

Leadership Corner

A Message from Rick Molitor
Superintendent



Jefferson County School District is unique in that it represents multiple cultures. Our job as educators and community members is to understand, support and celebrate our diversity and provide each and every student with an opportunity for an excellent education. That's why we strive for equity and excellence in our schools and classrooms.

You may have heard that we will be reconfiguring our schools over the next year. The plan is to create more equitable learning environments for all students – including those from diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Here is a snapshot of the changes:

- We will be creating a second high school to provide an alternative learning environment with additional career and technical education opportunities.
- We will be changing our “in-town” elementary schools to serve students in grades K through 5.
- We will be expanding Jefferson County Middle School programs to eventually serve students in grade 5.

We believe that having an additional quality high school option will provide new opportunities for our students with alternative learning needs to reach their greatest potential. Our goals for elementary students are to have fewer school transitions and to encourage parents to become more connected to their children's schools and staff members.

Our team is excited to be moving in this new direction to provide excellence and equity to our entire student population.

We look forward to your support and welcome your questions or comments. Don't hesitate to contact your school principal or get in touch with me directly.

Rick Molitor, JCSD Superintendent



Classified staff appreciation week – March 7-11

The Jefferson County School District has a dedicated team of people in many different roles who make sure our schools run smoothly and efficiently.

Our classified staff are the folks on the front lines. They are often the first impression someone has when calling or visiting our schools. They are the bus drivers who set the tone for the day ahead when they pick up our students in the morning. The cafeteria workers who make sure stomachs are full so kids can concentrate on learning. They are the helpful office staff answering parents' questions, giving directions and comforting a sick child until a parent can get there.

They are the librarians who help students find just the right book, the grounds keepers and maintenance workers who keep our schools tidy and the furnaces running. And they are the teacher's aides who provide a little extra help in the classroom. These are just a few examples of the many classified staff that help our schools operate effectively on a daily basis. During this week of appreciation, we would like to thank all of our classified staff for their hard work and dedication to making the district a brighter place for our students and families.



Sign up for the eNews version of Schools in Action

Stay informed with what's going on in your community. Sign up to receive the monthly *Schools In Action* eNews at the Jefferson County School District website. Get all the latest district news and information.

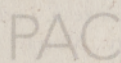
www.jcsd.k12.or.us

Performing Arts Center Events

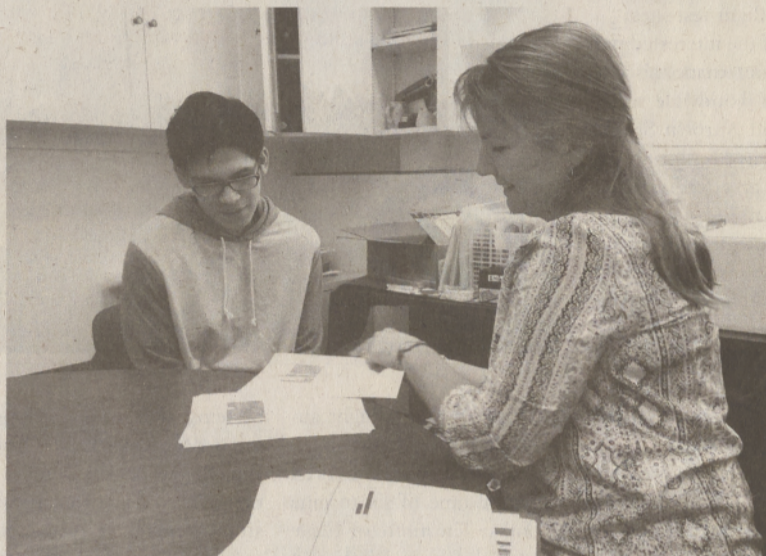
March

- 9 Mariachi Sol de Mexico – 4 p.m.
12 Central Oregon Master Singers present “Choral Dances” – 7 p.m.

For more PAC information call (541) 475-4327



Fifth year high school program helps MHS students graduate



Teacher Caron Smith (right) works with Hector Beaz at the Madras High School learning annex.

Madras High School's fifth year high school program allows students extra time to complete their high school graduation requirements. There are currently 30 students on the five-year graduation track.

“The traditional high school setting doesn't work for everyone,” explained MHS Principal Mark Neffendorf. “Many kids need another option in order to succeed. And that is our goal, to help students graduate in a way that works for them.”

The program is held at the high school's alternative learning center, also known as “The Annex.” The classes are all online and students work at their own pace.

Hector Beaz, a fifth year senior, struggled with understanding the importance of a high school diploma and was not motivated to attend or apply himself. But seeing all his friends graduate without him made him recognize that he had made a mistake.

“High school wasn't for me. I didn't enjoy it. But I realized I was the only one who didn't graduate. I decided I wanted to go back and get my diploma,” said Beaz.

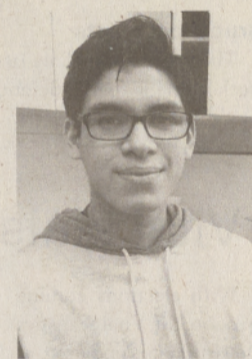
Teacher Caron Smith, who runs the Annex learning program, explained that the students who attend are smart and capable, but they need a different type of support.

“When they come to us, we meet them where they are and nurture and support them,” said Smith. “They become who they wanted to be all along but couldn't do it in the traditional high school setting.”

“Coming here has helped me a lot. I connected more with other students and teachers and it gave me confidence in myself,” said Beaz. “I've learned more here than at the high school because I'm able to go at my own pace and have individual teacher support when I need it. I like teaching myself.”

Beaz has bright hopes for his future. Once at risk for being a high school drop out, he now plans on studying forestry at Central Oregon Community College next year.

“I would tell other high school students who are struggling not to give up,” Beaz said. “Everybody has potential. They just don't always see it in themselves.”



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— Hector Beaz, fifth year senior

Madras High School senior Hector Beaz is a leader, role model and mentor to his peers at the Learning Annex.

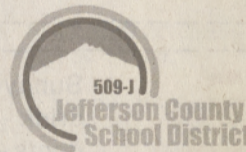
We want to hear from you

School communication survey deadline is March 7

A survey was recently sent to all families in the Jefferson County School District. The survey's primary goal is to help us improve communication with our parents and families. This continues to be a high priority for our administrative team as well as our school board. Our hope is to provide families with more information about what's going on within the schools, but we also would like feedback on how we are doing.

If you haven't already done so, please complete and return the survey to your child's teacher by Monday, March 7. If you have more than one child enrolled in school, you will receive more than one survey. We hope you will take the time to complete a survey for each school your children attend so we can better understand how we are doing in each building. We really need your feedback to help us meet the education needs of our learners.

Thank you again for your continued support. We welcome your comments and the opportunity to hear from you.



Calendar

March

- 4 No School – teacher work day
7 No School – teacher work day
14 School Board Meeting – 7 p.m./SSB
21-25 Spring Break – No School
28 School Board Meeting – 7 p.m./SSB

