

# ...NewsLinks

**A Web-based newsletter for the staff of Everett Public Schools**

Dec. 15, 2009 (*NewsLinks* articles are now [archived on DocuShare](#))

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## SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS – good news reported to the board on Dec. 8

Congratulations to the 29 staff members who have earned National Board Certification this year. With [90 staff](#) now holding this affirmation of their professionalism and dedication, our district now has an impressive eight percent of its teaching staff so honored.

Although it is not “official,” and we’ve not been authorized by OSPI to release any statistics, we are anticipating very good news about the district’s graduation rate. The work of the On Time Graduation Committee is the finest example of continuous quality improvement I’ve ever seen. It was good news indeed to see the extended graduation rate jump above 80 percent last year. You are going to be even more pleased to see how far it has increased this year. These amazing results are happening because everyone in K-12 education is focused on individual student success.

The district now officially has four robotics teams – one at Jackson High which took top national honors last year; a new one at Heatherwood and two elementary teams from Forest View and Hawthorne. More news is coming in the next week about how these teams are placing during December competitions.

At least one Hawthorne student is living the memory of his Lego League robotics win from last year by wearing his medal every day this year. I know firsthand because he rushed to me on the playground last week to make sure I had a

chance to admire the medallion and hear about his experience and why robotics is so much fun!

### **CHANGE COMING IN THE ABSENCE REPORTING SYSTEM – Are you ready?**

To provide a more stable operation of the absence reporting system, SmartFind *Express* will be updated on Monday, **Dec. 21, 2009**, and will not be available between 7 a.m. and noon.

#### **New phone number and Web address after Dec. 21, 2009:**

- **1-888-632-6439**
- **[www.everettsd.eschoolsolutions.com](http://www.everettsd.eschoolsolutions.com)**

Remember to reset this new Web address on your “favorites” and “shortcut” on your desktop. The current Web address and phone number for SmartFind *Express* will not be available after 7 a.m. Dec. 21.

Your access ID and PIN will remain the same.

### **NEWS FROM THE FOUNDATION – United Way campaign success and classroom grant announcements**

#### **Thank you! This year’s United Way campaign set an all time district record!**

Total participation grew by 28 percent and grew to 404 staff members. Your total donations grew 15 percent to an impressive \$108,324. Our community thanks you for your generosity during this tough economic time. Also, the Foundation's board of directors thanks all staff members who chose to designate a portion of their donation to the Foundation this year in support of all of our staff and students.

You still have time to turn in your pledge forms to the Foundation office at Hawthorne Elementary. Please inter-office your forms by Dec. 18.

**The Foundation proudly announces 60 classroom grants!** We awarded grants to 25 schools in the district for a total of over \$32,000. More than 14,000 students will benefit from the innovative projects designed by school staff and funded by the Foundation. These include buying classroom books, whole school math nights for students and families, and science and art programs.

We are proud to continue the growth of the classroom grant program and thank all of our teachers for their submissions this year! [The full list of this year's recipients is online.](#)

### **LEVY INFORMATION SESSIONS – mark your calendar to attend one near you**

Feb. 9, 2010 is the date when voters will consider two school district levies. One is a *Replacement Levy for Educational Programs and Operations* (You may remember this being called the *Maintenance and Operations* levy in years past) to replace what is expiring in 2010. The second levy is a *Building Repair and*

*Technology* levy for computers, software and major facility systems repairs (roofs, heating, ventilation, for example).

[Details about each levy are on the district Web site.](#) Dr. Cohn will be presenting more information at the dates and times listed below. You are invited to attend any session that is convenient for you.

Staff	Date	Time	Location
Longfellow	December 7	9 a.m.	Longfellow
North MS	December 17	3 p.m.	Library
Everett HS	January 4	2 p.m.	Little Theater
Maintenance	January 6	7:30 a.m.	<i>Staff Rm - tentative</i>
Cascade HS	January 6	2:15 p.m.	Band Room
Center	January 7	9:30 a.m.	C1/C2
Heatherwood	January 11	3 p.m.	Library
Evergreen MS	January 12	2:15 p.m.	Library
Gateway MS	January 19	3 p.m.	Library
HM Jackson HS	January 20	2:15 p.m.	Library
Eisenhower MS	January 25	3 p.m.	Library

### **SIGN UP TO BE A CULMINATING EXHIBITION PANELIST – or share this information with someone you know**

As high school students prepare to graduate, they complete a culminating exhibition. Students present this major, self-directed project to a panel of volunteers, sharing key elements of what they have learned from their academic work, and how they plan to take responsibility for their future learning.

