

School Improvement Monies Won

The Oregon Department of Education Monday announced that King Elementary and Madison High School will receive a total of \$5.5 million in federal grants to transform each school and raise student achievement beginning this fall.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the three-year School Improvement Grants provide resources to improve persistently low achieving schools across the country.

"We welcome the additional support," said Superintendent Carole Smith. "For the past several years

we've been using data to focus our efforts to improve student support and achievement. Both schools have shown progress, yet there's much work to be done. This grant allows King and Madison to build on what's working to ensure supported students and effective teachers in every classroom."

Of the four turn around models available under the grant, both schools selected the "Transformation" model. The model requires PPS to replace the school principal unless they have served in the role less than two years – which is the case at both schools.

Teens Provided Summer Jobs, Life Skills

First Step program geared to at-risk kids

As a 40-foot bus pulls over at Southeast Powell Boulevard and 42nd Avenue, more than a dozen youth in bright yellow T-shirts hop off the bus and run to the nearby bus shelters and sidewalks. With gloves on hand and garbage bags in tow, the crew fans out, picking up trash, filling their bags, before heading back to the bus.

On Monday, 20 new young em-



TriMet's First Step program kicked off Monday, giving at-risk youth the opportunity to have a summer job.

ployees kicked off their 10 week job training program through TriMet's First Step program, which gives at-risk youth ages 13 to 18 the opportunity to put their hard work into action with a summer job.

Founded in 1998, the First Step program, in partnership with the Youth Employment Institute, is designed to encourage young people to develop work and life skills by preparing teenagers to enter the world of work and develop understandings of workplace standards.

More than 300 youth, who must be in school to participate, applied for the program, which increased opportunities to 20 full-time positions in 2004.

Supervisor A.K. Rucker, who has operated a TriMet bus for 30-years, leads the program and serves as a mentor to the kids throughout the year.

"We teach accountability and responsibility," said Rucker. "What you do – or don't do – affects those around you."

IMPOSSIBLE.

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career goals can, at first, seem a little unrealistic. But now it's easier than ever to get started. That's because there are counselors available to assist you with everything from the process of enrolling to financial aid options and career guidance.

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Congratulations Haseena!

Congratulations Haseena Polk on your academic success.

Haseena graduated with honors from the 8th grade of Ron Russell Middle School, earning a 3.75 accumulative GPA and 4.0 for the third quarter.

Highlighting her steady school involvement and achievement, she was selected to read in front of her peers at the school's graduation ceremony.

She was an accomplished athlete at Ron Russell; involved with volleyball and basketball for two years and track and field for one year. She competed in the long jump, high jump, and 400 meter relay.

Haseena also enjoys studying Spanish and music arts. She began playing the violin at Mt. Olivet Baptist Church under Pastor Luther Stohs and spent four years in the orchestra program in the DDSO soaring to Cindy Raxter's Advanced Orchestra with the grade A+.

"I just paid attention in class, did extra credit homework assignments and studied," said Haseena of her achieved goals. She hopes to inspire others students.

Despite moving schools several times throughout her early school history, she has had much academic success.

She was a graduate of Ron Herndon's Albina Head Start program in 2002 where she was tested



Haseena Polk

at high skills level with reading, writing, and began foreign language studies, and studied Japanese for 13 months before she transferred to West Powellhurst in the David Douglas School district for 2nd grade.

Due to school zoning changing, Haseena was homeschooled for 3rd grade and then attended Trillium Charter for 4th grade and Mill Park Elementary school for 5th grade.

In the future, she plans on continuing orchestra with a goal of auditioning for the Portland's Youth Symphony. She would like to attend David Douglas High School and is interested in Veterinarian Medicine.

--From the Hill, Polk, and Warren families.