

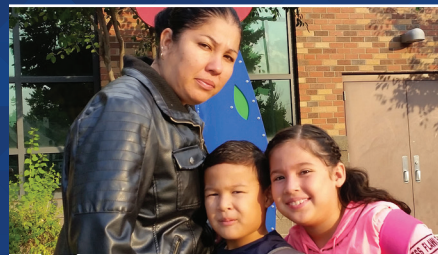


HIGH TECH TEACHERS
Stillman returns to district in new role supporting classroom technology

After 11 years at Wa-Hi as an English teacher and the past two years at Prescott, WSU graduate Carina Stillman returns to the district to support teachers in their use of technology.

Stillman visits classrooms and demonstrates how to incorporate technology to support lessons and engage students. She also is playing a critical part in the roll-out of the new English Language Arts curriculum at district elementary schools. Carina designs and implements trainings she will be exploring with teachers.

"One major area of my focus this year is to support K-5 teachers as they learn how to use the new ReadyGEN instructional materials," Stillman said. "I love the time I spend in buildings talking about educational technology with teachers. I am meeting many who are eager to do more with the technology. Planning and brainstorming with them is rewarding."



FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL
Edison transitions to Dual Language

Edison Elementary parent Griselda Mendez and her children Francisco Cruzaley Mendez (1st grade) and Alejandra Cruzaley (4th grade) take time out for a quick photo on the first day of school. Dr. Julie Perron is in her first year as principal at Edison as the school transitions to the district's elementary Dual Language School.

Walla Walla Public Schools

Dick & Julianne Moeller model community pride
Walla Walla power couple continues to make a difference in the valley

For those who don't believe in love at first sight, you might get an argument from retired contractor and 2015 Graduate of Distinction recipient Dick Moeller.

In the fall of 1962, Dick was a Walla Walla High School senior. He was out with friends listening to music during a dance at the Natatorium on Wilbur Avenue when a young lady in her DeSales band uniform caught his eye. It turned out to be junior Julianne Pancake. Dick built up his courage, asked her for a dance and 55 years later they remain inseparable.

The two were married in 1965. By the time Julianne was 25 all three of their children (Jeff, Greg and Terri) were born and Dick had already built his fourth house for the family. Julianne was mature beyond her years. She spent much of her childhood helping her mother keep up the household after her father passed away when she was only 12.

One common characteristic which has always strengthened the couple's bond was their belief in helping others and doing what was best for their family and the community. Dick worked long hours during his 35-year career in the construction business. Julianne did her part for the business by maintaining the books and helping prepare the new homes to go on the market. Despite their hectic lifestyle, Julianne managed to be a Cub Scout leader, soccer coach and band program volunteer at Assumption school. Dick spent 28 years volunteering on the Walla Walla Community College Carpentry Advisory Board. They were busy.

The days of juggling the schedules of their active children and operating a bustling small business are in the past, and their love for Walla Walla remains as strong today as it was then.

Dick served on the Walla Walla County Fair Board for years after retirement and Julianne volunteered at Providence St. Mary's Emergency Room for half a decade. Dick is currently volunteering on the district's Community Facilities Task Force in support of developing a Long-Range Facilities Improvement Master Plan. You will also find him at the fairgrounds almost daily with his backhoe or other construction tools helping out as needed.

For Dick and Julianne Moeller, life has always been about family, hard work and putting the needs of others first.



Dick and Julianne Moeller enjoy a quiet moment on the patio of their School Avenue home Dick built when he was just 27 years old.

Graduates of Distinction
Nomination forms now available

"I was blessed to have attended local schools from kindergarten through Wa-Hi. Those experiences built confidence, social skills and friendships that have lasted my lifetime."

-Judy Chamberlain Holloway
Graduate of Distinction

Visit the district's website for application forms.
Nominations due March 15 for this prestigious honor.



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Focus on Education

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Walla Walla Public Schools

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Walla Walla Public Schools

A Look Back in District History
Proudly Serving Students and Families Since 1857



*L-R: Walla Walla High School Flag Swingers from the Class of 1982 and 1983
Judy Wheeler, Carol Nelson, Dawn Roe, Carolyn Duncan, Tricia Parker and Peggy Needham.
Flag Swingers marched in front of the band in parades and performed at games.*

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Walla Walla Public Schools
Focus on Education

Your School District Newsletter | Fall 2017 | Volume 20 | Issue 1



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A Look Back in History

Bilingual Education

District celebrates diversity as a strength for all students

In 1988, just over 10 percent of the school district student population was Hispanic. Today, this figure has quadrupled and sits at nearly 40 percent. The district celebrates its diversity and is adjusting its Bilingual Education programs to better meet the needs of English Language Learners.