Being a panelist takes only about four hours of your time and is a great opportunity to see what high school students today do to meet standards and to graduate. Your feedback is invaluable in these milestone student presentations.

Below is a list of dates when panelists are needed at each school and how to contact a panelist coordinator.

School	CE Dates	Times	Contact	Phone No.
Cascade High	1/21/10	12:45-4 p.m.	Trish Roberts	425-385-6030
Everett High	1/13/10 & 1/14/10	2:10-4:30 p.m.	Jodie Sievers	425-385-4426
HM Jackson High	1/21/10	1:00-4:30 p.m. & 5:00-8:30 p.m.	Vicki Haskell	425-385-7003
Sequoia High	2/2/10	10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	Nancy Bertholet	425-385-5100

### **NEWS AROUND THE DISTRICT – great things happening everywhere**

1. [Cedar Wood is generating solar power!](#) On the PUD Web site, you can [see exactly how much electricity the school's solar array is generating](#) and track the environmental benefits.  
At the Cedar Wood booth at the Student Technology and Learning Celebration in January, you can learn more about the school's solar generation project. Sign up for the PUD's *Planet Power* project and get a \$15 Amazon.com gift certificate.
2. PTA *Reflections* art show is on display at the Educational Service Center at 4730 Colby Ave. in Everett from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays through Feb. 4. This year's theme is "Beauty is ...". Come see original work in many formats by students as young as preschool and as sophisticated as 12th-grade. A reception for the artists will be held Jan. 6 from 5:30 to 8 p.m.
3. Betty Cobbs is the featured writer in this month's edition of [Hope Health Letter](#). She writes about the joys of volunteering.
4. [Cascade HS wins Adobe Youth Voices grant.](#)
5. [Coach Nations recognized for sportsmanship](#)
6. [Over 550 participate in Walktober campaign](#)

#### **YOUR SCHOOL BOARD AT WORK – new board members and new board officers**

**Jeff Russell and Jessica Olson sworn in as new board members** – A much larger-than-usual audience said goodbye to Karen Madsen and Sue Cooper and hello to the newly elected school board members. Because Karen's father underwent heart surgery in Nebraska this week, she participated in the meeting by phone.

Together Karen and Sue have 37 years of school board experience, and it was clear from the [audience's comments](#) that their experience and dedication has been fully realized and appreciated and they will be missed.

After each accolade, Sue and Karen characteristically reflected the gratitude they had received back to those who had given it. *Being a board member in Everett is an opportunity to receive unearned credit. It is the staff here who achieve the great things you have accorded to us, and it is your school board who are honored each day by working with you.*

**Ed Petersen elected president; Kristie Dutton vice-president** – After the newly elected members were [sworn in](#), President Petersen acknowledged the experience represented by Sue and Karen. "Sue alone has more experience than those of us now seated. But with change comes opportunity, and I am confident in this new team's dedication and ability to do extraordinary work on behalf of each student."

### **Hutteball & Oremus approved to design H.M. Jackson cafeteria expansion –**

In September, the board approved a project to expand the H.M. Jackson HS cafeteria to better serve the district's high school with the largest number of students (1911 as of Dec. 1, 2009) in the area of the district with the most rapidly growing population. Hutteball & Oremus has designed a number of district projects including modernizations of Eisenhower, Silver Lake and Jefferson.

**GEAR UP: *College, my dream, my plan*** – In 2005-06, 75 seventh-graders were chosen and accepted the challenge of GEAR UP. If they successfully met the program's requirements and graduated from high school, a college scholarship would be waiting. Today, 52 of the original participants are now high school juniors at EHS and passionate about GEAR UP and their college plans. Only seven of the original students failed to meet program requirements; the others no longer in GEAR UP moved out of this district. As Gretchen Stiger reported, Everett's GEAR UP program has a greater success rate than others in the nation. "Most programs have only a 50 percent retention rate. Our students stay in GEAR UP."

The school board heard life and GEAR UP stories from students James Muramoto, Mileny Garcia, Felicia Finley and Alisa Rud. Each spoke of GEAR UP as a "family" and of how staff who believe in them have changed their lives today and their futures.

The board and superintendent shook the hands of Stiger and each student and thanked them for their determination and courage to tell their personal stories. Superintendent Cohn explained to the new board members why he spends so much time in district schools and brings students to school board meetings. "Having students present to you helps us all focus on the flesh and blood of what we do and is simply the best way to understand the importance of our work."

