



Leadership Corner

A Message from Rick Molitor
Superintendent



Looking forward to spring!

It's been an interesting winter with the recent snowstorms which caused some school closures and changes to our schedule. I want to thank our team, students and families for their patience and flexibility over the past few months. We're hoping for a milder spring as we finish out the school year. Overall, we lost nine days to weather and gained seven of them back by switching three non-student days in the calendar and adding four at the end of the year. Please be sure to check the revised district calendar on our website to make sure you have the most current information: jcsd.k12.or.us/district/calendar.

Thank you to our classified staff

Please join us in thanking our classified staff next month as we celebrate National Classified Employee Week March 6 through 10. While we appreciate our classified team year-round for the incredible work they do to create a great learning environment for our students, next month, we shine a spotlight. We would not be as successful in our classrooms without the support staff and all they do to keep our schools running smoothly and make our students feel welcome and valued.

Water testing

The latest school building water testing results are in and all of the drinking fountains and food prep sinks are within EPA tolerances. For details visit our website at jcsd.k12.or.us.

Thanks to all

There are many great things happening in our schools every single day. We're very proud of our students and grateful to our dedicated team, families and community members for their support. We ask that you stay connected and don't hesitate to get in touch if you have questions or comments.

Rick Molitor, *JCS D Superintendent*



Top photos: Metolius students enjoy hands-on learning during Science Fridays.

Metolius students reaching higher for Science Fridays

Metolius Elementary School teachers and staff are going the extra mile to make learning effective and fun. In an effort to provide extra challenges in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), Metolius teachers are blocking out time on Fridays for hands-on science projects that support advanced learning. On Fridays, students who are on or ahead of schedule during the school week are encouraged to initiate their own learning and dig deeper into scientific exploration.

"Although this isn't built into our schedule, we feel it is necessary for a multitude of reasons," said Carrie Dunten who co-teaches 5th grade with Kermit Kumle at Metolius. "These activities are so successful because students crave science and they also need these skills to be successful in middle and high school science classes," added Kumle.

Because the district is working hard to ensure that all students get the support they need to reach their full potential, students who do not finish the week's assignments get support and encouragement in quiet classrooms where they can concentrate on catching up for the week.

According to Dunten, all students are becoming more engaged and actively participating during the week so they can participate in STEM projects on Fridays. Attendance rates are also improving, said Dunten, because the kids want to get their work done.

"We just love these Friday activities," said Dunten! It is a fun way for our team to end the week too!"

Search for a new superintendent

The search for a new superintendent to lead JCS D 509J beginning in July is in full swing with help from a screening committee that includes board members, administrators, teachers, staff, parents and community members. The screening committee will present candidates to the board on March 2nd.

"We feel good about the process because our district team, parents and communities members are very engaged in helping us fund the right leader to move us forward," said JCS D School Board Chair Tom Norton.

According to Norton, the board will narrow the list of candidates and conduct reference checks and site visits between March 20 and April 4th. Following a public forum to gain insights from the community, the board hopes to vote to hire the new superintendent at the board meeting on April 10th.

"This is an important decision for our kids and we're committed to a thorough and careful process," said Norton. "We've made some great strides over the past several years and we need to maintain and grow our progress."



JCMS students participate in the annual Iron Chef competition.

JCMS Iron Chefs shine again

For the past several years, JCMS students have competed in an Iron Chef competition to grow and improve their culinary skills. This month's Iron Chef cook off brought four teams to the table, showing off dishes from various cultures.

"All the teams did a fantastic job and they were very excited to be a part of this program" said JCMS Assistant Principal Brent Walsh.

With coaching from 6th grade teacher Casey Claus and the OSU outreach program, the young chefs have been working over the past several weeks on food selection, food preparation and overall cooking skills. Judges included JCMS teachers Steve Cox and Erin Potampa.

The winning team of 6th graders included Perla Cohetzaltila, Weslie Thomas, Ethan Benham and Melissa Baldwin who moved on to the finals and will compete against teams from Culver, Warm Springs and Crook County.

"This is such a great thing for our kids. We are so thankful to be able to provide students with these opportunities. OSU deserves a huge shout out as do the teachers that work with our kids."

— Brent Walsh, *JCMS assistant principal*

JCS D Alumni: Where are they now?

Do you know a JCS D alumni who has moved on to college and/or career success? We are looking to feature our graduates in future *Schools in Action* updates. If you know of a former student, drop a note and photo to Superintendent Rick Molitor: rmolitor@509j.net.

Visit the District website at
jcsd.k12.or.us



Big Muddy School students were able to attend school everyday during the winter storms.

A window into Big Muddy School

Big Muddy School is the smallest school in JCS D and also the farthest away. Located 51 miles north east of Madras on the Washington Family Ranch, Big Muddy serves 21 students in grades K through 8 along with four high school students in partnership with Madras High School. The students who attend this unique district school live in staff housing on the ranch with their families, who work in various positions to support Christian youth camps run on the 64,000-acre property owned by Young Life, a non-denominational Christian ministry.

According to Big Muddy Principal Melinda Boyle who is also the curriculum director for JCS D, the small school's test scores continue to top the state average in English Language Arts and Math.

"This school's supportive community, small size and beautiful setting create a truly unique learning environment for our students," said Boyle. "We were probably the only school in the district not to miss a day during the recent snow storms."

In 1981, Big Muddy Ranch was a cult compound for Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. Today, it is home to the largest Youth Life Christian camp in the United States. The property includes a manmade lake, Olympic-size pool, three zip lines, go-kart track and an 88,000-square-foot sports center. In addition to Summer camp programs, the ranch hosts groups during the school year for outdoor schools, retreats and seminars.

March

- 12 OperaBend presents La Boheme/ 3-5 pm
- 16-17 High Desert Community Theater Guild presents "Let's Hang Him & Read the Will"/ 7 pm
- 19 High Desert Community Theater Guild presents "Let's Hang Him & Read the Will"/ 2 pm
- 18 US Senator Jeff Merkley Town Hall Meeting/ 9:30 am
- 22 MHS Music Dept. Concert/ 7-8 pm

PAC Calendar

Calendar

March

- 3 Regular School Day
- 13 Regular School Day
School Board Meeting/6 pm District Office
- 27-31 No School/Spring Break

April

- 4 Public Forum to meet superintendent candidates/PAC (Time TBD)

