

LONGVIEW SCHOOLS Review

First AVID graduates ready to soar

When Sofia Sanchez was 4 or 5 years old, she received a baby doll for Christmas. Little Sofia found her baby doll “Samantha” was usually sick and needed extra care. Before long, Sofia declared that she wanted to be “a baby doctor” when she grew up.

But no one in Sofia’s family had ever gone to college.

“I always wanted to be something but never knew how to get there,” recalled the 2016 R.A. Long High School graduate.

Now, students like Sofia have a road map.

As a high school freshman, she joined R.A. Long’s first cohort of AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination) students. The college-



JayDon Paull, Sofia Sanchez and Jane Cooper share lessons they learned in the AVID program. See a video of all of the AVID students with their “cardboard confessions” at <http://bit.ly/24tCbis>.

readiness program prepares students to succeed in high school and university.

Selected for their grades, test scores, socioeconomic backgrounds, parents’

education levels and other special circumstances, the two dozen AVID students in Sofia’s cadre formed a

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Landon Wood (far right) is named president of Washington State DECA.

Mark Morris club offers real-world experiences

As an eighth grader preparing to enter Mark Morris High School in 2013, Landon Wood looked at a list of elective classes and knew what he didn’t want to do. Music. His sister had that covered.

But he was intrigued by DECA—the student marketing association. His

dad worked in business. Maybe, he thought, this would be his thing too.

Now, having just finished his junior year at Mark Morris, Landon knows he chose well. His projects have shone at regional and national DECA competitions, and this spring he was

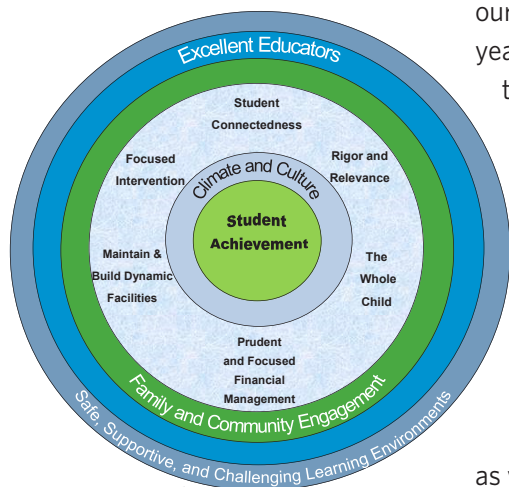
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Message from the Superintendent



Dear Community Members,

On behalf of Longview Public Schools, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to our 371 new graduates! May each of you achieve



A visual representation of "Our Design for Excellence." The full strategic framework is available at www.longviewschools.com.

your dreams.

I also extend my gratitude to our teachers, administrators, support staff, families and community members. Each of you has supported our students in some way this year—whether by teaching and tutoring; offering encouragement; contributing tax funds to pay for salaries, facilities and supplies; providing assistance to students in need; or simply making sure your student has set an alarm for morning. Every single action makes a difference.

As I near the end of my first year as your superintendent, I am pleased to report that my administrative team and I have established a fresh course for the district. Approved by our Board

of Directors in May, "Our Design for Excellence"

provides the framework that will help our schools, staff and students point our efforts toward two common measurable goals:

1. Increasing student achievement
2. Improving the culture and climate of our schools

The framework, which includes six areas of focus, gives our district a clear direction while maintaining flexibility in how we get there. In short, this is not a how-to but a what-to. And we believe it will lead to better results for more of our students and brighter futures for all. Sincerely,
Dan Zorn, Superintendent

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close-knit family among the Class of 2016's 180 students.

"That family aspect is the motivator for everything else," Sofia said. "It's made me more confident in myself."

Joie Matteo, a.k.a. "AVID-Mama," the class's AVID electives teacher, is passionate about the program.

"The goal of the class isn't Common Core," Matteo said. "The goal of the class is to set them up for success after high school, so they can achieve their dreams."

That involves teaching them both study skills and life skills.

The study skills include strategies for notetaking, digesting information, asking questions and making the most of group study sessions. Incidentally,

those skills have been adopted throughout the school.

"It's really helped our struggling learners, because it gives them a framework," said R.A. Long principal Rich Reeves.

"It's made me more confident in myself."

-Sofia Sanchez, AVID student

But AVID goes way beyond academics. Matteo's students practiced preparing food on the cheap for dorm life. They learned to change a tire. They were coached to write thank-you notes. They went on a road trip visiting colleges and universities, staying in dormitories.

"I'm trying to make sure before I send them off that they're going with some skills," she said.

Those skills include overcoming roadblocks in their lives and learning to advocate for themselves, including financially. As of June 8, the AVID Class of 2016 had received \$712,000 in scholarship offers. And nearly all the AVID graduates are starting college this fall.

Sofia is among them, heading to Washington State University in Pullman for its pre-med program, her intent to fulfill her childhood dream.

"AVID helps kids learn who they are and what they're capable of," teacher Matteo reflected recently, "so they see beyond the here and now."

The Longview School District is an Equal Opportunity district in education programs, activities, services, and employment. Longview School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, gender, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, age, families with children honorably discharged veteran or military status, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal. We provide equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. We also comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 402 of the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Act of 1974, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Civil Rights

Facilities master plan in process

After nearly a year of work, the Facilities Advisory Committee (FAC) is preparing a Facilities Master Plan to be considered by the Board of Directors. This will help the district set a course for replacing and renovating its facilities over the next 30 years.

The planning process has included input from the following:

- An analysis of current building conditions and enrollment projections by an independent consultant. Based on the study, the FAC identified areas of need—the greatest being elementary schools.

- An initial staff survey.
- Meetings with staff at every school in the district.
- Meetings with parent groups at schools throughout the district.
- Presentations at clubs, associations and civic groups.
- Sessions with student leadership groups.
- Three Listening Posts for community members.

More information on the process is available at www.longviewschools.com.

School buildings play a key role in our students' learning, and Longview's

are aging—and not just in terms of heating, lighting and plumbing. Many are not adaptable to changing teaching practices and technology, or new state class size requirements.

Longview Public Schools is committed to preparing facilities that will serve our students for decades to come.

Did you know?

When our two oldest (still in use) elementary schools—Broadway and Olympic—were opened, Harry S. Truman was president!

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selected president of Washington State DECA. He now leads 11,000 marketing students from 153 high schools in an organization with a \$2 million annual budget—the first DECA state president to hail from Mark Morris.

Landon is among 171 Mark Morris students in DECA. Supplementing the marketing curriculum, the club gives students opportunities to work on projects in five aspects of business: marketing, human resources, accounting, business management and entrepreneurship.

"It's kind of the club to be in," Landon said. "There's a vibe around here that promotes it."

DECA members raise funds that enable them to take field trips around the area, meeting with and learning from business leaders. And for one of their projects, they manage the



Mark Morris DECA members celebrate their regional wins.

school's student store. This year the store was one of 316 nationwide to achieve DECA Gold Certification. Students Adam Busack and Rowan Seals received national recognition for their work with the enterprise, which engages students in accounting, personnel training, and selling food

and other items.

"DECA provides real-business, real-life opportunities in an academic environment," said Mark Morris DECA club adviser Greg McCormick. "They get to meet real businesspeople, they get real information."

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Class of 2016 Facts

Total number of students
graduating in June: **371**

Number of students going to
college: **219**

Number of students going to
trade school: **52**

Number of students going to
military: **31**

Number of hours of service to
school and community: **31,807**

Average GPA for graduating
class: **2.89**

Congratulations, grads!

