

PENINSULA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Compass



Inspiring and Empowering Every Child, Every Day

Fall 2022



Inspiring and Empowering Every Child, Every Day

A Message from Superintendent Krestin Bahr

Peninsula School District's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan sets the direction and priorities for the next five years.

The plan consists of four key components:

Vision

To inspire and empower every child, every day.

Mission

To be the best school district in the state that prepares every child to be a successful global citizen by providing innovative, rigorous programs set within a culture of belonging.

Values

- Excellence
- Character
- Confidence
- Culture
- Curiosity

Goals

- Academic Excellence
- Innovation
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Learning Environment
- Community Engagement

Pictured on Cover: Evergreen Elementary students Oliver O., Tucker H., Sirena J., and Stella H. (L to R).

Dear Peninsula School District students, families, staff, and community partners,

The 2022-2023 school year is off to a fantastic start! I am so pleased to see the smiling faces of our staff and students in our buildings, sharing wonderful learning opportunities with their peers.

There is already much to be celebrated! Teachers are learning new ways of teaching, infusing more arts into their instruction at Discovery, Minter Creek, and Purdy elementary schools. All three schools were awarded Arts Impact grants. Evergreen Elementary received three grants that will allow them to plan a new outdoor learning environment for our youngest learners, plus purchase some great STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) equipment. The annual Fishbowl football game between Gig Harbor High School and Peninsula High School was well-attended and exciting, plus brought in over 38,000 food items donated to Food Backpacks 4 Kids from Gig Harbor, Peninsula, and Henderson Bay high schools!

Early learning is a focus for us this year, as we look closely at literacy and mathematics needs for our youngest learners. This October, we launched Peninsula Reads, a community-wide effort to promote literacy development in children. On November 1, we opened our first two outdoor Norwegian-influenced Transitional Kindergarten programs at Voyager and Evergreen elementary schools.

During November 14-18, we are celebrating American Education Week by inviting community members to tour our four new elementary schools (Artondale, Evergreen, Pioneer, and Swift Water) to learn about the recently completed facilities and how they lend themselves to the instruction taking place throughout the schools. Students will serve as well-informed tour guides. Go online to psd401.net to learn more.

We have started the school year guided by our new strategic plan, which is centered around our district's core values and calls out our belief that every child, in every school, deserves daily support on their own unique journey to excellence.



Our collective work over the next five years will be guided by our strategic plan's goals and values. To help highlight our work, you'll notice some new branding! Whenever we feature a person, place, or event that aligns with our strategic plan goal or value, you'll see images like that to the left to help point back to the strategic plan.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our students, staff, and schools. Together, we can inspire and empower every student, every day at PSD!

Krestin Bahr
Superintendent

Proud to be PSD



Featuring Photos from
Across the District



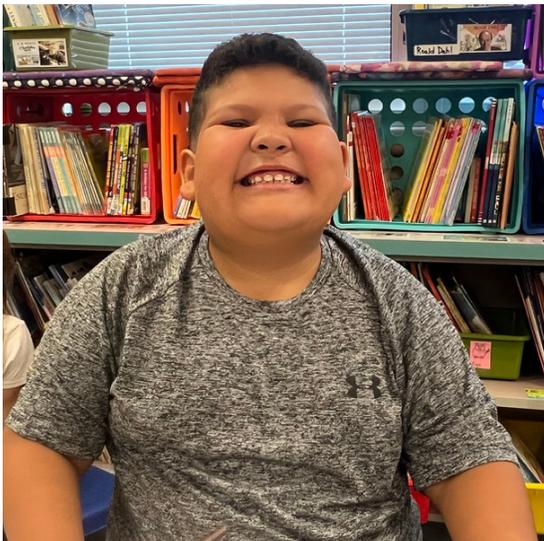
First day of Kindergarten for Voyager student, Mary S.



CTP students Mark S. and Amelia S.



Harbor Ridge students Kylee B. (L) and Shelby S. (R)



Harbor Heights student Kirby M.



Vaughn Elementary's Dean of Students, Martha Arneson, helps student Tatyanna P.



Peninsula High School students Kaylia H., Sophia C., and Daisy P. (L to R)



Promoting Lifelong Learners Through Literacy

As part of the Peninsula School District's strategic plan, we have set a goal for 100% of third-graders to be proficient readers. We know reading by the third grade is critical for lifelong success.