The top priority remains English acquisition, and the methods to achieve the desired results are centered around two research-based programs: Dual Language and English Language Development.

L-R: Equity & Access Coordinator Sergio Hernandez, Director of Bilingual Programs Dr. Victor Vergara and Latino/a Outreach Coordinator Marilyn Melgoza have teamed to enhance the district's Bilingual Education Department.

continued inside . . .

OUR VISION

Developing Washington's Most Sought-After Graduates

OUR MISSION

Walla Walla Public Schools ensures all students receive high-quality instruction in an aligned and coherent system while addressing their social and emotional needs in a safe and engaging environment.

www.wwps.org



Superintendent's Message

Walla Walla Public Schools mails the Focus on Education newsletter to the homes of residents three times per year. This publication serves as a platform to keep our community informed and connected to the school district.

We appreciate your involvement and support. The Board of Directors and I value your input and welcome your ideas as we strive for a world-class education for all students. Working together we can set our sights on Developing Washington's Most Sought-After Graduates.

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Walla Walla Public Schools...

Strategic Plan charts new direction

Walla Walla Public Schools Board of Directors approved a new five-year Strategic Plan last summer charting the direction of the district over the coming years. Four student-centered goals surfaced during this collaborative process: high-quality instruction, aligned and coherent systems, social and emotional needs, and a safe and engaging environment.

To ensure high levels of learning for all students, the Board of Directors established lofty expectations for increased student performance. Bold and courageous student success indicators were established to guide district actions and investments to meet community expectations for improved academic achievement. This renewed focus on performance and skill development will ensure Walla Walla students graduate prepared for today's competitive world, whether college or career bound. This new and ambitious strategic plan affirms our community's collective expectation for a world-class education for all students.



Facilities Planning Community input focus for 2017-18 school year

Walla Walla Public Schools is seeking input on facilities improvement options this school year as it eyes November 2018 as a potential date for a bond election. Walla Walla High School, Pioneer Middle School and Lincoln High School are at the top of the needs list.

Other needs across the district like roofing, HVAC and safety have been identified as high priorities in the study.

The Community Facilities Task Force, chaired by local businessman Paul Schneidmiller, is looking at cost-effective options to renovate Wa-Hi, Pioneer and Lincoln rather than build new schools. This pragmatic approach aims to preserve the district's historic buildings and infrastructure while renovating them to meet today's educational needs.

All existing bond debt will be paid off in December 2018. Any facility improvement projects being proposed in November 2018 are likely to be a replacement of current rates, or a slight increase depending on community input, maintaining one of the lowest school bond rates in the region.

Wa-Hi grads come home to teach next generation of students



L-R: Saydel Wold (Sharpstein 1st grade bilingual), Jennifer Golden (Garrison MS science), Jazmin Lopez (Edison 3rd grade bilingual), Jill James (Opportunity ELA), Brittany Anderson (Wa-Hi English), Lexie Mahan (Blue Ridge 5th grade), Anne Marie Jones (Green Park kindergarten), Yolanda Maycumber (Green Park 1st grade bilingual).
Not present: Keith Angotti (Prospect Point Special Ed), Kristen Duede (Mental Health Specialist).

Nine of the district's 28 teachers hired this year are former Blue Devils who have returned to their roots to teach in their hometown. It has been a busy fall for these new educators, many stepping foot into the classroom for the first time.

The first-year teachers are being supported by the district's Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST). This support team, led by Coordinator Erin Dorso, consists of staff across the district

working together to help teachers so they get off to a strong start. BEST program goals include reducing teacher turnover, improving teacher quality for student learning and ensuring equity of learning opportunities for all students.

"We are fortunate to live in a community where our students want to return and give back to the community where they were raised," said Human Resources Director Liz Campeau.

Bilingual Education continued from page 1



Bilingual Education teachers conduct professional development on new English Language Development Program.

This year the district hired Dr. Victor Vergara to lead this transformation as the program director. Marilyn Melgoza now coordinates Latino/a Outreach and Family Involvement, while Sergio Hernandez remains on staff to lead Equity and Access efforts.

