6th grade classes are movin’ on up

Board approves future move of 6th grade to the middle schools

Transportation Department keeps the wheels moving

School construction bond on February 14 special election ballot
Superintendent’s Message
Collaboration is at the heart of who we are

One of the many things that makes Shoreline Public Schools an amazing place to teach and learn is our commitment to shared leadership and collaborative decision-making. I was reminded of this in reflecting on the work that went into important decisions recently made by our Board of Directors to support the continued success and growth of our school district.

The Board’s unanimous decisions to develop a comprehensive early learning program, shift the middle school grade band configuration to 6/7/8 and ask voters to approve a bond to construct an Early Learning Center and rebuild Parkwood Elementary, Einstein Middle School and Kellogg Middle School followed much thought, research and discussion from our Instructional Program Planning Committee (IPPC) and Facilities Planning Committee (FPC).

The FPC also took the IPPC’s recommendations into consideration when developing their facility plan and bond recommendation. It was our strict intent that the instructional needs of our students would drive the construction needs of our facilities. In addition to those recommendations, the FPC also thoroughly reviewed building condition reports, enrollment projections and debt capacity.

We are currently scheduled to present the bond recommendation information to nearly 70 groups before the February 14, 2017 special election date. I hope you will join me at a future bond presentation or find more information at www.shorelineschools.org/bond.

Our tradition of open and collaborative decision-making processes is one of the reasons our school district continues to be recognized as one of the highest performing in the state. I want to express my gratitude to the community members who continue to join us in generously giving their time, knowledge and talents in support of our schools.

Regards,
[Signature]
Find a complete schedule of school district events with additional details at shorelineschools.org.

**December**
21-31: No School: Winter Break

**January**
1-3: No School: Winter Break
4: Back to School!
12: PTA Reflections Art Show
16: No School: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
23: School Board Meeting
28: Kinderfest
28: Hoopalooza
30: No School: Staff Work Day
31: Westside Band Festival

**February**
2: Kindergarten Registration Begins
2: Eastside Choir Festival
2: Westside Choir Festival
13: Eastside Band Festival
14: Westside Orchestra Festival
15: Eastside Orchestra Festival
20: No School: Presidents Day
21-24: No School: Mid-Winter Break

**March**
6: No School: Staff Work Day
6: School Board Meeting
7-10: Early Release for Grades K-6- Conferences
11: Shoreline Math Olympiad
12: Daylight Saving Time
20: School Board Meeting
30: SPS Foundation Spring Event

**Kinderfest is Coming**

**Saturday, Jan. 28**
10am-12pm
Shoreline Center
(18560 1st Ave. NE)

Do you live in Shoreline or Lake Forest Park and have a child who will be 5 years old by August 31, 2017? If so, Kinderfest is the place for you!

Kinderfest is an opportunity for parents and guardians of incoming kindergartners to learn about the programs offered by the Shoreline School District. Join us and receive information on food services, transportation, nurses, English Language Learners/Special Services, Highly Capable Program and PTA. Each elementary school will have representatives available to answer questions. Spanish, Amharic, Mandarin, Korean and Vietnamese interpreters will be available.

Limited, no-cost childcare will be available on-site for children who are over two-years-old and potty-trained. Please note that food will not be allowed in the childcare room due to possible allergies.

Kindergarten registration will begin on Feb. 2 at your neighborhood school. In order to attend kindergarten in the fall, your child must be five years old by August 31, 2017 and reside in the cities of Shoreline or Lake Forest Park.

For more information on registration please visit the Enrollment webpage at: www.shorelineschools.org/enrollment.

If you have additional questions, please contact Trinitee Swan at 206.393.4365 or triniteeswan@shorelineschools.org.
After nearly a year of research, discussion, community presentations and surveys, the Board of Directors approved a committee recommendation to move 6th grade students to middle schools at their Dec. 5, 2016 meeting. The move could potentially occur at the beginning of the 2020.

The Instructional Program Planning Committee (IPPC), comprised of school-community representatives from across the District, developed the recommendation after months of research into educational standards, curricula and learning environment needs for 6th grade classrooms.

