Helping Plant the SEEDs of Change

Workshop helps Shoreline students recognize and address social injustice

Nine Shoreline Schools Earn State Achievement Awards

Regular, On Time Attendance is Critical to Student Success
On June 18, I had the incredible honor of witnessing 629 of our graduating seniors accept their diplomas at their graduation ceremonies.

As I watched them cross the stage with diplomas in hands, wide smiles on their faces and bright futures greeting them on the other side, I could not help but reflect on the 13-year journey those students took to reach that moment and how many hands had helped them along the way.

I thought about all of the staff, volunteers, families and organizations who helped guide each one of those students to that point. From teachers to bus drivers, counselors to cooks, there have been so many people who have committed much time and energy to help those students prepare for the future awaiting them.

While our school communities have accomplished much this past year in support of current and future generations of Shoreline students, I want to recognize a few that will have a lasting impact.

In this issue of The Flagship, you’ll learn about our District’s new Instructional Strategic Plan that was developed over several months by a large stakeholder committee and included community-wide surveys, stakeholder meetings and a visioning day. All together, over 3,500 people provided input and perspectives in collaboratively helping shape a strategic plan to align our community’s vision, beliefs and instructional direction. This plan will help guide the focus of our work in best supporting the needs of our community for many years to come.

In addition to our instructional strategic plan, another major accomplishment was the creation and adoption of our District’s new Race and Equity policy. It too was a lengthy work of collaboration from all parts of our school community, involving student and family discussion panels, student forums and meetings with local community resource organizations. The policy’s focus on supporting and enhancing our professional development, workforce, systems and operations through an equity lens will help us to better identify and overcome socioeconomic obstacles that impact the quality of teaching and learning experienced by all of our students and staff. You’ll read more about the policy and its implementation in the next issue of The Flagship.

Both the Instructional Strategic Plan and equity policy will help move us forward in our mission of supporting the success of all students along their journey to a high school diploma and all that awaits them afterward. Neither would have been possible without our community’s commitment to educational excellence and continuous improvement. For that, I am incredibly grateful.

Regards,

Rebecca Miner
Superintendent

The Flagship is published by Shoreline Public Schools. Modifications to school district printed communications to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities may be obtained by contacting the Public Information Office at 206.393.4412.

Shoreline Public Schools does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed to the District’s Title IX Officer Bailey Bertram, and/or Section 504/ADA Coordinator Amy Vujovich, Shoreline Public Schools, 18560 1st Ave. NE, Shoreline, WA 98155, 206.393.6111.
School Construction Update

Thanks to the February 2017 school construction bond that local voters approved by over 74 percent, as well as some remaining funds from a 2006 bond and state match, a number of school construction projects are underway in our school district.

Renovations were recently completed to the North City Elementary Campus, which will serve as a temporary home for the Children’s Center, Head Start and Early Childhood Education program while an Early Learning Center is constructed at the current Children’s Center site. Those programs will move into the newly constructed Early Learning Center when it is completed in August 2018.

Work has also started on Phase 2 of the Aldercrest Campus renovation, which will complete infrastructure upgrades and classroom additions that were planned when Cascade K-8 Community School and the Home Education Exchange program moved to that campus in August 2016. Completion of the Aldercrest project is scheduled for August 2018.

The design process for the new Parkwood Elementary and Einstein and Kellogg Middle Schools is also underway. Architects have been selected and have begun meeting with design advisory committees from each of the schools to help determine the designs that will be considered by the school board.

Construction on those three projects will begin next summer. Parkwood students and staff will move to the North City Campus for the 2018-2019 school year while their new school is constructed. They will move back to their new school for the start of the 2019-2020 school year.

The Einstein and Kellogg Middle Schools’ construction projects will be done over two years. This will allow students and staff to remain at their current school sites while the projects are completed, similar to the process used during construction of Shorewood and Shorecrest High Schools.

If you have any questions, please contact our public information office at public.info@shorelineschools.org or 206.393-4412.
Numerous studies have shown that good attendance is essential to academic success. Shoreline Public Schools is joining a nationwide effort to raise awareness about the value of regular school attendance and focus on reducing chronic absenteeism in the new school year.

Chronic absenteeism is described as missing 10 percent of the school year—about 18 days—for any reason, excused or unexcused. About 10 percent of Shoreline students were chronically absent this past school year. That's over 900 students!

Chronic absence can have consequences throughout a child's academic career, especially for those students living in poverty, who need school the most and are sometimes getting the least. Children who are chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade are less likely to read proficiently by third grade, and students who don't read well by that critical juncture are more likely to struggle throughout elementary school. By middle school it's a warning sign that students will fail key classes and drop out of high school. A recent study found that students who were chronically absent in any year between 8th and 12th grade were over seven times more likely to drop out than students with better attendance.

