

Elementary Board Report

A Paws-itive Learning Community Striving to Meet the Individual Needs of Each Student as a Whole Child

Our theme for the month of January is self-reflection. The following reflects on a bit of what has been happening:

Landscaping with Lincoln

Our landscaping club has gotten off to a great start. Landscape leadership and landscape club members worked hard in December to plan a design and plant dozens of crocus, hyacinths, daffodils, and tulip bulbs at the front of the main building. Though the weather did not make students' efforts easy, students persevered and we should have a wonderful flower show in the spring.



Our landscape leadership team has already started work in January. They have walked the elementary campus looking for opportunities to improve the grounds for our learning community. A list of potential projects was created and students voted on the top projects for the remainder of the school year. The top three projects we will be working on are to develop picnic tables on the field side, plan and plant fruit trees on the field side, and revitalize the grassy area between the music portable and gym with a fence, hedges, wood chips, and/or plants. Our next landscape leadership meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 27, to develop plans for moving forward on these projects. I look forward to experiencing all that the landscape club develops.

MAP Testing and Assessments

You may have heard about students participating in MAP testing this school year and wondered what that was. We are always looking for the best ways to learn more about how our students are learning. Assessments can help us to diagnose and realize students' learning strengths and areas for improvement so that we may more effectively support them in their learning. Also as a targeted assistance Title 1 school, we are required to "rank" all students in grade levels served using Title 1 funding. This means we need to identify students that are most in need of math or reading support and serve them with A.C.E. (Accelerated Club for Education) team support. Students complete MAP testing on Chromebooks, in areas of math and reading in the fall, winter, and spring.

As you might imagine, we need to find out where our students are in their learning, while striving to focus the vast majority of our efforts on learning with minimal time assessing. In the past, we have utilized such assessments as DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills) and other fluency assessments with reading and common assessments for math. The Smarter Balanced Assessment required by the state for grades three through five is given during spring and gives us very limited feedback the following fall. Our kindergarten teachers have started using WaKids to assess our kindergarteners, as required by the state.

Our hope for the future is to be able to limit our assessments (other than the state required Smarter Balanced Assessment) to MAP testing and possibly a common reading and/or math assessment at each grade level (targeted assistance Title 1 schools are required to "rank" students using multiple measurements). Our work with the MAP and other assessments is helping us to learn and make effective choices on how we might better support our students in their learning for the future.

Elementary Showcase

We are excited to have the opportunity to share a little about some of the exciting things going on at the elementary this school year. Four of our efforts that we are choosing to share at the showcase are connected to our mid-summer opportunity to become a five-day-kindergarten school. They are listed below with our staff who will be sharing.

-Five-Day-Kindergarten –Three of our kindergarten teachers, Colleen Johnson, Shawna Corl, and Lisa Graham will be sharing about the move to five-day-kindergarten, WaKids, Kindy Cub Nights, and Kindy Cub Camp

-Art Specialist –Andrea Lewis (our new art specialist, kindergarten p.e. teacher and A.C.E. teacher) and Kelly Sullivan (A.C.E. paraeducator and art specialist paraeducator) will be sharing about our redesigned art specialist program.

-MAP Assessment –Jeremy Kidd (our new associate principal) and Colleen Wing (A.C.E. teacher) will be sharing about our new efforts to utilize MAP assessments to support our first through fifth grade students in their learning.

-MTSS –Lisa Bires (our school psychologist) will be sharing about recent efforts with MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support).

Similar to showcases in recent years, we will be sharing in a more elementary fashion. Board and audience members will visit each of four stations for six minutes each. We hope you enjoy and learn a little more about what has been happening with the elementary learning community this school year.

Community Member(s) of Mystery

Our January Community Member of Mystery has been on our PTO board this and last school year and also works as a para-educator. Students may see her in the cafeteria at lunch. She grew up and attended private school in Silverton, OR. Her hope is to become a kindergarten teacher in the future. She is married to Bryan, who has worked as a commercial plumber for 25 years. Together they have two children, a son who is a sophomore at La Center High School, and a second grade daughter at La Center Elementary. They would like to become foster parents when their children are older. Like many parents, she and Bryan enjoy watching their children participate in soccer and basketball. They also enjoy going camping at least twice a month to different places like Mt. St. Helens and the beach. She and her family also like to rescue dogs. They have rescued two dogs so far, helping them get healthy and then find a new family. Their dog Lily, a boxer, also helps out when rescuing dogs. Who do you think our January Community Member of Mystery is?

Our December Community Member of Mystery started working with us last May. She grew up in southern Idaho and met her husband of 25 years, Duke, a mechanical engineer, in high school. She graduated from the University of Idaho with a Bachelor of Science degree in family and consumer sciences. Four years ago, she and her family moved from their 200-acre farm where they grew durum wheat, hay and alfalfa and raised cows to their current home in Ridgefield. They have three daughters, one in kindergarten, one in fifth grade, and one in eighth grade. In her spare time, our Community Member of Mystery enjoys watching her daughters in a soccer, volleyball, and basketball games. She also enjoys reading most anything. Her family enjoys traveling to Idaho and especially Bozeman, Montana, where her 102 year-old grandmother lives. Who do you think our December Community Member of Mystery is?

If you guessed Tasha Clinton, office assistant, you are correct.