To reach this visionary goal, PSD is spearheading a community-wide effort to promote literacy development in young children by engaging community members of all ages in activities that support the importance of early literacy.

This campaign kicked off in October and will continue until the last day of school in June.

Please go to psd401.net to learn about literacy activities connected to this campaign and to see how you can get involved.

#PeninsulaReads

Badge Systems Offer Added Safety for Students and Staff



As a part of the Peninsula School District's (PSD) ongoing efforts to provide a safe learning environment for students and staff, badge systems are being improved for entry at Gig Harbor and Peninsula high schools.

At Peninsula High School (PHS) and Gig Harbor High School (GHHS), new door security systems will be put in place by the end of November. The new security includes a door buzz-in system that requires school visitors to ring a doorbell camera at the front of the school so a staff member in the office can temporarily unlock the main door to let them in the building. PSD and high school staff members have badges to automatically unlock the main doors at the school during the regular school day, and outside of school hours.

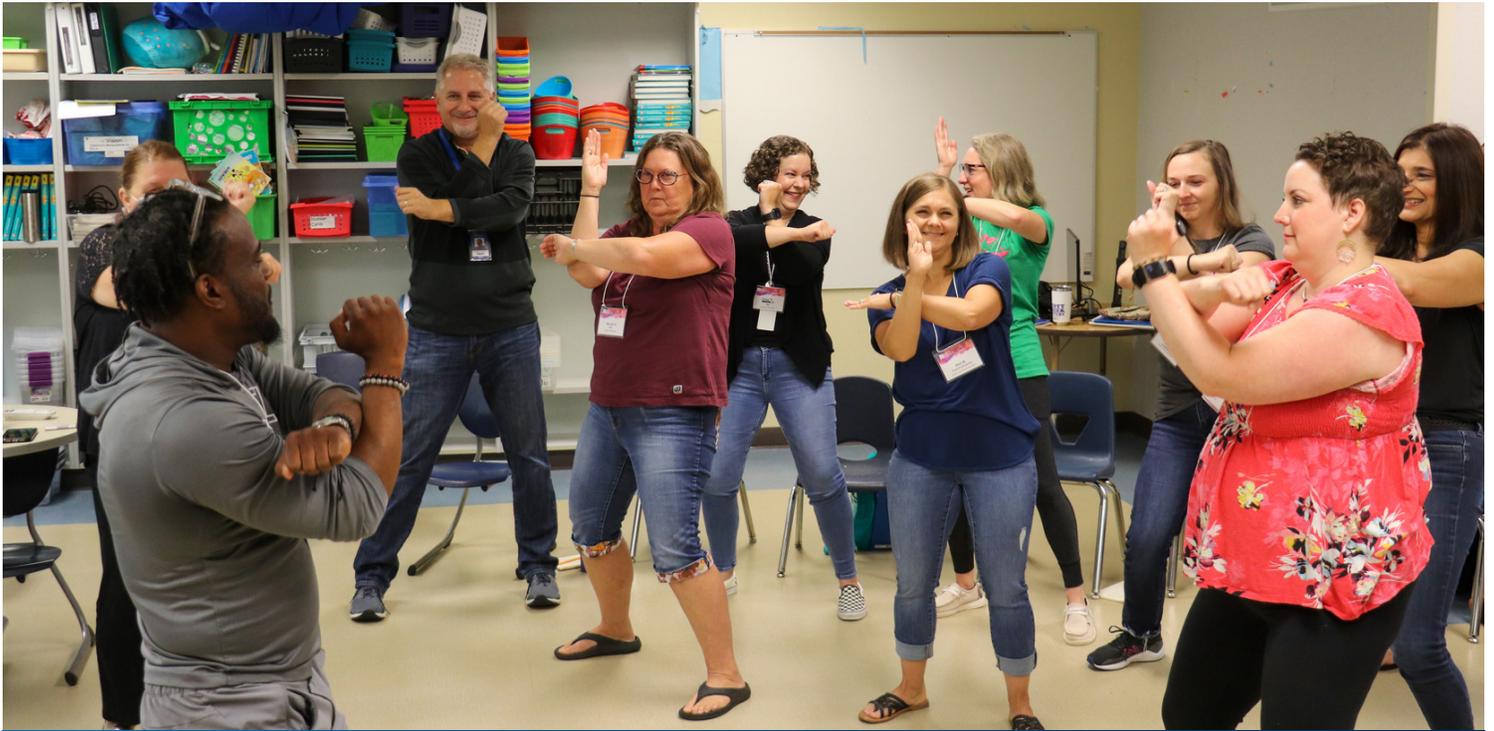
When the new systems become operable at the two high schools, the main doors will be locked to outside visitors during the school day. Badge security systems like this are already in place at PSD middle and elementary schools.