**The board's work study session focused on community engagement discussion topics.** Last week [Superintendent Cohn announced plans to form a Fiscal Advisory Council and an Equity and Access Council](#) and [the board's plans to involve the community in a 20-month process to renew the strategic plan](#). At their Dec. 8 work study session, the board reviewed and refined the [topics to be covered in four community conversations](#) and four study sessions leading up to a much larger community visioning event in the fall of 2011.

### **OPPORTUNITIES – for students and staff**

1. **H1N1 vaccinations available for everyone** – Snohomish Health District announced last week that H1N1 vaccine may be administered to anyone who requests it and who has no contraindications. There are no age restrictions. The Health District advises those who wish to receive a vaccine to check with their health provider. They also encourage those considered to be at highest risk of complications from H1N1 (pregnant women, those under age 25 and

those 25-64 with underlying health conditions) to check with health providers about the vaccine.

2. **Free haircuts for first time guests at Evergreen Beauty & Barber College**, Tuesday through Saturday until Dec. 23 at 802 SE Everett Mall Way. Appointments are available between 9:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Please call 425-423-9186 for appointments for this free offer. For directions, visit [www.evergreenbeauty.edu](http://www.evergreenbeauty.edu). The college has asked that we help spread the word among needy families.

3. **Holiday Auction** - The transportation department's fifth annual Holiday Auction is now underway in their offices in the Athletics Building. Open to everyone, the sale benefits the Domestic Violence Center and Christmas House (a local charity providing coats and toys to needy families). Last year approximately \$1,200 was raised for these organizations.

This is a silent auction of donated "slightly used" or "re-gifted" items (*the term "white elephant" also comes to mind*). The event culminates on Wednesday, Dec. 16 with a 10 a.m. performance by North MS choir, a cookie fest, and closing of the auction at noon.

4. **Create original glass designs** – Children 12 and under are invited to create an original design to be turned into a glass object as part of the [Kids Design Glass](#) program at the Museum of Glass in Tacoma. Each month, glassblowers choose one winning design and make two glass sculptures – one for an upcoming exhibition and one for the winning designer.
5. **Essay contest for students in grades fifth through eighth.** Sponsored by the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, this essay contest involves savings bond prizes from \$250 to \$1,000 for the winning students. [Application form and rules are online.](#)
6. **USA Today's SAMMY Awards mean \$7,500 scholarship for scholar athletes** – applications due March 5, 2010. The award honors student athletes from across the country who demonstrate excellence in the classroom, on athletic fields and in the community. Twenty-five such students will earn the award and receive a \$7,500 scholarship, a chance to be featured in a "milk mustache" ad and a trip to Disney World. [A 2008 winner was from Snohomish.](#) The [rules, forms and history of winners back to 1999 are online.](#)
7. **Amgen Award for Science Teaching Excellence (AASTE)** This award is designed to recognize and honor extraordinary K-12 science teachers who significantly impact their students through exemplary science teaching and who achieve demonstrated results in student learning in communities where Amgen operates.

Four Washington state winners will each receive the following benefits:

- An unrestricted cash award of \$5,000
- A restricted \$5,000 cash grant to the recipient's school for the expansion or enhancement of a school science program, science resources, or the professional development of the school's science teachers.

[More information and applications are online.](#) Applications must be submitted by Feb. 5, 2010, to be valid. Winners will be announced between April and June 2010.

#### **OPPORTUNITIES IN BRIEF – quick reminders from past issues**

1. **A \$100,000 federal grant funds free marine workshops for teachers and field experiences for students, April 17 – 18.** For more information call or e-mail [Amy Johnson](#) at Edmonds Community College's Center for Service-Learning at 425-640-1882, or go to [www.serviceeducationadventure.org](http://www.serviceeducationadventure.org).

#### **POLICY & PROCEDURE INFO – links to [all policies and procedures are online](#)**

Everett Public Schools complies with all federal and state rules and regulations and does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, veteran status, or disability. This holds true for all students who are interested in participating in educational programs and/or extracurricular school activities. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed to the school district's Affirmative Action Officer, Title IX Officer, ADA District Coordinator, or Section 504 Coordinator. Affirmative Action Officer, Carol Stolz, 3715 Oakes Ave., Everett WA 98201, 425-385-4106, Title IX Officer, Randi Seaberg, 3715 Oakes Ave., Everett WA 98201, 425-385-4104, ADA Coordinator, Kristine McDowell, 202 Alder St., Everett WA 98203, 425-385-5250, Section 504 Coordinator, Becky Ballbach, 4730 Colby Ave., Everett WA 98203, 425-385-4086.