

**Kennedy continued from A1**

It's part of Henson's teaching style; reassurance with a dash of tough love.

It's why his language arts class can descend into a conversation about space travel and veer back to align with a discussion on topic sentences and thesis statements. Students get two-minute cell phone breaks and when they work independently to ferret out key terms, they can do so while listening to rock music from Henson's computer or their own through borrowed headphones.

"I have one student who says, 'I can't do it. I can't do it.' Every time." Henson said of one of his combination kids. "They do it and say, 'I did it' and I tell them, 'Yes, you did it, just like last time. I always look at it as a choice. At Kennedy, it's this microcosm of choices," he said.

Another choice Odysseyware is a computer-based program

taught by one teacher who reviews student work and holds a weekly check-in. It requires 15 hours a week broken into three hours a day, Monday through Friday. It affords students up to six credits a term, two less than the cohort model. "It's for kiddos who are behind, to get them up to speed," Ketcher said. "Ideally, we want to cycle them out of Odysseyware and into the cohorts."

It's an ideal program for students who don't quite fit into the cohort model due to a variety of circumstances that range from having anxiety to simply being behind in their schooling. They can catch-up and acclimate to school again while earning credits that will add up to the golden number for a diploma: 75.

A spark A key in the mission of Kennedy is to get students to be at school. It often feels getting attendance

up is not just half the battle, but is the entirety of the war. So after former principal Mike Ingman and Ketcher attended a conference about students pursuing what ignites them – their spark – the school took the idea and ran with it.

To get students excited about what they are learning, it starts with the teachers. They focus on what kids are passionate about and, with input from the students, create a class that meets twice a week based around a topic. The teacher, in the role of a facilitator, guides the conversation and lessons to where the students are interested in going.

The sparks filled a gap for students who had bemoaned the fact that Kennedy offered no elective courses. In an effort to break up the steady rhythm of the school day these classes let students dive

into something they are interested in. This year, those interests include a green team, crafts, music, basketball and storytelling.

"The whole idea is it was kind of part of our thing to increase student attendance. If you are doing something that kind of interests you, you're more likely going to come to school," said Jessica Martinez, the GED instructor at Kennedy and also the leader of the green team spark.

"If you're doing something you like, you're more likely to like push through those things like challenges and not be like, 'Ugh, I give up. It sucks.' And so you know, it has a lot of really good things because one it's fun, two it helps you kind of develop those skills and gives you a reason to want to be here."

**Helping kids find hobbies**

Much like adults can benefit from participating in hobbies, children can reap rewards from engaging in hobbies. According to the Child Development Institute, hobbies give children a chance to express themselves. The CDI also notes that hobbies can play an important role in children's self-discovery and boost their self-esteem.

• Involve kids in your own hobbies. Kids look up to their parents and often want to emulate what their mothers and fathers do. If possible, involve children in your own hobbies. Gardeners can teach their youngsters how to grow and tend to a garden, while painters can host family painting nights where everyone is encouraged to create their own masterpiece. Parents whose hobbies are more adult-oriented, like woodworking, can still involve their children. For example, work with children to design a new item, then show them how the item goes from paper to finished product; just avoid allowing them to use any unsafe tools or machines.

• Let kids choose an activity. While some children might take to hobbies their parents favor, others might need to be given some freedom to find their own activities. Afford youngsters this chance, recognizing that it might take some time before

kids find an activity that genuinely sparks their passion.

• Be a source of encouragement. Some hobbies may prove more difficult than kids first imagined, requiring some perseverance before they can be enjoyed fully. In such instances, observe youngsters while they engage in the activity. If they appear to be enjoying themselves but are periodically frustrated, encourage them to keep trying. If kids appear to be disinterested in overcoming any struggles, then they might benefit by pursuing another hobby.

• Don't hesitate to focus on fun. Hobbies can teach kids valuable lessons and provide a sense of fulfillment, but it's important that parents not overlook the importance of fun in regard to their children's hobbies. Hobbies can provide children with the same respite from busy schedules that they do adults, and that break should be as fun as possible.

Hobbies can enrich the lives of children. Finding the right activity may require some patience on the part of parents and youngsters alike.

**Students of the Month**



**NORTH DOUGLAS E/M**



Macey Mello is the North Douglas Student of the Month. Macey has great attendance, she has increased her independence and social skills, and she also helps her school by helping cafeteria staff daily!

**MACEY MELLO**



**North Douglas Fire & Rescue**  
531 South Cedar St.  
Drain, OR 97435

**LATHAM ELEMENTARY**



**REED MEYERS**

As a first grader at Latham, Reed Meyers is a natural leader. He always works hard and consistently demonstrates his personal best. He is also a great friend to everyone. We are proud to have Reed represent Latham as our Student of the Month!

**BOHEMIA ELEMENTARY**



**SOLAY HERNANDEZ**

Solay Hernandez is a first grader in Mrs. McClean's classroom. She is a kind, hard working student who always does her best and sticks with a task until it is done. She focuses and gives her whole attention in class discussions. She shows kindness and patience when working with others. She is definitely a star student!

**YONCALLA MIDDLE SCHOOL**



**FAITH ELLIOTT**

Faith Elliott 7th grade  
Hobbies: Coloring, walking cats, Volleyball, Social media

Faith was nominated as student of the month because of her citizenship and respect for others. Faith is wonderful to have in class. She volunteers to give answers, pass back papers to fellow students, is willing to help others when they are struggling on a problem and always has a big smile on her face. Faith wants to become an international lawyer who is an advocate for human trafficking victims. She plans to go to Oklahoma University to study law.



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**COTTAGE GROVE HIGH SCHOOL**



**SAWYER WEYBRIGHT**

Sawyer Weybright has been chosen for our December Student of the Month. Sawyer has done a fantastic job for Trimester 1 and all of her teachers have very positive comments to share. We look forward to the great things she will accomplish the next 4 years!

**NORTH DOUGLAS HIGH SCHOOL**



**AMY DOOLEY**

Amy is an honor roll student, enrolled in college classes, Student Council Treasurer, involved in National Honor Society, FBLA and is a three sport athlete participating in volleyball, basketball, and softball.

**YONCALLA HIGH SCHOOL**



**SHAUNASI HARDY**

Shaunasi Hardy 11th Grade  
Hobbies: School Sports, Three sport student-athlete  
Shaunasi has done an outstanding job this year in Engineering/Design and has produced, designed and engineered a model that is quite good and should be competitive in the Oregon State student bridge competition. Shaunasi wishes to become a high school music teacher. Great Quote: "I'm not a fish"



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