

# MEAD

# MATTERS

December 2018



## Celebrating Our School Bus Drivers

*“The goal of every Mead bus driver is to be welcoming and to enjoy what they are doing.”*

It’s 6:45 a.m. and Craig Heasley has just arrived at work. Joining him are more than 80 fellow bus drivers who, after performing pre-trip safety checks, will be on the road by 7:15 a.m. to pick up students for the school day.

Mr. Heasley has driven bus for Mead for seven years – the past three as the driver for route 13, serving Colbert, Mountainside and Mt. Spokane students. “Bus drivers are the first folks students see in the morning and the last ones to say good-bye at the end of the day,” says Mr. Heasley. “Knowing the names of the kids who ride my bus is important. I work hard to help my riders feel comfortable on the bus.”

Kaida Dobbins, a kindergartener at Colbert, is one of Mr. Heasley’s riders.

At the start of the year her mom Kirsten drove her to the bus stop and waited. Mr. Heasley noticed the Dobbins have a younger special needs son and he saw an opportunity to help. With router approval he approached Mrs. Dobbins and offered to help the family by picking Kaida up at the end of their driveway alleviating the need to bring Kaida’s brother to the bus stop each day. “It means a lot,” says Mrs. Dobbins, “that someone would go out of their way to help our family. The fact that Mead would do this shows they are all about children. Not only are the teachers part of our daughter’s life but every



person she comes in contact with is a part of her life and the life of other students.”

Talking about his job, Mr. Heasley remembered a surprising story. “I always try to greet students and say good morning each day as they board my bus. I was amazed to learn that when asked who was the most impactful person they met during the school year, some Mountainside students said me . . . their bus driver. That was rewarding.”

While Craig Heasley’s impact on the students he transports on his rural route is the focus of this article, his story is not unique. Each of our drivers is dedicated to welcoming students, keeping them safe and assuring parents their children are in good hands as they travel to and from school each day.

*Bus Driver Craig Heasley is the most recent addition to our Who We Are video series. This video is posted on the district’s homepage (mead354.org).*



**Thursday, January 10, 2019 @ Mead High, 6-8 pm**  
**Keynote: 2018 Young Scientist, Dhruvik Parikh**

## Mt. Spokane 3A State Volleyball Champions



Congratulations to the Mt. Spokane High School Volleyball Team and coaching staff (Head Coach Dave Whitehead) on a dominating performance at the State Tournament on their way to the 2018 3A Title!

The Wildcats, going 12-1 at state before heading into the championship match, left no doubt who was the best team, defeating Lakeside (Seattle) 3-0 in the final, best of 5, title match.

## 4A Cross Country Academic State Champions



Congratulations to the Mead High Cross Country Team (girls) who are the 2018 4A Cross Country Academic State Champions with an impressive 4.0 team GPA!

## Mt. Spokane State Slowpitch Softball Champions



Congratulations to the Mt. Spokane Slowpitch Softball Team (Head Coach Carl Adams) who captured the 2018 State Slowpitch Softball Title on October 27 at the State Tournament in Richland by defeating Lake Washington 18-0, Central Valley 4-3 and U-High 10-4.



# Behind the Scenes

## Working Together to Equip Students, Inspire Problem Solvers & Create Leaders

Behind the scenes in the Mead School District, you will find many folks whose work is essential to making our school district a great place for kids to learn and grow. Maintenance Director Travis Bown is one of those individuals. Travis oversees all aspects of a department that includes 22 employees during the school year and 32 employees in the summer, including groundskeepers, plumbers, electricians, carpenters, HVAC specialists, painters and a locksmith. We asked Travis a few questions about his life and work.

### What is your family background?

I was born and raised in Spokane, graduating from Mead High School in 1993. I actually met my wife Tammy when we were both students at Northwood. We have a son who graduated from Mead High in 2017 and a daughter who is a sophomore at Mt. Spokane.



### Tell us about your career path. How did that lead you to the Mead School District?

I started working for Spokane Public Schools as a journeyman electrician in 2000 and then was promoted into their Energy Management Department where I managed energy use for all of Spokane's schools and buildings.

### What are a few of the biggest changes the Maintenance Department has undergone in your four-year tenure?

Our staff has increased from 15 to 22, allowing us to self-perform more tasks, resulting in lower operational costs, fewer callbacks and a substantial decrease in backlogged work orders. We have been and will continue to work with Avista and Inland Power & Light to take advantage of rebate programs with the goal of upgrading all schools and buildings to LED lighting systems as quickly as possible.

### What do you like about your job and what is most challenging?

I work with great people who are extremely dedicated to providing the very best service to the Mead community and its students. I love the challenge of helping design new buildings that will last 30+ years and incorporate the latest in energy saving technologies.

### What about your "behind the scenes" job might surprise people?

I am continually looking for ways Mead can collaborate with local partners. For example, the Mead School District is one of 61 customers selected to access kilowatt-hours generated by Avista's new Adams-Neilson Solar Farm in Lind, Washington. Through their *Solar Select* program, we are able to buy 1.2 million kilowatt-hours annually for the next eight years. This equates to 75% of Mead High's annual electricity consumption. The purchase of this renewable solar energy is cost neutral for the district. As an education institution we are excited to be in the forefront when it comes to using renewable energy sources like solar.

