

Kennedy

Continued from A3

exercising and stuff like that, I decided that it would be just fine for us to play basketball."

The staff at Kennedy sees the fluidity of the spark not as a detriment but as a great asset to these programs. The ability to find what students are interested in is the end-all-be-all. And without this ability to adapt the class would not be outside on a 40 degree December day playing basketball.

Kennedy's outdoor basketball court, like most things at the school, deviates from the norm. The small court, with its wooden roof that allows it to be played on all-year long, features a three-point line just a step away from half-court and is begging for a game of full-court pickup to be played on it. When the students play, they shoot full-court shots and are not concerned with the nuances of form or defense. Their games are played with Lonzo Ball's confidence and Lavar Ball's athleticism and it is clear the

main goal of not being in a classroom is achieved.

"The goal is – with spark – is to get the kids an opportunity to do what they want to do and so as long as it has academic value," said Heritage.

"The more we can get the kids engaged, the more effective it is to reach our goal."

"...we're different"

Inside a classroom, less than a three-point shot away from the hoop outside, three kids wait

in line for a glue gun. Despite Vickie Costello's best efforts to make it to the store during lunch to pick up an extra one, the kids will have to share if they want to finish their Christmas centerpieces.

It's the latest project for the crafts spark that has shrunk in recent weeks but allows students the freedom to be creative, pick their projects, and express themselves.

Today, they're doing that by arranging pinecones and candles and berries on sheets of wood to give out as gifts. Earlier this year, they made life-sized silhouettes using their classmates and black paper. Still to come, a 40" by 60" bear to be hung in the school's gym.

"It's funny, if you go to the school district and look at all of the other school mascots, they're all in the cat family," Costello said. "But Kennedy is the bear, we're different."

It's true, Kennedy is different. At Cottage Grove High School, art students restore carousel horses for a community project but they don't trace the life cycle of Chinook salmon my monitor a tank of eggs like they do in Costello's crafts park.

"I'm crafty," Costello said, "but not a native artist." So, she seeks help from others and like all other spark instructors, lets students lead the way.

Jam sessions

Wood planked walls curve into the ceiling that catches the sounds of Kennedy's gym. There's no squeak of sneakers

chasing after a basketball. Instead, cords and hesitant strumming of a learning guitar and the guiding bow strokes of a violin. It's the music spark.

An AV projector sits under the basketball hoop and a whiteboard centers a group of tables. "Be the change you want to see in the world," it asks.

On the other side of the half court line are six cafeteria tables with lunch ladies chattering between notes.

There's a circle of guitars with sheet music laid down on drums and hardly consulted.

Instructor Matt Hall wanders the group, his violin tucked at his chin, his boots caked with dirt and his sweater vest just slightly askew. His hand comes up in between bow strokes to encourage three singers to project.

"Some say life will beat you down."

Break your heart, steal your crown."

The skill levels vary from students who earn the praise of a veteran musician to those who have just picked up the guitar.

Like every other spark, music is dictated by students and Hall allows them to choose songs to work on, filling in where suggestions are lacking.

But when he sets his bow back to the strings, it's impossible to tell whose suggestion this song was and what was disjointed, confusing chatter becomes a harmony of effort that finds a rhythm and fills the gym. It turns into a jam session between the cafeteria and whiteboard,

just this side of half court.

"So I've started out, for God knows where."

I guess I'll know when I get there."

Cohorts

All five sparks fit into a 55-minute window in the cohort model. The rest of it is made up of language arts, social studies, math, science and health. Teachers hold court in the traditional way and students complete assignments but that's where the comparison to a CGHS schedule ends.

Each cohort is made up of 15 students and is given a schedule. Every two weeks, that schedule changes. It's called, the tumble.

"If you're not a morning person and you have, say, math in the morning, we want to give them an opportunity to have math in the afternoon," Ketcher said.

So while students may start the year with one schedule, they'll end it having had nearly every combination of classes, which allows students the chance to do well in classes they may have failed at 8 a.m. Cohorts also allows students to meet state requirements by passing standardized tests or completing work samples.

And because the cohort model is the most structured, it means other programs can bounce in and out of it and the model itself is fluid.