“We asked teachers to lead the conversations,” said Assistant Superintendent Brian Schultz. “They helped the committee understand the standards and expectations of middle school math, science, language arts, social studies and English Language Learners.”

The committee took a deep and comprehensive look at the grade band alignment and current research on numerous factors that impact academic achievement and behavioral development.

“As we looked at the grade band and curriculum issues, there were four categories of ideas that guided our work,” explained Joe Peterson, 6th grade teacher at Ridgecrest Elementary. “We focused on: content, curriculum and materials, space and time constraints, and the social and emotional needs of students.”

In examining the educational standards and available curriculum, it became clear to the committee that there was a definite split between the 5th and 6th grades in how the standards and curriculum align.

“We learned most of the math curriculum are designed for kindergarten through 5th grade and then jump to 6th through 8th grade,” said Peterson. “The math at the 6th grade level is more advanced than it may have been in the past.”

The advanced level of math now required by 6th grade learning standards also requires teachers to be content specialists in order to effectively teach it. That’s unrealistic and ineffective according to Schultz.

“Elementary teachers are required to be knowledgeable and understand the content and instructional practices for the numerous subjects they teach throughout the day,” said Schultz. “To effectively understand and teach the advanced level now required in 6th grade math and science standards, we really need to provide those teachers and students with a learning environment and schedule to support that type of specialized instruction.”

Peterson agrees. “We’re currently asking 6th grade teachers to be experts in a wide range of subjects that are pretty advanced... shifting the 6th grade to middle school will go a long way in supporting the success of teachers and the students we teach,” he added.
Schultz also points out that professional development for 6th grade teachers has also been difficult. “When you only have two or three 6th grade teachers in a school and the rest of the school’s teachers are using a different curriculum, it can be a challenge for those teachers who are cut off from their 7th and 8th grade counterparts,” said Schultz. “They should be collaborating with teachers from those grades to ensure a smooth progression of the advanced educational standards.”

When it came to science, the space and configuration of classrooms was also a factor for the committee. “The science standards in 6th grade are chemistry heavy and are asking us to use instructional materials and units that require a science lab environment,” said Peterson. “That’s simply not available in an elementary school. Most classrooms only have a small sink in the back and no counter space for students to conduct labs.”

While instruction and academic achievement were factors in the committee’s recommendation, the social and emotional aspects were also a focus. “We looked at a lot of research around how to best support the social and emotional needs of students in the middle years,” said Einstein Middle School Principal Nyla Fritz. “In our recommendation, we were intentional in including that further study and stakeholder involvement in shaping best practices for the future Shoreline 6-8 middle school model.”

Fritz also quickly points out that the move will not only better support the growth and success while in 6th grade, but also as they progress through 7th and 8th grades. “Having a middle school experience that is three years, instead of two, allows us to build a stronger school culture focused on academic and social growth,” said Fritz.

Timing for when 6th grade students will transition to middle schools is to be determined at this point. Much of it depends on the outcome of the February 14, 2017 school bond vote. If the bond passes, the District expects 6th grade would move to the middle schools in 2020 when the Kellogg and Einstein Middle School construction projects would be projected to be complete.

While the elementary schools will certainly miss their 6th graders, the middle schools are very excited and look forward to welcoming them to their school community. “I’m incredibly excited to welcome our 6th graders to our amazing middle schools,” said Fritz. “We have such a phenomenal community here and I can’t wait to share all of the learning and extracurricular opportunities that will be available to them in middle school.”

“The Board of Directors greatly appreciates all of the hard work that went into this process. This includes the committee’s thorough research and carefully thought out recommendations. It also includes the school community’s input and feedback,” said Board Director David Wilson. “We are fortunate to have so many in our community who are engaged and focused on the needs of our current and future students. It is also important for all to understand that as we move forward, implementing researched best practices will be key to our success.”
The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) recognized Parkwood Elementary as one of the top schools in the state for improving math scores and closing the achievement gap at a surprise celebration held for the school's staff on Wednesday, Nov. 30.

