiy, IQ Campus Branch Coordinator who oversees the six campus branch locations. “We changed to open up our membership, but schools and education are where we started. That’s where our heart is. Giving back to the community is the main reason we want to continue to support the campus branches and to keep preparing students. They gain employment skills and professionalism. It’s also a great pool for us to hire future employees. Many students get part-time jobs at IQ.”

That was the case for Evergreen High School (EHS) campus branch manager Olga Khriptyevskaya, who started working at the Evergreen branch her freshman year and was recently hired at the Clark College campus branch. The Evergreen senior was selected over many older and more experienced applicants. She credits her hiring to the skills and experience she gained at the

EHS branch. “One thing the Clark College Manager said when hiring me was that I am confident in my experience even at 17. He was also impressed by my management at the campus branch. People our age don’t have a lot to put on a resume, but working at the IQ campus branch bumps you up. This is all real experience, it’s not just pretending.”

Kim Berhow, the EHS teacher who teaches the banking and financial services classes said that the experience of meaningful work is what sets this program apart. “I feel strongly that the majority of the students that come out of our program, I would recommend for a job because of what they’ve learned. They are processing real transactions and answering questions, all while using the highest standards of professionalism and teamwork. Students know that and feel confident because they’re trained. I want to train students to be someone I would want to hire.”

Training students who could be hired for a job outside of the campus branch is one of the most important pieces of the program for both Berhow and EHS staff assistant Carolyn Osten (who opens the credit union in the mornings, verifies cash drawers and oversees the students). Berhow is a certified public accountant and Osten’s background is in financial services. “The important things I stress are their (students;) demeanors when greeting and waiting on members,” said Osten. “How professional they are. The importance of accuracy



Class to Career: Student Olga Khriptyevskaya smiles at the teller window of the IQ Credit Union Campus Branch at Evergreen High School (EHS). Khriptyevskaya, who is manager of the EHS branch, was recently hired to work at the Clark College IQ Credit Union branch based on her campus branch experience.

and doing the right thing all the time. And of course confidentiality, especially with teachers who they know personally who are bringing in transactions. I tell them, when they go out in the working world the expectations are very high.”

Those lessons are the ones that Khriptyevskaya has successfully taken to heart. “It’s a whole new level of understanding when you’re looking at confidentiality in real life transactions. We can study it (confidentiality) and say don’t ever do this, but until you pull something up yourself and see things, you don’t understand what it’s like to see a live person’s information. I don’t remember or talk about anyone’s information because I don’t want anyone talking about my accounts. When you experience it firsthand, you realize what you need to do to keep confidence and be a professional.”

QUALITY EDUCATION

Pacific Middle School: Where everyone belongs

Eighth grade students are taking the initiative to help ease the transition from elementary school to middle school



We Belong Together: A Pacific Web Leader gets to know a group of incoming sixth grade students during orientation activities on the first day of school.

For many students, the transition from elementary school to middle school can be a difficult one. There’s a big difference between fifth and sixth grade, but counselors at Pacific Middle School have found a way to help ease that transition.

Each year, between 70 and 80 eighth grade students are given two days of training before being paired with groups of incoming sixth graders.

That training includes learning orientation games and activities, preparing welcome packets and talking about what was difficult about the transition from elementary to middle school.

These eighth grade students are called WEB (Where Everyone Belongs) Leaders.

The program was first designed by the California-based Boomerang Project, a consortium of educational coaches and

trainers. The group provides support for middle and high school transition programs to more than 2,000 schools worldwide.

Pacific Middle School counselors Rene Corbin, Ruth Bigback and Michelle Miller have all attended training sessions for the program and implemented it with great success at their school.

Older students take younger charges under their wings, showing them around the school and giving them a friendly face in a larger school environment.

“We spend time sorting the incoming students into small groups and then assigning two WEB leaders to them. Those eighth graders contact each of the kids in their group before the first day at school,” said Corbin. “I know that a lot of them

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21ST CENTURY EDUCATION

Evergreen High School's credit recovery program "Ignites" students passion to graduate



Successful Recovery: Evergreen High School teacher Robert Balmer leads a senior English class for students in the school's credit recovery program, Ignite. Balmer estimates that of the 30 seniors enrolled in Ignite, up to 25 will successfully graduate on time.