WINTER  
BREAK

December 24 – January 4  
School Resumes January 7

# Bidwell Community Park



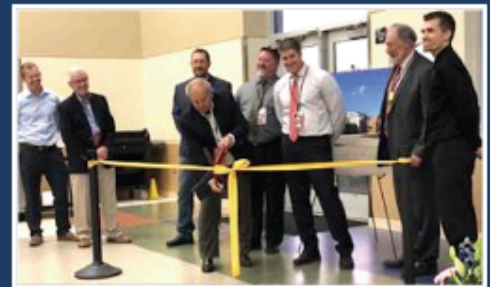
## Mead High Graduate Instrumental in Securing Grant Funds for Park Completion

Rebekah (Demand) Bennett graduated from Mead High in 2007 and like many young adults fresh out of high school left Spokane to attend college, work and explore the world. She and her husband moved back to Spokane in 2011. Armed with a degree in Nutrition and Exercise Physiology from WSU, and her background as a lifeguard and competitive swimmer, Bekah joined the Spokane County Parks Department as a Recreation Program Manager three years ago. A part of this job included overseeing the County's Northside Family Aquatics Facility located at the west end of Bidwell Park.

For those unfamiliar with Bidwell Park, it is a 20-acre site located on the east side of Hatch Rd. several blocks north of Midway Elementary School. Aside from the Aquatics Facility (Phase 1), the majority of the land is vacant awaiting the money needed to complete Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the recreation facility.

Anxious to see the park fully completed, Mrs. Bennett worked hard and was instrumental in successfully procuring grant funds in excess of \$1 million that, coupled with a commitment of \$2.8 million from Spokane County and \$52,000 in non-government funds, means construction on the final two phases of the park is on track to begin this spring. Phase 2 and Phase 3 are slated to include a softball field, basketball court, aquatic center upgrades, open green space, a playground, benches, bike racks, picnic areas, shade trees, walking paths and a restroom.

Commenting on the selection of Bidwell Park for funding, committee members indicated Rebekah Bennett's passion for both the project and her community was clearly evident during her formal grant presentation. By the way, Bekah is the daughter of Renee Demand who teaches science at Northwood Middle School.



## Midway Elementary Dedication Ceremony

On the evening of September 27, Midway staff, students, architects, community members, board members, and construction workers gathered for the official Midway Modernization Project Dedication Ceremony.

Midway Principal Josh Westermann hosted the event. School Board President Denny Denholm, Superintendent Tom Rockefeller and Facilities & Planning Executive Director Ned Wendle also spoke and thanked Mead patrons for their support of this renovation project. The evening included a performance by the Mt. Spokane High School Jazz Choir under the direction of Tobin Eystone.



## Principals Designated for New Elementary School & New Middle School

In the fall of 2020 the Mead School District will open a new elementary school and a new middle school. The principal for the elementary school will be Laura Ketcham Duchow and the middle school principal will be Barb Pybus. Both are veteran lead administrators. Ms. Duchow is in her 5<sup>th</sup> year at Shiloh Hills and this is the 12<sup>th</sup> year for Ms. Pybus at Farwell.

MEAD MATTERS  
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Questions or concerns?  
509-465-6014  
[www.mead354.org](http://www.mead354.org)

The Mead School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Grievances or concerns should be directed to: Dr. Jared Headley, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services and Activities - 509-465-6008 or [jhead.headley@mead354.org](mailto:jhead.headley@mead354.org).

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## Upcoming Mead High vs. Mt. Spokane Rivalry Contests



**PACK THE PALACE  
BASKETBALL**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15 @ MT. SPOKANE  
GIRLS - 5:30 PM  
BOYS - 7:15 PM

**GYMNASTICS  
MEAD INVITATIONAL**

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5 - NOON  
MEAD GYMNASTICS CENTER



**CATMANIA  
BASKETBALL**

TUESDAY, JANUARY 15 @ MEAD HIGH  
GIRLS - 5:30 PM  
BOYS - 7:15 PM



**WRESTLING  
GLOW DOWN  
SHOW DOWN**

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24  
MEAD HIGH @ 7 PM

## Preparing for Two New Schools A Message from Superintendent Tom Rockefeller



We are 21 months away from the opening of two new schools. An elementary school that will be built near Market Street on the old Mead Middle School site and a middle school located on Five Mile Prairie. When these new schools open in September 2020 our elementary schools will be K-5 and our middle schools will house 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students – a realignment from the current 7-8 model.

During this school year our Learning Services Department, utilizing ten cadre sub-committees, is developing action plans in preparation for this upcoming change. Our goal is to have key components of the transition, such as staffing and boundaries, in place one year before the new schools open. This will allow new school staffs the opportunity to plan and collaborate, and our families will know a full twelve months in advance the schools their children will attend starting in September of 2020.

Regarding boundaries, the Board of Directors in August authorized the formation of a Citizen's Boundary Review Committee to study and recommend changes to current elementary, middle and high school boundaries. The committee includes 12 community members who equitably represent all district geographic areas. The committee will present its boundary change recommendation to the school board this spring. There will be opportunities for community input prior to any boundary change adoption by the school board.

To learn more about our 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade transition planning, visit [mead354.org](http://mead354.org) where you will find a link to information on the goals and work of each cadre sub-committee.

In closing, I wish each of you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I am extremely thankful to live in a community that has strong commitment and support for public education.

## NAME OUR NEW SCHOOLS!

We are seeking names for our new elementary school (located near Market at the old Mead Middle School site) and our new middle school (located on Five Mile Prairie). Both schools open Fall of 2020.

With your help we plan to give each school a name representative of the locale where the school will be built. A link to submit your ideas is available on our homepage ([mead354.org](http://mead354.org)). Submission deadline is December 31. Thank you for your suggestions! The school board plans to make a final decision on names for our new schools in the spring.



Elementary  
School



Middle  
School