OSPI's Title I Program Supervisor Larry Fazzari traveled from Olympia to make the presentation to the school's staff. He presented them with two of the most prestigious awards granted by the OSPI Title I Office. Parkwood earned the Title I, Part A Distinguished School Award for making significant progress in closing the achievement gap in mathematics. They were one of only five Title 1 schools in the state to earn the honor. They were also presented with the Title I, Part A Academic Achievement Award for raising student achievement in math school-wide, one of only eight schools in the state to win that award. They were one of only three schools in the state to win both awards.

Parkwood is one of 2,190 Title I schools in the state that were eligible for the awards. Title I is a federal education program that allocates additional funds and resources to schools with high rates of low-income families to support students in meeting challenging academic standards.

“Our staff are committed to teamwork and truly view every child's future as their personal responsibility,” said Parkwood Principal Ann Torres. “They are creative and persistent, constantly trying new things to ensure every single child maximizes their potential.”

“We are incredibly proud of the amazing work the school's staff, students and families have done to earn this recognition,” said Superintendent Rebecca Miner. “I am also very grateful for our supportive, student-focused community who continually go above and beyond to support student success.”

Along with the awards, OPSI also presented the school with a $15,000 check for the school to use in funding programs and practices that continue to support student success. OSPI is also paying to send three of the school's staff to attend the National Title I Conference in Long Beach, CA this February.
One of the highlights of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) conference to be held in Bellevue this February will be the hundreds of outstanding student-musicians from all across the northwest who will perform as part of the All-State and All-Northwest music ensembles, including over 30 Shoreline students.

Students are selected through a competitive process that includes audio recording submissions to judges who evaluate each instrument and voice part. The students who are selected will participate in three days of rehearsals directed by nationally recognized conductors during the annual state NAfME Convention in Bellevue, Feb. 16-19, 2017.

Shoreline students selected to perform include:

**All-State Junior Band**
Joanne Kirchner, Flute (KMS)
Bonnie Yang, Flute (KMS)
Tyler Prosch, Euphonium (EMS)

**All-State Concert Band**
Jasmine Mikesell, Flute (SCHS)
Stephen Nichols, Clarinet (SWHS)
Kevin Lee, Alto Saxophone (SWHS)
Stephan Huchala, Trumpet (SWHS)

**All-State Symphony Orchestra**
Sing Cheer To, Violin (SWHS)
Adeline Kovell, Violin (SWHS)
Heidi Resing, Violin (SCHS)
Brandon Mochizuki, Violin (SWHS)
Zachary Braaten, Viola (SWHS)
Kamil Tarnawczyk, Viola (SWHS)
Henry Girard, String Bass (SWHS)
Jakob Phipps, Bass (SCHS)

**All-State Symphonic Choir**
Elizabeth Hickman, Sop1 (SWHS)

**All-Northwest Band**
DeMeaus Wong, Flute (SCHS)
Jamie Forschmiedt, Clarinet (SWHS)
Andy O’Keeffe, Clarinet (SCHS)
Reina Sato, Oboe (SWHS)
Patrick Joyce, French Horn (SCHS)
Rhye Pirie, French Horn (SWHS)

**All-Northwest Mixed Chorus**
Yuheng Chen, Tenor 2 (SWHS)
Elliot Faley, Tenor 2 (SWHS)

Nicholas Towle, Tenor 2 (SWHS)
Jacob Delaney, Bass 2 (SWHS)
Adam Freemantle, Bass 2 (SWHS)

**All-Northwest Treble Choir**
Hannah Liu, Soprano 1 (SWHS)

**All-Northwest Orchestra**
Veronica Lee, Viola (SWHS)
Matthew Walton, Percussion (SCHS)

In addition to the individual Shoreline student-musicians selected, the entire Shorewood Chamber Orchestra has been invited to perform and Shorewood Orchestra Teacher Dan Wing has been selected to conduct the Junior All-State Orchestra.

Wing credits community support and engagement for the success of music programs and student-musicians in Shoreline Schools.

“Our school district and community support music to a high degree,” said Wing. “The honors that we achieve in music is a validation and evidence of the importance of music and the arts in Shoreline.”
What does it take to keep the wheels spinning in transporting 6,300 Shoreline students to and from school safely and on time each day? It’s not an easy task, but that is exactly what the school district’s transportation department staff does every day, explains Mary Sherman, transportation director.