Evergreen High School (EHS) student Caycee Griggs started his senior year 12 credits short of on-time graduation. When asked how he felt that far behind, he said, "I just didn't think school was that important and I've never liked to ask for help."

That's a common situation for students who fall behind or drop out before graduation. Students can also get behind due to a medical condition, family turmoil, or poor personal choices. Before they know it, they have only a year or two left in high school and are looking at either staying in school for an additional year or just giving up and dropping out. However, through

the Ignite Program, EHS is trying to get these students back on track to graduation before they drop out.

Ignite is the credit recovery program at Evergreen High School. Open to juniors and seniors, it offers students an opportunity to make up class credits through a combination of traditional classes and online courses through the Aventa system.

Ignite students begin the school day later than students in traditional classes. They attend a couple of classes during the day and when school lets out, spend time in the computer lab working on online classes. Each online class is worth half a credit. Students also attend

classes taught by Ignite teachers Robert Balmer and Anne Rogge.

Balmer explained, "Typically the students here have to overcome obstacles and there are responsibilities that make it hard to get to school. Students enter the year with 'I'll never graduate,' but by the end of the year, if they work hard, they realize they can make it back from falling behind."

Though the program has only been in place for four years, the numbers support that the model is working. Out of 30 students in Balmer's class this year, six have already rejoined the traditional school model and are likely to graduate. Out of the total 30, he estimated that between 22-25 will graduate at the end of the year. A success, considering where these students were at the start of the year.

The goals behind Ignite aren't just about graduation. Students are not just earning credits, but learning skills that will serve them long-term, explained Rogge. "We're less focused on seat time and more focused on skills and meeting standards. Once students reach a standard, they can move on to something else. We've found that these students do well in a small environment where they're not moving between classes every period and the instruction is more tailored to their individual learning.

The more comfortable they feel, the more willing they are to ask for help when they need it, which is something they will need to know how to do when they move on to post-secondary pursuits."

That is certainly the case for Griggs. "What is different for me about Ignite is the fact that it's not a classroom full of people you don't know, so you're not afraid to ask questions or get help. The teachers are really helpful. They all know people individually, it's easy to ask them questions and get help. Whatever you need they're there for you."

Though his initial goal was to get enough credits for a Washington certificate, now that he has progressed through the program, Griggs' new goal is to walk at graduation.

Balmer said getting students to take ownership of their education is key to the program's success. "The most important part is getting students to buy into the fact that education is important and we are an important resource for them. You can fall behind, but if you work hard, you can get what you want. My goal is to give students skills that will help them move on."

As Griggs stated, "Part of the graduation requirements are to write about how you've changed and how high school has helped. I wrote about Ignite."

WEB Leaders

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stay in contact with the sixth graders over the phone, by text or by email throughout the year."

For the eighth grade students at Pacific, being a WEB Leader is an honor. "When I was a sixth grader I had a WEB Leader," said one student. "She really helped me feel comfortable and I wanted to give that same feeling to incoming students. That's why I'm a WEB Leader."

The honor of being a WEB Leader is hard won, thanks to an application process that includes a written essay, recommendations and staff feedback. For the 2010-2011 school year, Corbin said 120 applications were submitted, but only 80 students were selected for the program.

The success of leadership programs can be difficult to

measure, but that's not the case with Pacific's WEB program. Since the 2006-2007 school year, when the WEB program began, though the school's number of students on free and reduced lunch has risen consistently, the number of students with multiple unexcused absences, behavioral problems or failing grades has gone down.

Corbin called that a 180-degree turnaround.

WEB is a great program, Corbin added, but one that needs funding. Each year, she completes grant applications for money to cover things like t-shirts, snacks and water for orientation day, and costs for WEB socials. She said that, despite potential cuts, plans are moving ahead for opening up the application process to seventh graders who want to be WEB Leaders in 2011-2012.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Sam I Am: First grade students, parents and staff at the district's elementary schools received a special treat the first week of March. In celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday and Read Across America week, Beaches Restaurant provided free Green Eggs & Ham breakfasts and gift certificates at each school. The Evergreen School District Foundation supported the efforts with a free book for each first grader to take home with them. Staff and parents added to the fun by dressing up as the iconic Cat in the Hat.

MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD

In budget discussions, community input does make a difference



Joan Skelton
School Board Member

We want to thank those of you who attended our community budget forums, sent emails, and testified at our board meetings regarding

the upcoming budget cuts which are the result of our state's fiscal shortfall. Your opinions are very important to us, and we listen, read, and take to heart everything you say.

Unfortunately, as of this writing, our state legislators have not yet settled on the 2012-2013 budget so we're not able to report what the district's cuts will be for the coming year. I can say that in the past few years we have reduced district staff by 40 percent with more

cuts coming this year. Work hours were shortened for many, wages frozen and decreased, and many classified staff experienced layoffs. We've refinanced bonds resulting in \$4 million savings directly to the taxpayer, reduced over \$3 million in energy costs, and increased efficiency by restructuring how we use staff.

Through all of this, we continue to monitor our areas of importance: protect the classroom, improve instruction through professional development, maintain our facilities, and ensure the safety and security of our students and staff.

Please visit our website at www.evergreenps.org to review the specifics of what we've done so far, what we are looking at currently, and how we compare to eight of the larger districts in the state in fiscal management.

We are trying to be as transparent as possible and continue to invite your comments and suggestions. Your participation does make a difference.

QUALITY EDUCATION



Riverview Represented: Riverview Elementary School physical education teacher Alice Atha was chosen to teach for ten days at the American International School in Nigeria, Africa. The American International School of Lagos (AIS) is a private school with American curriculum for roughly 600 pre-K through 12th grade students representing 40 different countries. Through a long-standing partnership with Tacoma Public Schools, Washington teachers are periodically chosen by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to spend time at the school. Atha, who had worked as a consultant with the OSPI Health and Fitness Cadre, was uniquely experienced for a trip like this one. Atha spent several weeks in 2004 teaching in Taiwan.

STEM

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grant was worth \$8,676.

Grants from the Washington STEM fund come from a variety of sources including Microsoft, Boeing and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The group has doled out \$2.4 million in grants and hopes to push that number to \$100 million over the next decade. Long term, companies backing the grants hope to attract the interest of young people to potentially lucrative STEM careers in the future.

2011 marks the first year that these grants have been awarded, with the goal of generating more interactive STEM lessons for students.

"We're now able to have 14 of the LEGO

robotics kits," said Ayala. "That means we'll have 52 students involved." The program is now an everyday part of the classes taught by Ayala and fellow teacher Jeff Reed, something students say is great. "It's a lot more fun than the work some of our friends are doing in other classes," said Aiden Nellor. "Building robots and making them do stuff is really cool."

Grant winners like Ayala have been asked to help inform more teachers about the program. "We were given a video camera to use for promoting the grant and the way we're using the money. The website just went live and we've already posted some footage of the robotics

class and the way we're integrating the STEM technology," said Ayala.

The grant expires in January of 2012 and by then students from the original Burton robotics team will have moved to either Cascade or Pacific Middle Schools. Fortunately, opportunities exist for them to continue working with robots over the next several years since Cascade has a robotics program with four teams and Pacific is considering an after school program for interested students. For those interested in continuing on further, both schools feed into Evergreen High School which also has an award-winning robotics program in place.

YOUR EVERGREEN SCHOOLS

April 2011, Vol. 35, No. 3
Evergreen Public Schools

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USPS (004 726) is published four times a year by the Community Relations Office, Evergreen School District #114, P.O. Box 8910, Vancouver, WA 98668-8910. Periodicals postage is paid at Vancouver, WA.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
Your Evergreen Schools, P.O. Box 8910, Vancouver, WA 98668-8910.

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Evergreen Public Schools



Pursuit of innovation, collaboration and equity garner \$3,000 for Heritage High School teacher

Lee Emmert honored for excellence and innovation in the arts

In Lee Emmert's classroom, music is playing, there are no florescent lights and photographs cover the wall like graphic wallpaper. A professional photojournalist by trade - he has been published in Forbes and Time Magazine - Emmert is also the photography teacher at Heritage High School (HHS). He wants his students to get as close to a real world experience as possible when working on photos and multimedia projects. In the creative world, no one likes working under florescent lighting.