Other security changes for PSD students are also in the works. Soon, all students will be given school badges that they will use to purchase their lunches, check out library books, and ride their school bus. PSD buses will have special tablets that scan a student's badge for bus attendance. Once a badge is scanned, a notification will be sent to the student's school and to their parents/guardians via a mobile app to let them know their student boarded the bus. When the student exits the bus, they will scan their badge to notify the school and their family that they successfully arrived at their destination.

"This is a great update because, let's say a bus breaks down, we will know what kids are currently on that bus and who to contact," Kris Hagel, Executive Director of Digital Learning, said. "We are hoping to implement this process in early 2023."

The new tablets will also be used as GPS devices for bus drivers. The GPS will help navigate a bus route for a driver. This will help substitute drivers complete new routes efficiently and on schedule, Hagel said. ■

Art-Infused Instruction Supports Innovation in the Classroom



Staff from Discovery, Minter Creek, Purdy, and the district office dance during Arts Impact training.

Teachers, librarians, and school leaders from Discovery, Minter Creek, and Purdy elementary schools came together last summer to dance, create, and learn. The three schools received art-infused instruction training from Arts Impact stemming from grants they received last year from the Washington State Arts Commission and the Gig Harbor Arts Commission. Arts Impact is a local arts organization that specializes in providing professional learning in the arts and arts infusion for teachers in the Puget Sound region.

Through music, art, theater, and dance, teachers connect core academic concepts and increase engagement for a wider variety of learners. Tiffany Hawkins, teacher at Discovery, used what she learned in the arts training to connect vocabulary with theater and visual arts. Her students created posters with definitions, parts of speech, a synonym, an antonym, syllables, origin, and a sentence in their own words. Students then demonstrated their understanding by performing a skit in groups of 3 where they acted out an example of the vocabulary term. In math, her students made songs to describe the process of multiplication, and in science, students created a song to describe the sun, moon, and stars. Then they added

body movements, created a dance to go with the song, and performed it in front of the class.

“An innovative arts-integrated curriculum nurtures and challenges the whole child,” said Delonna Halliday, principal at Discovery Elementary. “It nourishes the intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and artistic development of each student. It helps students see that learning is not an isolated task.”

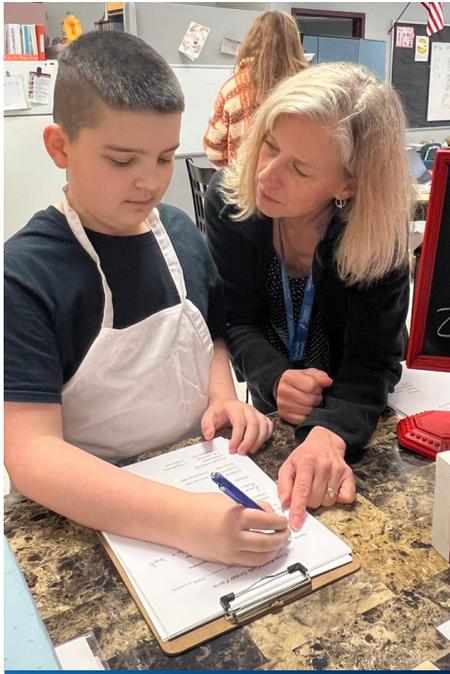
The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction supports Art-Infusion and Arts Impact training at Washington schools to help integrate more creative thinking into core curriculum. ■



Discovery principal Delonna Halliday at an Arts Impact training.



Students Learn Job Skills at Goodman Middle School's Cool Kids Cafe



GMS student Tucker M. with paraeducator Jennifer Moomaw.



A Cool Kids Cafe student delivers a coffee drink to GMS teacher Suzi Mach.