On Mondays, an advisory period is taken out of the time allotted for spark. On Mondays

and Fridays, 15 minutes from two cohort classes are given to students who work on crew in the cafeteria or around the grounds (for which they can earn one credit for every 64 hours worked) and on Wednesdays, there's a trip for one cohort to a wetlands restoration site where they earn money that funds field trips (taken nearly every Friday), prom and t-shirts for the school.

This build-your-own-education model is uniquely designed for the students at Kennedy with the intention of graduating as many students as possible. But not everyone wants a diploma.

Showing up

Attendance is a growing dilemma for schools across the state of Oregon, including CGHS and Kennedy. The spark program helps, but once a student turns 18, truancy laws that allow schools to fine students for missing class, are no longer relevant. Traditional GED programs used to be a way to lure students back in and advance them out into the world but changes to the test in 2016 made a GED harder to obtain.

"If a student has been out of school for two years and comes back for their GED, I don't like to put them in the program," Ketcher said, noting she'd rather place them in Odysseyware where they earn six credits a term while catching up on material that will help them pass the GED test.

Kennedy's program attempts to reel in the attendance issue

by making it mandatory for GED-seeking students who are eligible for the program by being at least 16-years-old, one year behind in credits and have taken geometry, algebra II and read at an 8th grade level.

Students who don't have at least a 75 percent attendance rate are on their own when it comes to paying for the GED test, which costs \$38. Practice tests cost \$6. It's an investment Ketcher said could span between \$200 and \$500 per student.

"We've never had a student who didn't meet the attendance requirement pay for their own test," Ketcher said.

Choices

By the time Ketcher calls the last number and the student chooses a gift, there's still a few left over—along with trays of cookies and treats she desperately tries to give away and she's presented with her own gift—one of the craft spark's Christmas centerpieces. Teachers chat in groups with Christmas carols floating through conversations and the AV screen adorned with the Yule log courtesy of Youtube. There's no bell signaling the end of the day, the end of the term, just students making a dash for the door and then, the bus with Ketcher following after them, her hands cupped to her mouth, shouting, "Make good choices!"

City names winners of yard light contest



The house at 1505 Jason Lee Ave. won the city's annual Christmas lights contest.

The residents at 1505 Jason Lee Ave. will have a little less to pay when their utility arrives next month.

The house, pictured above, was named the first place winner in the city's annual Christmas lights contest.

"The entries were great. There are some amazing decorations around town," city manager Richard Meyers said.

The house on Jason Lee Ave will receive a \$100 credit on their utility bill. Second place (located at 1157 S. 2nd St.) will get a \$75 credit and third place winner (located at 1808 S. 4th St.) will receive a \$50 credit.

The mayor and city council judged 22 entries in all. Other entries included:

317 South 3rd Street
435 Kalapuya Ct.
440 Kalapuya Ct.
234 G Street
1425 W. Harrison Avenue
1517 Jason Lee
1513 Jason Lee
1505 Jason Lee
1440 Jason Lee
1205 Meeker
1157 South 2nd Street
1118 South 2nd Street
1330 South 4th
325 Grant
1808 South 4th
660 Wilson
805 Wilson
987 Wilson
2262 Wilson
2210 Wilson
1950 South 8th
234 South 11th Street

Worship Directory

DRAIN:
HOPE U.M.C.
131 W "A" St. Drain, OR
541-315-1617
Pastor: Lura Kidner-Miesen
Fellowship & Song: 11:30am
Potluck Lunch: 12:00pm
Worship: 12:30pm

COTTAGE GROVE:
6th & Gibbs Church of Christ
195 N. 6th St. • 541-942-3822
Pastor: Aaron Earlywine
Youth & Families Pastor:
Seth Bailey
Service times: 9am & 10:30am
Sunday School: 9am for all ages
Christian Education
Nursery for pre-k - 3rd Grade
www.6thandgibbs.com

Calvary Baptist Church
77873 S 6th St • 541-942-4290
Pastor: Riley Hendricks
Sunday School: 9:45am
Worship: 11:00am
The Journey: Sunday 5:00pm
Praying Thru Life: Wednesday
6:00pm