To the right are tips you can use to help your student arrive to school on time every day. If there are barriers preventing your student from attending on time each day, please contact your school's office to connect with staff and resources that can help.

What You Can Do

- Set a regular bedtime and morning routine.
- Set out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
- Find out what day school starts and make sure your child has the required shots.
- Introduce your child to her teachers and classmates before school starts to help them transition.
- Don’t let your child stay home unless she is truly sick. Keep in mind complaints of a stomachache or headache can be a sign of anxiety and not a reason to stay home.
- If your child seems anxious about going to school, talk to teachers, school counselors or other parents for advice on how to make them feel comfortable and excited about learning.
- Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbor or another parent.
- Avoid medical appointments and extended trips when school is in session.
Nine Shoreline schools were among the 280 Washington schools to earn 2016 Washington Achievement Awards this past school year. The schools honored represent the highest-performing schools in the State based on three years of academic information as reported in the Washington Achievement Index. The award recipients were recognized by State Superintendent Chris Reykdal and State Board of Education Acting Chair Kevin Laverty at a statewide awards ceremony held on May 3 in Auburn.

“The Achievement Awards recognize all the great work happening in Washington schools and the ways educators are making a difference in student outcomes,” said Kevin Laverty, State Board of Education Acting Chair. “It presents an opportunity to honor schools that are achieving at high levels, as well as schools that are making great growth.”

Schools are recognized in seven categories: Overall Excellence, High Progress, English Language Arts (ELA) Growth, Math Growth, Extended Graduation Rate, English Language Acquisition and Closing the Achievement Gap.

The Shoreline schools recognized as top performers in one or more categories are:
- Briarcrest Elementary (Overall Excellence, Math Growth and ELA Growth)
- Brookside Elementary (High Progress and ELA Growth)
- Cascade K-8 Community School (Overall Excellence, High Progress and ELA Growth)
- Echo Lake Elementary (High Progress)
- Highland Terrace (Closing the Achievement Gap)
- Lake Forest Park (ELA Growth)
- Meridian Park Elementary (Closing the Achievement Gap)
- Parkwood Elementary (Overall Excellence and Math Growth)
- Syre Elementary (High Progress and ELA Growth)

“These schools help Washington lead the way in innovative education and access to high-quality learning opportunities,” said State Superintendent Chris Reykdal. “To all of those honored, thank you for your dedication to Washington students, families and the future.”

The Achievement Index is the only statewide school accountability system recognized by both the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and State Board of Education. The Achievement Index measures student proficiency in math, English language arts, science, student growth, and college and career readiness. Educators, families, and community members can use the Index to identify areas of strength and improvement in Washington's schools.
Over 200 Shoreline middle and high school students descended upon the Shoreline Conference Center on May 15 to attend the Seeing Everyone Equally and Distinctively (SEED) Social Justice Conference.

Students spent the morning uncovering, recognizing and openly discussing the effects of institutional racism and biases against marginalized groups, explained Dr. Tanisha Brandon-Felder, director of equity and family engagement.

Speakers, staff and community leaders guided students through a series of workshops and presentations to provide them with the skills and tools to help them find their voice and strength to stand up for themselves and their friends when confronted with bigotry and unfair situations.

“The goal is to build awareness around topics that may not be formally addressed in other settings, but that build common understanding that can lead to future conversations and influence positive change in our community,” said Brandon-Felder. “We want to increase positive interactions in school spaces, community activities, discussions among peers and families, and raise the involvement in community based organizations.”
Each workshop session was relevant and timely for students and allowed them to delve into deeper conversation and consideration of current social justice events.”

The theme of this year’s conference was “Starting the Conversation to Ignite the Change We Want in our Community.” Fifteen workshops were offered that focused on engaging topics such as issues of race and identity, social justice, community activism, gender identity, media and bias, using the arts as a catalyst for social change, sci-fi social justice and many more.

“I learned a lot about society through a new lens. I became aware of how much we still have to learn about others and their situations,” said Shorewood senior Dunya Al-Musawi. “I hope students learn the value of being involved in social issues... as we are the future of this country, being educated is the first step in becoming leaders of change.”

“I learned a lot about society through a new lens. I became aware on how much we still have to learn about others and their situations.

-Dunya Al-Musawi, Shorewood H.S. student

This was just the first of what will be an annual event offered to students. “It was powerful to see authentic conversations around difficult topics and see students have healthy discourse,” said Brandon-Felder. “Events like this increase all of our awareness around the importance of equity and having healthy dialogue.”

The SEED Conference was organized by the District’s equity and family engagement department and supported through funding from the Shoreline Public Schools Foundation.
After six months of meetings, planning, community input sessions and surveys, the District’s 2020+ Instructional Strategic Plan was presented and approved by the board of directors on June 19.

