

With a little help from Harrison, Dorena students found a way to keep learning

By Zach Silva
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It was a homecoming of sorts for Dorena School on Monday morning. After weather kept the school closed for the past two weeks, the doors were back open and school was in session once more.

“It’s felt just like back to normal,” said Dorena principal Linda Folkman on Monday morning as she went from classroom to classroom welcoming students back to their building. “I think we’re totally back to normal, back to what we do.”

The historic snowfall that began on Sunday Feb. 24 closed school throughout the South Lane School District from Feb. 25 through March 1. On Monday March 4 schools across the district were hit with a two-hour delay before starting school once again while power outages at Dorena kept the school without power until Thursday. Folkman noted that it was a near miracle that no trees fell on the building and that the school was fortunate that last year’s leaky roof was replaced this summer.

“If we hadn’t got that new roof on that building, I imagine we would have had some pretty good water damage,” she said. With the school closed, the teachers made their way to the SLSD office where they put together a plan for the

week.

SLSD interim superintendent Dr. Larry Sullivan worked with Folkman and SLSD Director of Director of Human Resources and Director Staff Effectiveness Brian McCasline to come up with a solution of what to do with Dorena. It was resolved that the 76 Dorena students along with teachers and staff would spend the rest of the week at Harrison Elementary School.

“We have space [at Harrison]. The building was built for 615 students and we have 450,” said Sullivan. “It worked out really well.”

At Harrison, each grade level shares a common area with four different classroom spaces – or “pods” – attached to it for each specific classroom teacher. With Harrison in its first year of the building, the district decided at the start of the school year to just fill three of the four pods at each grade level. The open pods were filled for the week by Dorena elementary students while the middle school students worked in a room off the library. Now with a place to learn, it was another endeavor for teachers to determine exactly what they needed to bring from Dorena to Harrison.

“The teachers were kind of on their own. They had Monday to plan and I said to them on Monday, ‘Plan for sure on three days but think about the whole week.’ And

so they packed according to what they needed,” said Folkman. Adding, “It was dependent on the teacher on what they wanted to bring up. And the fact that I said, ‘Hey, what you bring up you have to haul back so be aware. Pack wisely.’”

In addition to adjusting to being in a new building that dwarfs the size of their school, the Dorena students, many still without power at home, had other needs for things such as a warm shower, a hot meal or their clothes washed, all of which were provided for them at Harrison. Once the necessities were taken care of, then learning could begin again.

“Now when everyone’s pretty comfortable we’re getting to some more academics. But I thought about what was going to engage them and keep them interested. What was going to give them an opportunity to voice all the stuff that has been going on in their lives,” said Dorena teacher of the second and third grade blended classroom Ariel Pavlak. Sitting in her tempo-rary classroom on Friday, she went over how the key to keeping her students engaged and transition them into an academic mode was to continue to talk, think and write about their experience with the snow.

Each year Pavlak’s class publishes a book and after recent events, the class will

now focus on the events of “Snowpocalypse 2019.” To start their brainstorming, her class shared their favorite and least favorite parts of their week of snow. The highlights and lowlights spanned a wide range from typical snow day events such as snowball fight and getting to play board games to lowlights that featured trees falling near their house, no internet and stepping in dog poop and not being able to wash it.

Pavlak, and those at Dorena, expressed gratitude to the district for getting their school quickly

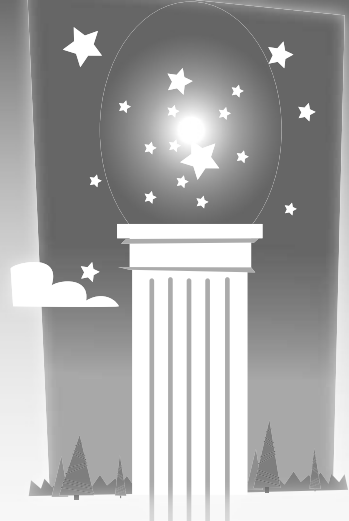
plugged into another school and to the Harrison teachers for offering assistance as needed. But after four days at Harrison, she echoed a shared feeling: it was time to go back to Dorena.

“We all felt like country bumpkins that first day. It was like, whoa... check this place out every-thing is new and shiny. Look! There’s an elevator. At first there was a lot of, this place is awe-some with all the shiny new stuff,” said Pavalk. “But now they’re like, ‘Are we going back to Dorena on Monday?’ They miss their school. We do have a really unique, small

community up there and it’s very comfortable and it’s very safe for all of us. So definitely a lot of small fish in a big pond feeling.”

Monday morning back at Dorena, students recounted their favorite memories of their time at Harrison. They enjoyed the state of the art technology, a bigger library and a hill out on the playground that they got to slide down. But now, they were back where they belong.

“We’re finally back into our regular classrooms and doing our regular stuff,” said an excited student in the second and third blended class.



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March Students of the Month

LONDON SCHOOL



SADIE CARDWELL

This month we would like to nominate Sadie Cardwell. Sadie is a 3rd grader in Ms. Henderson’s class. She is a very hard worker and follows classroom rules. Sadie does a great job in PE and is always on task. Although Sadie can be quiet, she speaks up on the playground to remind kids to play fair. She is a kindhearted keeper of the piece. Sadie’s good attitude and pleasant demeanor make her an all around great kid. Congratulations Sadie on being our March 2019 Student of the Month!

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LINCOLN MIDDLE SCHOOL



ELIJAH OZBUN

Elijah Ozbun is Lincoln Middle School’s March Student of the Month. Elijah always has a sunny disposition and is so kind to animals. He is always quick to say hello and will often go out of his way to ask about your day. Elijah has a great sense of humor, an eagerness to learn, and has the gift of brightening people’s days. He works well with other students who have a hard time finding a partner. Even if he struggles with material, he is always willing to be helped and try again. Elijah is amazing!

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HARRISON ELEMENTARY



MILO MINSHEW

Milo Minshew is a 1st grade student in the Owls Nest. Milo a very caring and kind student. He is an excellent friend who is always ready for anything. Milo really enjoys music and dancing. Milo works hard at school and continues to increase independence with tasks. He is eager to learn and has made excellent progress in communication, sign language and social interaction. Milo is such a joy to be around.

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YONCALLA MIDDLE SCHOOL



AARON MCGRATH

Aaron is an 8th grader and has a great sense of humor and while it occasionally interrupts the class, the teachers all agree that he is fun to have in class. He is also a hard worker and keeps his grades up. He is respectful but doesn’t forget we are all here to have fun! Likes to play video games and eat food. Likes PE. Aaron has no idea what he like to do when he graduates from HS but I bet it will include eating and playing video games. Aaron the son of Jamie and Jamie McGrath

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LINCOLN MIDDLE SCHOOL



GABE LYDA

Gabe Lyda is Lincoln Middle School’s February Student of the Month. Gabe is such a hard

worker who truly cares about doing well. Regardless of how “easy” an assignment can be he actively chooses to give 110% on everything. His quirky sense of humor and unique observations make his class participation more than just impressive, but rather enjoyable. He can always be counted on to be polite and friendly to both kids and adults. Lastly, his dedication to thorough thinking and detailed artwork are noticed by his classmates and teachers alike! Thanks for your awesome smile and effort GABE!

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ELKTON HIGH SCHOOL



PAUL YEAROUS

Paul is a nice young man who is thoughtful, responsible and a dedicated student. He is an attentive, active and analytical student who is a pleasure to have in class. Paul is a very conscientious and diligent student. He is inquisitive, hard-working and always willing to try. He is polite, respectful and has a great sense of humor. Paul is always wearing a smile and is a good friend to his fellow students.

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