

# 509-J Schools in Action!

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## Leadership Corner

A Message from Rick Molitor  
Superintendent



The Jefferson County School District team believes that every student in every one of our schools is unique. We know that each child and young adult has something positive to bring to our local communities. While some students follow a more traditional learning path, others find success through alternative learning programs offered by our dedicated teachers and staff members. This month, in the spirit of Thanksgiving, we'd like to celebrate the students, teachers, staff and community partners who are part of our Youth Transition Program and Life Skills Transition Center.

I'd also like to take this time to thank our District team and families for their support and patience during a challenging month. As you are probably aware, one of our Madras High School staff members was placed on administrative leave last week pending a police investigation concerning charges of sexual abuse. As we work to cooperate with the police department investigation, please know that we take these issues very seriously and will continue to put the safety and well being of our students and staff at the forefront of everything we do.

As we prepare to celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday, I feel grateful to live and work in a community that values education and schools. Please enjoy this week with your families and don't hesitate to get in touch if you have questions or concerns about school-related issues. I can be reached via phone at (541) 475-6192 or email [rmolitor@509j.net](mailto:rmolitor@509j.net).

## Students learn job skills and find jobs through Youth Transition Program

Everyday, young adults with physical, psychological, developmental, cognitive and emotional challenges or health conditions make valuable contributions to our communities. Helping students with disabilities learn skills and find jobs is an important part of the education program at Madras High School. The MHS Youth Transition Program (YTP) helps young adults with challenges transition successfully from school to work after they graduate from high school. For more information about YTP, contact Dianna Barrett at (541) 475-8275 or [dbarrett@509j.net](mailto:dbarrett@509j.net).



MHS Youth Transition Program students proudly display their weekly stipend checks earned by participating in the School-to-Work Job Training Program sponsored by Heart of Oregon Corps and MHS. (From left: Madeline Figueroa, 18; Cadaleana Bates, 19; Bransen Stanfield, 17; and Cristian Benitez, 19).

*"It's like a big family and the teachers always help."*

— Tiarra Diaz, 19, former YTP student who currently has an apartment and a bus assistant position with the Oregon Child Development Coalition.



YTP participant and MHS graduate Justin Donovan, 19, with Heart of Oregon Corps Stewardship Crew Leader Andres Palamo III.



Heart of Oregon Corps Thrift Store Manager Lisa Stearns (left), with former YTP student and MHS graduate Elizabeth Padron, 19, who is earning a stipend and an education award for her AmeriCorps service.

*"When students make a successful transition from school to work, it's good for all of us – our community, our economy, our workplaces and most of all, our students."*

— Dianna Barrett, Transition Specialist for Madras High School.

### Impact Aid Funds: We need your input!

If you weren't able to attend the Impact Aid hearing in Warm Springs on November 18, we still want to hear from you. Complete our online Impact Aid survey at [jcsd.k12.or.us](http://jcsd.k12.or.us) between December 2-8.

### Tutoring for K-8 students!

Math and Literacy Tutoring for students K-8 is now available on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:30 – 5:30 p.m. at Westside School. Applications are available in school offices and on the District website at <http://www.jcsd.k12.or.us/parents/jefferson-county-family-university>. For more information, contact Su Chamberlain at (541) 475-6192.



Life Skills Transition Center students and teachers with kale grown in their community garden. (Back row from left: Dan Peterson, Educational Assistant; Kim Urbach, Educational Assistant; Martha Ahern, Teacher; Kendra Wolf, 20; Dianna Barrett, Youth Transition Program Coordinator. Middle row from left: Ace Smith, 17; Tiarra Diaz, 19; Sky Kinley, 16. Front row: Brooke Williams, 19).

## Life Skills Transition Center: Helping young adults live independently

Young adults who have developmental challenges are learning to live successfully and independently in Jefferson County with help from the Life Skills Transition Center at Madras High School. The Center helps students build skills in reading, money management, computers, cooking, personal care and health. In addition to daily living and social skills, they receive training and work experience to help them find jobs in partnership with local businesses and nonprofits. The students also get involved with community and environmental projects like creek restoration and participate in School-to-Work training programs. For more information, contact Martha Ahern at (541) 475-3160 or [mahern@509j.net](mailto:mahern@509j.net).

*Love rises like a wave  
You realize you're immersed  
All someone did was to remind you  
"It must be hard – this job you have."*

*You laugh and realize  
You are "On the good end of the stick."*

*There is no way to put a value on  
The experience of working with your students.*

*You stand there immersed  
In a warm sea of love –  
Laughter coming from the classroom kitchen.*

— Martha Ahern, Teacher,  
Life Skills Transition Center



Ace Smith, 17, holds a birdhouse built and painted by Life Skills students.



Sky Kinley, 16, poses with the Life Skills Transition Center's community garden celery.



Life Skills students learn the art of sewing by making quilts from donated blue jeans. The quilts are sold in the community to benefit the program. (From left: Tiarra Diaz, 19; Teacher Martha Ahern; Sky Kinley, 16; Brooke Williams, 19; and Ace Smith, 17).

## Family University

Parents and families can now enjoy classes and workshops at the Family University in the Westside School. Learn literacy, math, money management and computer skills or have fun with family arts, crafts and volleyball. Childcare is available for class participants Mondays through Thursdays from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. For registration information or a complete schedule of classes, contact Su Chamberlain at (541) 475-6192.

*Funding for Family University provided through the Oregon Community Foundation, Title I, Title III, and Title VI programs.*

## Calendar

### November

11/27 -29 Thanksgiving Break  
11/29 Native American Heritage Day

### December

12/9 School board work session & presentations followed by board meeting - 4:30 p.m. JCMS Commons  
12/11 Two-hour early release  
12/23 - 1/3 Winter Break