

PENINSULA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Compass



Back to School

Celebrations from Across the District

School Construction Update | Student Board Representatives

Fall 2021

A Message from Superintendent Krestin Bahr



KRESTIN BAHR
Superintendent

I've had a song stuck in my head these past few weeks. Have you heard "I Hope You Dance" by Lee Ann Womack? She sings about perseverance and hope, which is why I think it keeps replaying in my head since that's been much of what I've felt as summer has turned to fall.

In the song, Lee Ann sings:

"I hope you never fear those mountains in the distance,
Never settle for the path of least resistance . . .
And if you get the choice to sit it out or dance,
I hope you dance."

Peninsula School District, we are dancing! We recognize the fear that exists everywhere right now, but knew our students and families needed us to open our schools full time, in-person, five days a week. It has taken hard work, dedication, and perseverance to open our schools and keep them safely open during the pandemic.

The reality of this undertaking has required all hands on deck — teamwork surrounding ever-changing regulations, requirements, and opportunities; organization and calibration of quarantine; close contact tracing; and COVID-19 requirements. But, we did it! After a year of Zooming and trying hard to keep connected with each other in meaningful ways, it has been such a gift to see our students and staff together in-person. The sounds and sights of children in our classrooms learning, laughing, and making friends has never been sweeter than this fall.

Childlike wonder is evident as our classroom teachers bring science/STEM, literature, and mathematics into the minds of kids. From teaching kindergarten routines and literacy to

concepts in AP Physics, our staff are building communities of learners with care and professionalism. All of our staff, in and around our schools, are finally doing what they love best - working with kids in-person every day.

We have so much to celebrate and I invite you to dance with us. This will continue to be a year unlike last year as we navigate an ever-changing landscape; however, we remain steadfast about one thing — our students' success.

In my first few months as your new superintendent, I have learned that this community has always been creative, innovative, and never settles for staying in the box or, as Lee Ann sings, sits out of the dance.

Let us partner to find the very best that we have, in every corner of our district, and continue dancing with kindness and love, with care and grace, with compassion and focus. Within great moments of complexity, we can work together to make our schools a better place for all children in our community.

Superintendent's Entry Plan Includes Listening Tour



- Build public trust and strengthen engagement in PSD schools;
- Update the needs, objectives, and work priorities of the Peninsula School District; and
- Identify the district's strengths, improvement opportunities, and challenges.

This fall, Superintendent Bahr is attending community events and hosting a series opportunities for parents, community members, students, staff, and other interested parties to share their ideas and perspectives about the Peninsula School District.

Some of Superintendent Bahr's listening tour activities so far have included elementary school open house events; first day of school visits; PenMet Parks' Scarecrow Festival; and meetings with Mid-Day and Morning Rotary, the Chamber of Commerce, District Parent Council, Red Barn Youth Center, Communities In Schools, and other school staff and community groups.

If you are a community member and are interested in having Superintendent Bahr attend your event, please email Tonya Beattie, executive assistant, at beattiet@psd401.net.

Pictured on Cover: Fish Bowl football game on September 17.

Superintendent's Entry Plan Summary

Krestin Bahr | 2021-2022 School Year

Phase 1: Pre-Entry | Spring 2021

Focus: School and Staff Visits, Establishing Goals and Outcomes

Activities: Engage in a purposeful effort to listen to the community and learn about the Peninsula School District by:

- Visiting schools;
- Meeting with staff, labor associations, families, businesses, and community leaders;
- Analyzing data and reviewing documents; and
- Communicating with local media outlets.



Phase 2: Entry | July 1-December 31, 2021

Focus: Meet with Staff and Community Stakeholders, Welcome Back and First Day of School Activities

Activities: During this phase, activities include:

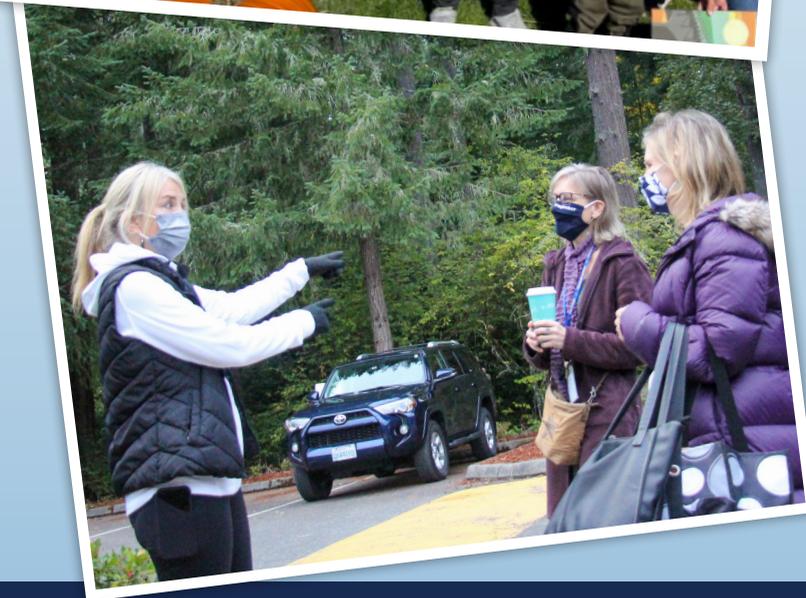
- Conducting school and classroom visits;
- Hosting meetings, interviews, and events to hear from staff, labor groups, community members, educational partners, policymakers, and other stakeholders;
- Developing a strong working relationship with the Peninsula School District Board of Directors; and
- Working with local media to understand internal and external communication opportunities.