Lofty goals linked to the new Strategic Plan call for narrowing the Achievement Gap through improved student achievement. Consistent approaches to instruction, improved communication with families and early interventions are key strategies in place to help Latino students keep pace academically with students listed in other demographic categories. Dr. Vergara has a proven track record of success. His last district, Woodburn, Ore, faced extremely

challenging demographics and still lauded one of the state's highest graduation rates for Latino and ESL students at nearly 90 percent. Under his leadership the district is looking for similar results.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR NEXT...

- » New English Language Development program to help English Language Learners master English
- » More home visits
- » Community events
- » Spanish social media sites and radio
- » Higher participation in sports and clubs
- » Parent engagement events
- » More students earning Seal of Biliteracy

Hispanic college-going rates among best in WA

Data released this summer from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction for the district class of 2015 revealed 66.1% of graduating Hispanic/Latino seniors attended a post-secondary institution, 16% above the state average of 50.1%.

This represents the 12th highest college-going rate for Hispanic students in Washington state. It is also the highest in the state when comparing Walla Walla's data to demographics of schools with modest levels of poverty and language diversity.

This result represents three consecutive years of increase in which Hispanic students' college attendance has risen steadily from 47.5% in 2012.

Wa-Hi science teacher leads efforts to improve student learning

Burt to speak at state conference; she also contributes to national blog

Walla Walla High School science teacher Mary Burt has always had a flair for adventure and it shows in her teaching style and leadership. Early in her career, Mary taught in the Marshall Islands and on a Navajo Reservation. She quickly learned the importance of working closely with her fellow educators and developing positive relationships with her students. Burt takes the extra time to discover the interests of her students and then finds ways to incorporate them in classwork as an engagement strategy.

Now she has a laser focus on helping improve student learning at Walla Walla High School. Mary is currently serving on a Professional Learning Community of teachers focused on making sure students are held to very high expectations, while also providing the right support to help them be successful. Mary makes learning fun by setting up hands-on science activities to challenge students to think on their own and make discoveries.

"I am very optimistic about the shifts happening in our district thanks to the new strategic plan," Burt said. "There are clearly communicated goals in place to ensure ALL students are successful, as well as the support to help teachers make that happen, such as a renewed focus on the practices of Professional Learning Communities work."

One area of focus for Mary and her team is writing with evidence. They are learning from each other how to identify strategies to help freshmen, including reluctant writers, make great strides in their writing.

This fall, Mary will be presenting at the Washington Science Teachers Association Conference. Mary also contributes to the Student Achievement Partners blog. Her science Professional Learning Community team is aligning coursework to the new science standards and developing plans to meet the requirement of a third year of science for graduation.

The district is thankful world traveler Mary Burt has found her home in Walla Walla.



Walla Walla High School science teacher Mary Burt strives to find creative teaching techniques to engage students. Hands-on science labs inspire students and improve learning.



at Walla Walla High School — Mental Health. Primary Care. Behavioral Support. No Cost.



MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ENHANCED

In September, The Health Center Board of Directors officially dedicated the new Walla Walla High School Health Center with a community ribbon-cutting ceremony. The new Walla Walla High School student-based health center opened the first day of school with a focus on mental health services. Services also include primary care and behavioral

support. There is no cost to students and families for any of the services offered.

Thanks to the Walla Walla County Commissioners for allocating funds from the county's one-tenth of one percent of sales tax revenue to provide these critical services to Walla Walla High School students.



ENROLLMENT SOARS!

The Southeast Area Technical Skills Center, better known as SEATEch, is experiencing an enrollment boom this fall since opening its doors three years ago. Enrollment jumped 59 percent in September compared to last year, up 57 students in just one year.

SEATEch offers juniors and seniors from regional high schools advanced programs in Manufacturing and Welding, Audio and Visual Production, Construction Technology and Health Sciences. SEATEch staff are excited about the program's growth, and are continuing to seek additional students as the program continues to grow.

Director Dennis Matson says the enrollment increase is largely due to promotional and awareness efforts.

"The most critical aspect of our promotion was the face-to-face contact our instructors had with students through classroom visits, facility tours and our open house," said Matson. "This personalized our programs and allowed students to meet instructors prior to registering."

A second factor in the enrollment spike was communicating the pathway to a career. Today's job market is seeking future employees who have the educational background, combined with industry skills and professional certifications.

"SEATEch provides the education, skills and certifications to assist students as they pursue their post-secondary options, including the workforce, trade schools, or two/four-year colleges," Matson said.

CAREER PATHWAYS
INDUSTRY JOB SKILLS
INDUSTRY CERTIFICATIONS
NO COST