Meaning and connection are key to what Emmert is trying to accomplish with his students. In pursuit of real world experience for students, Emmert was inspired to create the Immune Project, an interactive website that features weekly photo stories created by either well-known photographers, or college students from an advanced photojournalism class he teaches at University of Oregon (UofO) in Eugene. Each week, a photographer posts a photo story and Emmert posts questions for the photographer that allow high school students to dialogue with the photographer via comments. "It connects famous photographers with college students and connects both those groups with high school students," he said. "It's about connection and learning from those in the real world."

Embracing a meaningful creative process has paid off; Emmert won a \$3,000 award for excellence and innovation in the arts, for Immune.

He was one of only four teachers in the country to receive this honor from the College Board -which administers the Advanced Placement (AP) program- at the national conference in San Francisco.

When asked how he conceived the idea to connect students and professional photojournalists, he said, "My goal for my students is to break down barriers between school and life. Creating Immune seemed easier than not doing it. As a published professional, I knew I would have access to these people and I believe that not everything should just come from me."

In addition to creating a class where students can learn to take photos or create multimedia projects, he's focused on giving them ways to share that work and collaborate with others outside of the class.

"This is my third year teaching and last year was the first AP photography class and this year we started a multimedia class and the multimedia website, Howl Heritage," said Emmert, explaining how the class has grown. "We're modeling it off of programs like "This American Life" and "Radio Lab." I think it's strange to have students creating content just for content's sake. That's where Howl Heritage comes in."

Howl Heritage showcases student work in not only photography and multimedia, but also student produced fiction, nonfiction and video work. "What the Immune site has done is shown that photography

isn't just one thing," explained Emmert. "You can't succeed just because you're good at one thing. The photographers that I interview speak multiple languages and create documentaries that highlight their breadth of knowledge on a topic. The Howl Heritage site gives our students an outlet to practice that themselves."

Emmert plans to use the award money to continue his efforts to encourage creativity and open up access for students. "It has disturbed me as a teacher that some students have access to personal cameras and some don't. The ones who do have them can do a lot of fun stuff off-site, whereas those who don't have to use the school cameras which can only be used at HHS. I plan to use the award money to help level the playing field and purchase some loaner cameras that students can take off-site."

Despite his own professional achievements, when asked what his proudest accomplishments have been during his time teaching, Emmert lists the exposure and accomplishments of his students as the high points. "My first year of AP Photography class, 90 percent of the students who took the AP test passed," he said. "Then there was the Adobe International photo competition and of the 17 winners selected worldwide, eight of those were students from my class. They now have their work published and touring a book. I'm proud to be a part of giving them that experience. The things that students do should be publicized and by the time they leave

this class, I want them to have more than a grade, I want them to have a chance to take their body of work with them."



Students teach math lessons

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someone else to step in. Jed is strong in talking to the students and getting them excited, Ben is very educated about construction, he knows everything and I like the hands on work with the students."

Landis said that all of the soft skills- teamwork, communication and leadership are vital to the success of the Skills Center model. Not only are the older students demonstrating real world math for the younger students, they're showing them how they need to behave to be successful in a working environment. For Dodge, the teaching component feels like a natural part of the Skills Center education. "It's a good experience to actually be a teacher and learn what you have to do to be one. This felt just like the Skills Center model of going into a profession, like having a career in construction

and then coming back to teach it. It's a chance to spread the knowledge."

Nelson agreed that the most rewarding part has been to see elementary school students learn. "I've really liked being able to teach the kids math that they can apply in the real world and to see how it all comes together for them when they come out to the job site. To finally see that they understand how they use math is the best part."

Landis plans to continue the program next year with another class if possible.

"When it's students teaching students there's a connection you cannot duplicate as an adult teaching students," said Landis. "A teacher telling students how things will be in the world is different than a student relating how it has been for them."

ENERGY STAR

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wide commitment from staff and students to promote and implement energy saving measures.

"Evergreen Public Schools' robust energy management program is a national model, demonstrating how to fight climate change through energy efficiency," said Elizabeth Craig, Acting Director of EPA's Office of Atmospheric Programs. "Effective energy management not only helps the bottom line, but it also is our most cost-effective climate strategy."

Across the United States, top companies and organizations are continuing to promote strategic energy management through participation in ENERGY STAR. The district is in good company, other award recipients included: Pella, Boeing, Panasonic, Sears, Samsung Electronics, Staples and the Cleveland Clinic.