Phase 3: Reflect & Report | Fall 2021-Winter 2022

Focus: Develop Summary Report and Strategic Plan Updates and Recommendations

Activities: Develop and present a summary report to the Peninsula School District Board of Directors in 2022 that outlines the superintendent's findings, observations, and next steps.



See Superintendent Bahr's 100-Day Entry Plan online at psd401.net/superintendent.

Celebrations From Across the District



Pioneer Designated as STEM Lighthouse School

Since 2012, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has declared several schools across the state to be STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) Lighthouse Schools. Pioneer Elementary School was recently awarded this designation. STEM Lighthouse Schools provide technical assistance and advice to other schools and communities in the initial stages of creating a learning environment focused on STEM. They serve as resources and examples of how to implement best practices in the area of STEM.



New Signage at Gig Harbor High School

Anyone entering the lobby of Gig Harbor High School is now treated to a new large welcome sign. "It has brought pride to our students and staff," Principal Michele Suiter said. "It identifies a school culture that is proud, warm, and welcoming."

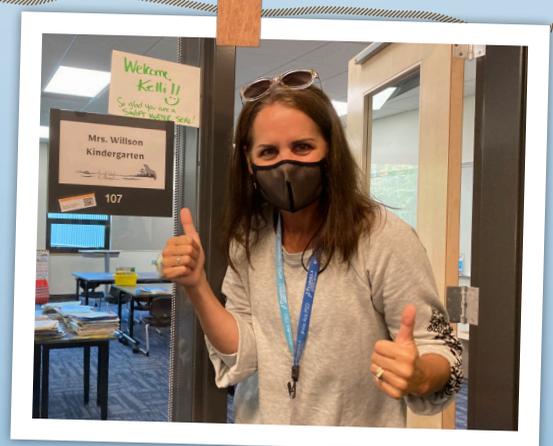
The Tide Way sign is a result of the hard work of schoolwide teams. Through a process of asking students, staff, and families 'What does it mean to be a Tide?', the Tide Way was developed.

"The Tide Way is what we hold ourselves to: Do we live with integrity? Are we kind, engaged, and responsible?" Suiter said. "This sign in the front office is a reminder to each of us to hold ourselves and each other accountable to the Tide Way and to represent well. All in all, these signs are about a school culture that speaks to who we are, who we want to be, and where we are going. It is Tide Pride."



Artondale Elementary Siblings

Older students help their younger siblings on the first day of kindergarten. Pictured: Evan and Caleb T. (left) and Mia and Lia J. (right).

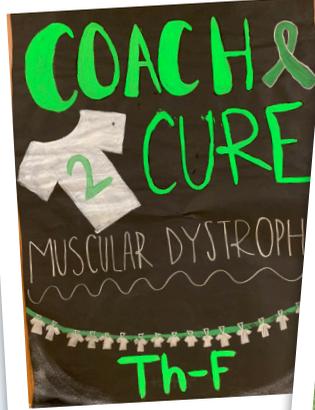


Kindergarten Teacher Kelli Willson Excited to Move into Her New Classroom at Swift Water Elementary



PSD Scarecrow Wins Judges' Choice Award

"Fishing for Knowledge," PSD's entry in PenMet Parks' 12th Annual Scarecrow Contest, received the Judges' Choice Award at this year's Scarecrow Festival on October 2. The scarecrow was assembled by district staff and designed by Peninsula School District parent, Cara Cantonwine.



Coach to Cure at Peninsula High School

Peninsula High School hosted its annual Coach to Cure football game to raise money and bring awareness to Duchenne muscular dystrophy. PHS graduate Micah Hester (pictured middle) continues to be a strong leader and influencer at PHS.



PHS Student Receives STEM Award

Peninsula High School junior Mia Stitt was recognized for her achievement as one of 11 Washington STEM Rising Star Award recipients in our state.

Mia was selected as the West Sound Region Rising Star for her exemplary academic performance and her engagement with STEM in and outside of the classroom.