She quickly points to her dedicated staff of over 60 drivers, mechanics, dispatchers and office staff who helped log nearly 475,000 miles last school year. “We have an incredible staff here; we’re like a big family, not only in our department, but also out in the community,” said Sherman.

On a normal day, the transportation department runs 42 regular routes to and from school, as well as 112 mid-day routes that include preschool, transition programs, sporting events, field trips and others.

With student enrollment increasing, that transportation department family is also looking to expand. “We’re looking for drivers right now, but there’s been a shortage that has been a bit challenging,” said Sherman. With competition from industry and regional transportation systems, she’s hoping the flexibility and benefits of driving for the school district entices more to apply.

Flexibility was one of the main selling points when Gayle Harris started driving for Shoreline Schools back in 1978. “As a young mother, driving a school bus gave me the opportunity to have a flexible schedule that made it easier to adapt to my kids’ schedule as they got older,” said Harris. “My husband is self-employed, so the health insurance benefits were also a nice plus,” she added.

She starts her day with a pre-trip safety inspection, such as checking turn signals, brake lights, emergency exit latches, fluid levels and other items from a list she records her data on. After unplugging from the diesel engine warmer, she cranks the engine and is off on her route.

“Our kids are just so good,” she exclaimed as we pulled up to her first stop. “They’re really clean and respectful.” Indeed they were during that day’s route. Most quietly chat or used their mobile devices until we arrived at their school where they each thank Harris and quietly exited.

One of the things Harris says she enjoys most is...
Gayle Harris inspects the emergency exit on her bus.

Mary Sherman (left) talks with transportation specialist Dorothy Kahn before mid-day routes are run.

Drivers begin their pre-trip safety inspections before embarking on their morning routes.

Gayle Harris at the helm in the cockpit of her bus.

seeing the kids grow and mature from year to year. She also points out that she has students on her route whose parents were on her route when they were students. “It’s really neat because they remember me and I remember them all the way back then,” said Harris.

It’s clear that the students enjoy their driver as much as she does them. “She’s the best,” said a kindergarten student when asked what he thought about his bus driver. “She gets me to school every day and she’s really nice.”

“Our drivers and everyone in our department make a huge difference for many kids each day,” said Sherman. “Their commitment to students’ safety and well being on and off the bus is something that makes them very special. They know they make a difference so they go that extra mile to support all of our students.”

If you are interested in becoming a bus driver for Shoreline Schools, please visit our jobs page at www.shorelineschools.org/jobs.
At their October 10 meeting, the Shoreline Public Schools Board of Directors unanimously approved a resolution placing a bond proposition on the February 14, 2017 special election ballot.

“The bond proposal we are asking Shoreline and Lake Forest Park voters to approve is a critical component of our Future Shoreline initiative,” said Board Director David Wilson. “Approval of the bond will provide our students and staff with learning facilities that will continue to support the highest levels of achievement by allowing us to align our instructional programs and configurations to give our students the very best learning experience possible well into the future.”

On Tuesday, Feb. 14, 2017, Shoreline and Lake Forest Park voters will consider a $250 million school construction bond that will allow the school district to:

- Alleviate elementary overcrowding and prepare for state-funded class size reductions;
- Provide learning environments to support student achievement;
- Expand and enhance early learning opportunities;
- Design new buildings to enhance school safety and security; and
- Capture an estimated 10 percent state match.

Projects to be completed if the bond passes include:

- Rebuilding Parkwood Elementary School
- Rebuilding Einstein Middle School
- Rebuilding Kellogg Middle School

The Board made its decision based on a study completed by the Facilities Planning Committee (FPC), consisting of parents, staff and community members, over the past year. The committee thoroughly reviewed each facility’s building condition report, which ranks the facility’s structure, systems and safety components, as well as demographic studies projecting future enrollment growth. The FPC also heard reports and recommendations from the Instructional Program Planning Committee (IPPC), which reviewed the District’s current instructional programs and configurations.

“I want to thank these committees for the incredible job they did in developing a plan where the instructional needs of our students determined the construction recommendations,” said Superintendent Rebecca Miner. “They were very thoughtful and forward-thinking in their review and recommendation. I look forward to sharing this information with the community in the coming months and engaging in a conversation about the future of our amazing school district.”

