

509-J Schools in Action!

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Leadership Corner

A Message from Rick Molitor
Superintendent



Earlier this month, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) released its annual report card comparing schools across the state. This year, ODE is using a new rating system to provide a more balanced picture of school performance. The new rating system compares schools with similar demographics including income levels and ethnic/racial diversity. Although we are a unique school district, the state selects other Oregon districts that best match our demographics. While the state cannot do an exact comparison, they compare other schools and districts to the best of their ability. The report card looks at state test scores, academic achievement, achievement growth, subgroup growth (English learners, special education students, Native American students, Latino students, white students), graduation rates and subgroup graduation rates. While many of our individual schools are making amazing progress in achievement, our overall district rating continues to fall below other schools districts in our state and below our own goals.

I'd like to ask our families and community members to "dig deep" as they look at these results. We are working to create a system where students are successful. The results may seem discouraging, but it's important to consider the progress we've made and continue to make. We are proud to see Metolius Elementary receive an "above average" rating this year. We can also look at Madras High School as a great example of what we can accomplish working together. Since 2008, our overall passing rate for reading scores at MHS has improved from 26% to 75%. During that same time period, our high school passing rate for math scores has jumped from 26% to 63%. This is remarkable progress, but we still have a lot of work to do.

Our graduation/drop out rate continues to be a challenge and it affects our overall rating. We need your help in making this a priority for our students. Creating a culture of hope and a sense that our community values education is something we can't do without your support. I'd like to ask each and every one of you to get involved. If you are a family member, you can do this on your own with your child or get in touch with us and see how you can help at school as a volunteer. All community members are welcome and invited to participate, even if you don't have children in our schools.

Thank you for your continued support and please don't hesitate to call my office or your local school principal if you would like more information about the report card or other school-related matters.

CONSTRUCTION ZONE



Clint Bruisedhead of Warm Springs and Jim Smith of Redmond at work on the Warm Springs K-8 School.

Making Our Schools Safer

Thanks to funding made possible by the school bond, a new card access system will replace key locks at the main entrances to all of our 509-J school buildings. The new system is designed to make our schools safer and more secure for students, teachers and staff.

"Providing a safe environment is one of the most important responsibilities we have," said JCSO 509-J Superintendent Rick Molitor. "When our students, teachers and staff are safe, we can focus our energies on teaching and learning."

Work on this important upgrade began this month and the new system is expected to be in operation right after the holiday break.



Casey Green of Warm Springs flashes a smile while working on Warm Springs K-8 school construction.

Local Spending

Last month, we reported that 45% of the team members working on the Warm Springs K-8 construction project are tribal employees. This percentage is higher than any previous construction project in the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs community.

According to Dave Fishel, construction project manager for JCSO 509-J, the numbers are looking good for the in-town projects as well.

"We continue to emphasize the importance of keeping as much of the bond funds in the local community as possible," said Fishel. "To date on the Performing Arts Center project, 22.0% of construction expenditures have been made within Jefferson County and 73.5% have been spent within Central Oregon."



JCSO teachers and staff are getting healthy and setting a good example for students.

JCSO teachers and staff take heart

During the month of October, JCSO teachers and staff participated in a heart health challenge. They logged minutes of sustained cardio-respiratory activities including running, walking, biking, hiking, swimming, aerobics, dance, tennis, gardening, walking the dog and more. This challenge is part of a larger Staff Wellness Program started three years ago with a grant from OEA Choice Trust. Under the wellness program, staff members have access to exercise programs like Zumba, Yoga and basketball and participate in nutrition and fitness challenges that help them to take control of health options.

"The wellness program is good for our team on many levels," said Jamie Smith, MPH, BSN, RN and school nurse for 509-J. "It's also good for our students because we can be healthy role models for them."

Community members are invited to "share the health" by enjoying the "Energi Stations" that are located along the Willow Creek walking/bike path in town, behind Madras Primary and Madras High School and in Metolius and Warm Springs as well. Special thanks to the Jefferson County Health Department, Community Health Improvement Partnership and the Warm Springs Indian Health Services & Diabetes Prevention Program for helping to make these stations possible.



JCSO 509-J receives grant to improve academic performance in Warm Springs

Our school district was recently awarded \$100,000 planning grant to help launch the Warm Springs K-8 school. Warm Springs K-8 is one of 30 schools in the United States to be awarded a grant from Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC) as part of a national effort to develop "breakthrough" model schools that integrate personalized, blended and competency-based learning.

"This planning grant will help us explore academic designs that improve student achievement," said Melinda Boyle, Director of Curriculum & Instruction for JCSO 509-J.

According to Warm Springs Planning Principal Glenna DeSouza, these three approaches to teaching and learning will help our students be successful.

"These new models are improving student achievement in other schools throughout the United States," said DeSouza who is involved in a series of school site visits with other teachers and staff. "We are excited about the possibilities and providing our Warm Springs students with these opportunities when we open our doors in 2014."

For more information about the planning grant or the new Warm Springs K-8 school, contact Glenna DeSouza at gdesouza@509j.net or call (541) 475-6192.

"These new models are improving student achievement in other schools throughout the United States,"

— Glenna DeSouza, Warm Springs Planning Principal

"This planning grant will help us get our Warm Springs students on track to meet and exceed the state average for academic performance."

— Melinda Boyle, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, JCSO 509-J

Catherine Sergeant wins District School Librarian of the Year Award!

This month, our very own District School Librarian, Catherine Sergeant, received the District School Librarian of the Year Award from the Oregon Association of School Libraries (OASL). Each year, the awards are given to school librarians who demonstrate exceptional performance as teachers, instructional consultants, information specialists, and leaders.

"Catherine Sergeant is an amazing person and strong instructional leader who positively impacts the entire 509-J school district," said MHS Principal, Sarah Braman-Smith. "She is constantly improving the status quo to cultivate learning and her energy and dedication towards creating the best learning experience for all of us is endless."

The award was presented at Jesuit High School in Portland at the OASL Fall Conference, on October 12th.



Calendar

November

11/1	No School; Teacher Work Day
11/8	No School; End of Quarter
11/11	No School; Veteran's Day
11/13	2 Hour Early Release
11/14	MHS Parent Conferences; 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. - MHS Commons
11/19	Student Math & Literacy Tutoring begins (Tues. & Thurs.); 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. - Westside School
11/25	School Board Meeting; 7:00 p.m. - SSB
11/25-26	No School; Parent Conferences
11/27 -29	No School; Thanksgiving Break