Middle School Students Model Leadership

Kopachuck Middle School 8th grade leadership students, Ella N. and Michael M., welcomed students as they arrived at the school for orientation on September 2. In addition to greeting students, they gave directions and provided support for staff.



Harbor Heights Welcomes Families

On a sunny day in early September, staff at Harbor Heights Elementary School hosted a meet and greet event to welcome all families back to school. Rien H. and her daughter, Alivia, met with Alivia's teacher Kristen Chu and her other classmates.

School Construction Update

On February 12, 2019, the PSD community passed a \$198.55 million bond for school construction to address extreme elementary overcrowding and other emergent infrastructure needs. Here are some of the latest updates on PSD's school construction projects. We are grateful to our community for supporting our schools and providing safe learning places for our students.

Middle School Modernization Projects

Kopachuck Middle School



L to R: Superintendent Krestin Bahr, KMS Student Kaitlyn L., School Board President David Olson, Principal Heidi Fedore, Asst. Principal Nate Hudac.

Key Peninsula Middle School



Principal Jeri Goebel (center) and Asst. Principal Andrew Frost (second from right) with KPMS students.

Because of cost-saving steps made by the district, PSD is able to modernize and add additional classrooms at Kopachuck Middle School and Key Peninsula Middle School using 2019 capital bond funds.

After elementary overcrowding and emergent facility needs, addressing

middle school overcrowding was identified as the district's next highest priority.

Groundbreaking ceremonies were held in August at both middle schools, and construction for both projects is currently underway.

The projects are being completed in phases so students can continue attending school in-person. If you visit our schools this year, please pardon our dust!

Both projects are scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2023.

Three Elementary Schools Open This Fall



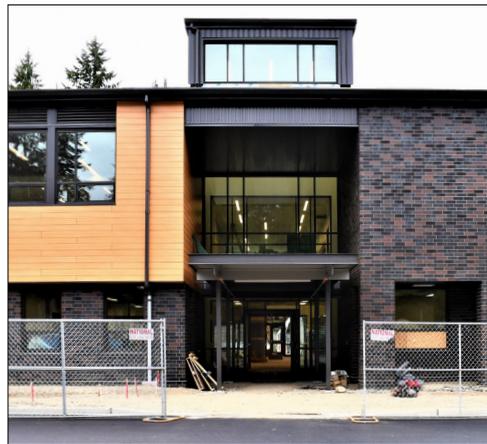
Evergreen Elementary

School Replacement & Expansion
Bond-Approved Opening: Fall 2022
Opened: First Day of School 2021



Swift Water Elementary

New School
Bond-Approved Opening: Fall 2021
Opened: First Day of School 2021



Artondale Elementary

School Replacement & Expansion
Bond-Approved Opening: Fall 2021
Projected Opening: Fall 2021

Meet This School Year's Student Board Representatives

High School Representatives Bring Student Perspective to Peninsula School District Board of Directors

The Peninsula School District Board of Directors recognizes the value of communicating with students and receiving input and perspectives. To foster this relationship with students, the board annually appoints up to three high school students as advisory, non-voting representatives to serve as liaisons between the board and the district's high school students from Gig Harbor High School, The Academies at Henderson Bay, and Peninsula High School.

Student representatives contribute to board discussions by providing student insight and perspective; representing their associated student body; and reporting to students about the work of the board and district activities. Student representatives do not attend closed executive sessions, make motions, hold board offices, or vote.

"The main focus of the school board is to serve the students of Peninsula School District, and it's important to hear their voice on current topics," said David Olson, President of the Peninsula School District Board of Directors. "Their perspective is invaluable."



"I hope to connect with the school board and engage them in the school's ongoing activities . . . and vice versa."

Caroline Gregory
School Board Representative
Gig Harbor High School



"I believe that a student's voice is key in making decisions for schools. Not only do these decisions affect the community, but they affect each student directly . . . I want to be a positive representative for not only Peninsula, but for all the lovely schools in the Peninsula School District."

Annalis Parker
School Board Representative
Peninsula High School



The selection of the student representative for **The Academies at Henderson Bay** is currently pending.



Watch live streams of regular PSD Board of Directors business meetings at psd401.net/schoolboard.



We Are Hiring

- Bus Drivers
- Para Educators
- Substitute Teachers, Para Educators, and Clerical Staff

Work while your child is in school.

Full-time benefits for part-time work.

Apply online at psd401.net/jobs

PENINSULA SCHOOL DISTRICT *Compass*

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Superintendent
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#BetterTogether

The Peninsula School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed to the District's Title IX and Compliance Officer, Section 504 and ADA Coordinator, John Yellowlees, at (253) 530-1081, email yellowleesj@psd401.net. Mailing address: 14015 62nd Ave. NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332.