Find more information on the bond and schedule of presentations at shorelineschools.org/bond. A pamphlet with detailed bond information will also be mailed to homes in the District in early January.
Natural Leaders parent leadership program honored for service

Natural Leaders, a program that supports parent involvement and leadership building in nine Shoreline schools, was recently honored as the North Urban Human Services Alliance’s (NUHSA) Outstanding Human Services Program. The group was presented the award on Dec. 6 at NUHSA’s Annual Human Services Awards.

Shoreline is one of nine school districts that support and participate in the Natural Leaders program. The program was developed by the Washington Alliance for Better Schools (WABS) in 2003 with parent partners from Shoreline and neighboring districts.

While there are many family engagement opportunities and programs, Natural Leaders is different, explains Margarita Guzman, a parent and Natural Leader at Lake Forest Park Elementary. “Parents lead the program and train other parents who join,” said Guzman. “Last year, we trained over 80 parents in Shoreline Schools.”

The required training to become a leader in the program is a big commitment, according to Katherine Henson, family advocate at Lake Forest Park Elementary. “They spend about four hours a week from October to May in trainings to become Natural Leaders,” said Henson. “It’s really amazing to see how much time they put into it.”

Once they are trained, the Natural Leaders support family engagement in schools by planning activities for families and connecting with those who might not be familiar with the many ways they can be involved in their students’ educations.

“It’s a fabulous program that really acts as a bridge between our school community and some of our hard-to-reach families,” said Amy Famelos, family advocate at Einstein Middle School and Shorewood High School. “We’re really excited to expand the program in the middle and high schools.”

Did you know that breakfast is served in most Shoreline Schools?

The only exception is Cascade K-8, where they are currently trying to generate enough interest to offer breakfast at their school.

Shoreline schools that serve breakfast offer students a daily assortment of cereal, whole grain bars, fresh fruit and beverages in the cafeteria every morning.

You can check your school’s menu for our rotating daily entree specials, which include scratch baked muffins and biscuits, cinnamon rolls, hot breakfast sandwiches, yogurt parfaits and more!

A breakfast is $1.75 (elementary), $2.00 (secondary), $2.75 (adults/non-students) and FREE for those who qualify for free/reduced meals.

Avoid the morning rush at home and send your child to enjoy a warm, hearty and healthy breakfast to start their day off right! Parents and guardians are also welcome to join their students for breakfast.
Shorecrest Choir to play Carnegie Hall this spring, fundraising to get there

How do you get to Carnegie Hall? If you’re Shorecrest Choir, it’s practice, practice, practice… and a bit of fundraising.

Shorecrest Choir was selected to sing with the National Youth Choir at Carnegie Hall in New York City in April 2017 after winning the Gold 1st Place Award at last year’s Worldstrides Choral Festival. Now, they need your help to fulfill their dream of singing at the world-famous Carnegie Hall.

Their goal is to include all 75 students in this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Students will sing with the other qualifying schools from around the nation, work with an internationally acclaimed conductor and experience an area of rich cultural and historical significance. To accomplish this, they have a fundraising goal of $130,000.

There are two ways to donate funds to the choir, by check and online. Both ways of donating are tax deductible, and a tax ID number will be provided upon request.

Make your check out to Shorecrest High School and mail to:

Leann Rozema, Choir Director
Shorecrest High School
15343 25th Ave. NE
Shoreline, WA 98155

You can also donate online. Just follow the simple steps below.

1. Go to the Shorecrest High School Website
2. Click “Online Payments” on the left hand column
3. Scroll to the bottom of the page and sign in as a “guest”
4. Complete the information and “sign up”
5. Select “High Schools”
6. Select “Shorecrest High School”
7. Select “Donations”

Thank you for your financial gifts to the Shoreline Public Schools Foundation! Because of you, 59 grants were awarded this fall:

18 grants to support Art, Music and Diversity Enrichment
21 grants in support of Bridging the Achievement Gap
20 grants to enrich students’ STEM Education

Your support truly makes a difference to our students and will have a positive impact on their education. To donate or learn more about the Shoreline Public Schools Foundation visit our website: www.shorelinefoundation.org.