Calvary Chapel Cottage Grove
1447 Hwy 99 (Village Plaza)
541-942-6842
Pastor: Jeff Smith
Two Services on Sun:
9am & 10:45am
Youth Group Bible Study
Child Care 10:45am Service Only
www.cgcalvary.org

Center for Spiritual Living
Cottage Grove
700 Gibbs Ave.
(Community Center)
Rev. Bobby Lee
Meets Sunday 3:00 p.m.
cslcottagegrove@gmail.com

Church of Christ
420 Monroe St • 541-942-8565
Sunday Service: 10:30am

Cottage Grove Bible Church
1200 East Quincy Avenue
541-942-4771
Pastor: Bob Singer
Worship 11am
Sunday School: 9:45am
AWANA age 3-8th Grade,
Wednesdays Sept-May, 6:30pm
www.cgbible.org

Cottage Grove Faith Center
33761 Row River Rd.
541-942-4851
Lead Pastor: Kevin Prueitt
www.cg4.tv
Full Children's Ministry available
Service: 10:00am

Delight Valley
Church of Christ
33087 Saginaw Rd. East
541-942-7711
Pastor: Bob Friend
Two Services:
9am - Classic in the Chapel
10:30am - Contemporary in the
Auditorium

First Presbyterian Church
3rd and Adams St
541-942-4479
Pastor: Karen Hill
Worship: 10:00am
Sunday School: 10:00am
www.cgpresbynews.com

Hope In The Grove
700 E. Gibbs • 541-520-9529
Pastor: Wayne Husk
Sunday services:
Worship: 8:30a
Coffee Fellowship: 9:30a
Bible Study: 9:45a

Hope Fellowship
United Pentecostal Church
100 S. Gateway Blvd.
541-942-2061
Pastor: Dave Bragg
Worship: 11:00am Sunday
Bible Study: 7:00pm Wednesday
www.hopefellowshipupc.com
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Living Faith Assembly
467 S. 10th St. • 541-942-2612
Pastor: Rulon Combs
Worship & Children's
Church 10:00 am
Youth 180 Mondays 5:30-8pm

**Non-Denominational
Church of Christ**
1041 Pennoyer Ave
541-942-8928
Preacher: Tony Martin
Sunday Bible Study: 10:00am
Sunday Worship: 10:50am & 5:30pm
www.pennoyerveccoc.com

Old Time Gospel Fellowship
103 S. 5th St. • 541-942-4999
Pastor: Jim Edwards
Sunday Service: 10:00am
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and St. Philip Benizi**
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1025 N. 19th St.
541-942-3420
Father: Joseph Hung Nguyen
Holy Mass:
Tue-Thu: 8:30am; Sat: 5:30pm
Sun: 10:30am
Confession: After daily mass,
Sat. 4-5pm or by appointment
St. Philip Benizi, Creswell
552 Holbrook Lane
541-895-8686, Sunday: 8:30am

St. Andrews Episcopal Church
1301 W. Main • 541-767-9050
Rev. Lawrence Crumb
"Church with the flags."
Worship: Sunday 10:30am
All Welcome

Seventh-day Adventist Church
820 South 10th Street
541-942-5213
Pastor: Kevin Miller
Bible Study: Saturday, 9:15 am
Worship Service: Saturday, 10:40
Mid-week Service: Wednesday, 1:00

Trinity Lutheran Church
6th & Quincy • 541-942-2373
Pastor: James L. Markus
Sunday School & Adult Education
9:15am
Sunday Worship 10:30 am
Comm. Kitchen Free Meal Tue & Thur
5:00pm TLC Groups
tlccg.com

United Methodist Church
334 Washington • 541-942-3033
Pastor: Lura Kidner-Miesen
Worship: 10:30am
Comm. Dinner (Adults \$5,
Kids Free)
1st & 3rd Monday 5-6:00pm
umcgrove.org

"VICTORY" Country Church
913 S. 6th Street • 541-942-5913
Pastor: Barbara Dockery
Worship Service: 10:00am
Message: "WE BELIEVE IN
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