



Health/Education

Student Instruction Plans Under Review

Portland Public Schools Superintendent Benjamin O. Canada, Ph.D., has announced that the district will revise its method for developing plans for individual students' educational needs.

"We will continue to individually assess students as we have always done," said Canada, "but I want to explore with teachers and principals, alternative ways to tailor instruction to individual student needs and to share that information with parents."

While students are formally

tested in most grades, last fall, the district mandated that Individual Instruction Plans be prepared for each child in grades 2, 7 and 9 who fell below benchmark the previous year.

The purpose of the plans was to outline strategies the teacher would use to bring the child to benchmark and to share that information with parents. But the plans caused controversy because few teachers and principals were involved in designing them and in many cases they duplicated work already

being done.

"We have learned," stated Canada. "I have listened to teachers and principals. While there were positive and negative aspects linked to the Individual Instruction Plans, I believe that together we can craft a process that better meets the needs of students, parents and teachers."

Canada said the district's overall goal of increasing the academic performance of all students will continue to be the focus of the district discussions.

Legacy Health System to Expand Burn Center

(AP) — The Oregon Burn Center at Legacy Emanuel Hospital is seeking donations for a planned \$5 million facelift to add rooms and upgrade equipment.

Legacy Health Systems officials say the center has outgrown the 5,000-square-foot space it has occupied since its founding in 1977. The unit has 12 beds in seven rooms. The center has little space for visitors, and patients don't have much privacy.

The burn center, the only one of its kind between Seattle and

Sacramento, Calif., served an average of 269 people annually for the past three years. About a third of the patients are children, and one of five patients is injured by fire or electrical burns in the workplace.

A small but growing fraction are patients with wounds not caused by burns, but by tissue-destroying skin infections.

Legacy will invest \$2 million in the expansion, and its charitable foundation has pledged \$1 million. Legacy is asking Oregon residents and businesses to donate the remaining \$2 million.

Pledges already exceed \$800,000. Labor union leaders and power industry executives have taken a leading role in raising money for the center.

The center treats about 10 electric power workers annually who are injured on the job in Oregon and Washington.

"This wondrous place in fact saved their lives," said Doug Shaffer, a Portland General Electric technician and member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 125.

Angels of Care: 10 Years of Helping

A unique team of social workers, nurses, counselors and chaplains has just celebrated 10 years of helping patients and families cope with life threatening illness.

The Supportive Care Team at Providence Portland Medical Center helps with pain management, spiritual and emotional care, grief counseling

A death in the family is a traumatic experience, but patient families say the Supportive Care Team is enormously helpful in coping.

People who would like additional information about the Providence Portland Medical Center Supportive Care Team can contact Al Williams at (503) 215-6165.



Supportive Care Team Manager Al Williams comforts a patient in the Respiratory Unit at Providence Portland Medical Center.

and ethical issues about end-of-life care.

"We help patients and families come to terms with a life ending and help them realize what it means," said Team Manager Al Williams, a licensed clinical social worker.

Lou Libby, M.D., a pulmonologist who often refers patients to the team, says the group is "indispensable." When a medical emergency brings a patient to the Intensive Care Unit, the Supportive Care Team are the unexpected angels of care to patients and families," said Libby.

Valued as much by doctors and nurses as patients and families, the Supportive Care Team teaches pain management classes to new nurses and helps facilitate ethical discussions between doctors and patients' families.

"Sometimes it's difficult for families to make decisions about caring for a family member who is dying," Williams said. "We are the objective party in the conversation."

Other local hospitals are beginning to emulate the team's patient care model, particularly in the area of emotional support for families.

Information about the team's effectiveness has spread even as far as Japan, with health care workers from that country recently visiting the team at Providence Portland Medical Center to learn more end-of-life care.

Oregon Declares War on English Ivy

Oregon's Weed Board has officially declared English Ivy — a "botanical barbarian" — a noxious weed.

"English ivy has left the residences and is invading the forests — it is out of control," said Dan Hilburn, a member of the seven-person Weed Board, which advises the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

"English Ivy is a botanical barbarian. It's the single most serious threat we have in Oregon," said Sandra Diedrich, director of Portland's Forest Park Ivy Removal Project. The decision, which follows a seven-year campaign against the plant, won't exactly put it out of existence. But the designation is critical, because it can be followed by placement on the state's quarantine list. Quarantined weeds

are illegal to sell or import or move about. The state's Department of Agriculture will consider ivy's commercial fate — whether it's quarantined — this fall. Ivy's classification as a noxious weed makes available state funds with which to research its eradication.

Among the possibilities: germ warfare with a yet unidentified bacterial or fungal pathogen. English ivy joins 99 plants on a state list of botanical miscreants that includes Himalayan blackberry, Scotch thistle and poison hemlock. Ivy's dark green leaves and its aristocratic heritage may make it look regal and pretty, but don't be fooled. The creeper loves Oregon, where it has no natural enemies. It needs little sunlight. It loves mild, wet climates. English ivy jumps garden borders, spreading across

forest floors, smothering and killing ferns, shrubs and other plants that support elaborate ecosystems and provide feeding opportunities for wildlife.

It then climbs and wraps trees, choking off light and air. And Oregon's animals find ivy's leaves unpalatable — in the case of songbirds, ivy's leaves and berries are toxic. There are a few birds that can tolerate ivy's berries, among them starlings and house finches. But this is not good news. The birds distribute the plant's seeds for miles around, multiplying ivy's grip.

As a result, half of Portland's urban forests and natural areas are infested. In Portland's 4,800-acre Forest Park, for example, volunteers armed with shovels and shears go out each week to rip out vines

and sever shoots that climb tree trunks. Their goal: to create ivy-free buffers around trees.

Diedrich, whose organization formed in 1994 to lead the Portland charge against the invader, had lobbied hard for the noxious weed designation and is thrilled by the board's action, which was taken last week.

"There are people who told me this would never happen," she said. "I'm ecstatic." Others aren't so pleased. Although only 20 of the 1,400 members of the Oregon Association of Nurserymen grow English ivy, hundreds of garden-supply businesses sell it.

"We sell English ivy, and we'll continue to sell English ivy," said Mallory Gwynn, a salesman at Al's Garden Center in Woodburn. "People ask for it."

Seminar Looks at Dementia and Aging

Fred C. Miller, head psychology instructor at PCC Cascade, will speak at a health seminar Saturday, March 10 at 10 a.m. at the Ainsworth United Church of Christ.

Miller is currently in charge of the

African American Dementia and Aging Project and is attempting to identify 100 African Americans over the age of 65 to assess their risk factors for stroke and cognitive functions. Information about this project

will be given at the seminar along with ideas for decreasing stress in our daily lives. Dr. Jeffrey Kaye, Director of Aging and Alzheimer's Disease Center at OHSU will speak on Alzheimer's Disease at 10:30 a.m.

Joe Inglesby from Mt. Hood College will speak on "Understanding Our Daily Leisure and Recreation".

The public is invited. Lunch will be served. Attendees are asked to RSVP by Friday by calling 503-284-8767.

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