

Superintendent's Message

Patriot's Pen Contest Winner

Dear Families,

The principals, cabinet and I meet every two weeks for our leadership team meeting. Three weeks ago, Lynn Loftstrom, one of our Literacy Coaches, led us through a close reading strategy with the purpose of demonstrating the power of carefully reading a piece of text more than once (Close Reading). We all felt our comprehension, understanding and connections of the text increased dramatically. The strategy was done using paper copies of the text with pencils and highlighters.

We are very proud of our sixth grade Enumclaw Middle School student, Sophia DeMarco, who won the Enumclaw VFW Post 1949 writing contest with her essay. Congratulations, Sophia!

The dictionary tells us freedom is the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint. To me, freedom is captured in faces, not words. I think of our country's history and its heroes. I think of those who fought for freedom, those who stood for freedom, and those who embodied freedom.

Freedom is the power to act. It is Rosa Parks standing for freedom to live equally. It is Benjamin Franklin standing for American freedom on England's soil. It is our founding fathers gathering for freedom and signing a Declaration of Independence guaranteeing each man and woman freedom of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Freedom is the power to dream. It is Amelia Earhart dreaming of having the freedom to fly. It is Martin Luther King who had "a dream" of brotherhood, and a nation that was an oasis of "freedom and justice". It was Neil Armstrong who dreamed the impossible and took one "small step for man and a giant leap for mankind." It is Abraham Lincoln who dreamed of peace in conflict and unity in war.

Freedom is the power to choose. It is the Miracle Worker, Anne Sullivan, who chose to see potential in Helen Keller and freed her to communicate. It is thousands of men and women, who have risked their futures, their families and their lives to fight for the freedoms of America and its citizens. It is mothers who give their children wings to fly. It is teachers that free their students to think. It is children who see the world as possibility and refuse to be told they cannot make a difference.

Freedom is to be treasured. Gail Halvorsen once told me that he had asked some children in post World War II Germany why they were so happy, despite having nothing. They responded, "We have freedom and that is worth more than anything." For those with freedom, it is often taken for granted. For those without freedom, it is priceless. To me, freedom is living in a country where I get to stand for what I believe in, even if I stand alone. Where I can pursue my dreams, no matter how unrealistic. Where my freedom to choose has been paid for in the blood of those who truly valued freedom.



Last week, Chris Beals, Terry Parker and Tracy Brown gave us a new piece of text (electronically) and we went through each step of the same close reading process but this time instead of using a paper copy of the text, pencils and highlighters, we did everything electronically. Below you will see a comparison of how we did this.

Close Reading Strategy

Using Paper, Pencil and Highlighters	Using Digital Tools
1. Listen to text as it is read aloud. Provide handout of text.	1. Listen to text as it is read aloud. Text sent out electronically.
2. Reread text to self. Underline words or phrases that you are unsure of, are wondering about, or jump out at you.	2. Reread text to self. Use toolbar in the Google doc. containing the text to underline or highlight.
3. Write questions or wonderings about underlined text on paper as you reread	3. Use "Comment" button on toolbar to pose questions or wonderings about underlined text
4. Turn and Talk about your questions and wonderings	4. Turn and Talk about your questions and wonderings
5. List questions from the group on large chart paper	5. List questions from group in a shared document that all can view
6. Identify questions for follow-up	6. Assign questions to research and provide time to follow-up

In our short time to debrief this, we found the strategy to be just as effective and more efficient using our electronic devices. The efficiency of collaboration and how a teacher could view the individual questions and wonderings was greater because each teacher could access a shared document with all of the students' comments. As we integrate additional electronic devices into our system, we will continue to explore how we can adapt and even push the thinking of good strategies to higher levels through the use of technology.

In partnership with you, **Mike**

Calendar of Events: December/January

When

What

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|-----------------------|---|
| December 16 | High School Winter Choir Concert at 7:00 pm |
| December 17 | Black Diamond Elementary Holiday Sing-Along at 6:00 pm |
| December 17 | Kibler's Winter Wonderland Reading Night at 6:00 pm |
| December 17 | Thunder Mt. Middle School Holiday Program at 7:00 pm |
| December 21 | Board meeting at district office – 6:30 pm |
| December 21-January 3 | Winter Break |
| January 4 | Welcome back to school! |
| January 4 | Board work study at Westwood Elementary – 6:30 pm |
| January 14 | State of Education Address and soup supper at the high school Commons – 6:00 pm |
| January 15-17 | One Act Plays |

Thunder Mountain Middle School Celebrates Veteran's Day



Left: Thunder Mountain Boy Scouts Seth Hanson, Kellen Murray, and Zach Montgomery lead the flag ceremony to open the assembly. **Right:** Choir teacher Sarah van Vegten leads the Thunder Mountain choir in singing the National Anthem with Veterans representing the branches of the military on stage.



Thunder Mountain students Kolby Vogel and Shelby Callahan open the assembly honoring our Nation's Veterans

Socktober



Sunrise teacher, Marilyn Firnkoess, and her class collected 60 pairs of socks for kids in need during the month of "Socktober." This is a part of their classroom commitment to BE AWE-SOME (helping others in big and small ways each day). Thank you to Mrs. Firnkoess and her students for their concern for others!

Active Learners!

At a recent meeting, our school and district leaders actively took part in learning about a variety of technology tools to help support student learning in our classrooms. As we continue to bring more devices and increased access for our students, these tools will help us achieve our goal of helping all students to build academic growth and skills for success in the world of college and career through the use of technology.



Westwood Jingle Bell Run

65 runners qualified for the Westwood Jingle Bell Run held Friday, December 4th. The runners received a holiday hat and ran to six different stations where they picked up a prize. The runners returned to the Jingle Bell Cafe for a pizza lunch and more prizes! Thank you to the Westwood PTO and parents for supporting the Running Club. And thank you to PE teacher, Jill Carlson, for planning and facilitating this fun event!



Magic Strings Concert

125 Southwood Elementary Magic Strings students grades 1-5 inaugurated the holidays with tunes and songs. The students sent forth volumes of cheerful sound to a packed Enumclaw High School auditorium filled with appreciative parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters and community members!