“The plan identifies instructional priorities and establishes a common vision for student learning and shared beliefs,” explained Maria Stevens, director of teaching and learning. “It will provide direction within our learning organization to help shape the culture, determine priorities and serve as the guiding force behind decision-making related to the District’s curriculum, instruction, assessment, policies and procedures.”

Knowing the plan that would be created would have a major and long-lasting impact on the District’s instructional direction and strategies, having the community participate in its development was a major focus from the start.

Work on developing the plan began in January 2017 when a committee of over 40 staff, parents, students and community members from across the school district began meeting regularly to research and discuss topics and trends impacting education. The committee's goals were to:
1. Explore and identify instructional priorities;
2. Establish common values, purpose and direction for teaching and learning;
3. Understand instructional strengths, opportunities and challenges; and
4. Clearly communicate and collaborate with the community.

The committee engaged in a comprehensive review of the District’s programs, instructional strategies and achievement data, as well as reviewing information on current and future educational shifts, trends and research-based best practices.

The work also included collecting and reviewing community input from over 3,500 individuals who participated in surveys, open houses and an all-day visioning forum.

“The Instructional Strategic Plan was created with the community to reflect our core values, beliefs and learning expectations,” said Stevens. “Ultimately, the plan will create a more cohesive instructional program aimed at improved learning for all students.”

According to Stevens, now that the 2020+ Instructional Strategic Plan—which you can read on the following page—has been created, the district plans to create a District Instructional Leadership Team who will be charged with our short term goals and measures.

“I'm very grateful for our community’s support in coming together to identify our goals for the future and align our efforts,” said Stevens.
Vision for Student Learners
Shoreline Public Schools will support all students in becoming ...

- Persistent
- Effective Communicators
- Growth Oriented
- Critical Thinkers
- Empathetic
- Creative
- Global Citizens
- Knowledgeable
- Collaborative

Instructional Strategic Directions
We will design and implement systems of learning that honors individual student goals and dreams, while building college and career readiness in an environment that supports social, emotional, and physical well being.

1. Support a culture of ongoing learning and growth.
2. Embrace equity and diversity.
3. Know our students and meet their social, emotional and academic needs.
4. Foster students’ ability to develop academic, life and career skills.
5. Teach in ways that are relevant, engaging, innovative, student-driven and rigorous.

Shared Beliefs

All students can achieve
All students can grow to reach their academic and personal excellence.

Equitable access to rigorous learning is essential
All students will be provided with equitable instruction, access to innovative programs, and necessary supports for success.

Diversity makes our community stronger
We view diversity as an asset. Fostering an environment of dignity and respect, all individuals, opinions and contributions are valued.

Curiosity sparks creativity and innovation
Students will be encouraged to generate questions, explore topics of interest, and engage in inquiry to develop new ideas and novel ways of thinking.

Respect, empathy and collaboration are at the core of community
Students will broaden their perspectives by seeking to understand the perspectives and experiences of others to enable them to work collaboratively. Students will understand their role and responsibilities in our local and global community.

Mission
Provide a collaborative learning community which engages all students in learning the academic and work-life skills needed to achieve their individual potential and become responsible citizens.
Congrats Class of 2017!
While most students were starting their summer vacations, a group of 10 students from Cascade K-8 and Shorecrest High School were facing some tough competition from over 8,000 other middle and high school students at the National Technology Student Association (TSA) Conference in Orlando, Florida on June 21-25. The four students from Cascade and six from Shorecrest earned the opportunity to represent their schools and compete at the conference after placing high in various events at the state TSA competition earlier in the year.

While the competition was definitely tougher at the national level, the Cascade and Shorecrest students were up to the challenge.

The Cascade K-8 video game design team, represented at the national conference by Elena Tapia and Andrew Edwards, took home the first place trophy in Middle School Video Game Design. The team's role-playing game "Blackfire" was designed and created by Tapia, Edwards, Jaeden Caldwell, Jack Cameron, Molly Grauer and Liam Prestia throughout this past school year.

Shorecrest's technology problem-solving team of Alex Resha and Myles Parent were top 10 finalists in the High School Problem-Solving Competition. Participants were given a challenge on site and had a specific amount of time to design and test a prototype to solve the challenge.

In addition to the competitions, students also participated in learning workshops and business meetings with students from all over the country, as well as Turkey, Japan and Germany.

“The leadership and management skills that the TSA has to offer have guided me through structuring and completing many projects both inside and outside of school, improving both my grades and my satisfaction with my work," said Edwards. “Overall, I would recommend the TSA to any student who aspires to effectively express their talents... and maybe even get a cool trophy!”

Since 1978, TSA has been working with students in technology courses to help students learn to compete and lead in technology fields. TSA has chapters in 49 States, and 250,000 members in middle and high schools across the country. Washington currently has the largest growth in middle school level TSA programs.