If you need a caffeine fix while at Goodman Middle School, drop by the Cool Kids Cafe for a hot beverage and some baked goods created by the school's Options Program students.

The Cool Kids Cafe is in its third year of operation at Goodman, and is run by 23 Options students, two teachers, a handful of paraeducators, and a couple of volunteers. Students take orders, calculate menu costs, make coffee drinks, bake treats, and hand deliver orders to staff and volunteers.

"We are building life skills here," special education teacher Kari Hyatt said. "This isn't just training for a job at a coffee shop or a restaurant; this is teaching them skills needed at any job."

All 23 students who work at the cafe tested and received their Washington State Food Worker Card and had to submit a resume, three non-family references, and an application to work in the cafe.

The Peninsula School District Options Program is a part of the district's special education programming. The Options Program teaches life skills and functional academics to students to help prepare them for high school and beyond.

In one short interaction at the Cool Kids Cafe counter, you can see all the different skills the job requires, including math, communication, memorization, customer service, teamwork, and more.

When students aren't working in the front section of the cafe, they may be delivering drinks or working on Cool Kids Cafe swag in the back classroom. Students designed their own logos and created a list of values for the cafe. The class uses a Cricut machine to produce vinyl iron-ons for shirts, sweatshirts, hats, coffee mugs, and more.

All the profits from the cafe go back into the shop to help purchase inventory and equipment. Local fresh foods market Harbor Greens donates dough to the students to make bagels, their most popular food item.

Eighth grader Mackenzie W. enjoys being a barista, but also loves working with the Cricut machine. She wants to be a clothing designer and run her own craft business when she's older. Benjamin C., also an eighth grade student, has worked as a painter with the family business. He wants to run a mechanic shop as an adult, so he is learning customer service skills at the cafe.

"Some of our students will go into a retail or restaurant job, but some will go to college or a trade. It all depends. But through their experience with the cafe, all of them will know work ethic and what it takes to be successful," Hyatt said. ■



Evergreen Elementary Thinks Outside the Building with New Planned Outdoor Learning Environment



Evergreen student Auggie S. works outside at Evergreen Elementary School.

Staff at Evergreen Elementary on the Key Peninsula have a vision for a new space to give students hands-on lessons beyond their classroom. They are planning to create a new outdoor learning environment equipped with covered teaching spaces, a native plant garden, a compost garden, rain barrels, and a natural playscape.

The outdoor learning area is slated for the open grassy area on the south side of the school's campus, near the new Hugh and Janice McMillan Community Center. Principal Hugh Maxwell said all the items for the space have been purchased and they are now working on the first phase of building the space.

"When the kids get outside and explore in the wild, it's a different type of learning," Principal Maxwell said. "We are committed to giving our school community this unique learning experience."

Evergreen is a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) integration school, focusing on teaching students with a curriculum that shows how all class subjects intertwine. During the 2021-2022 school year, Evergreen applied for and received three separate grants to help fund STEAM integration, including:

- \$30,000 from OSPI for being a STEM Lighthouse School;

- \$25,000 from the Pacific Education Institute to support students' environmental literacy; and
- \$10,000 from the U.S. Navy for STEM lab equipment, including a 3D printer and rocket launcher.

"Evergreen has had a STEAM focus now for several years," Maxwell said. "It takes a lot of resources to develop a program that is really going to be sustainable." ■

A volunteer work day is scheduled for this fall to install pavilions, paint sheds, and more. The school is accepting donations of stumps and logs from the community to help build the natural playscape. Please check the school's website for more information at ees.psd401net.





Vaughn Elementary Fifth Grader Sells Flower Bouquets to Help Children in Ukraine



Vaughn Elementary Fifth Grader Sophia P. sells flower bouquets to help fund medical procedures for children in Ukraine.

Vaughn Elementary fifth grader Sophia P. is a creative, well-rounded student. She loves to sew, paint, draw, and play soccer and softball. She is also a young entrepreneur, using her talents to create and sell beautiful bouquets of flowers to help raise money for children in Ukraine.

Sophia began her flower business by making bouquets and leaving them at her neighbors' doorsteps as an act of kindness. She enjoyed making bouquets so much, she wanted to sell flowers as a business. After her first few sales, the flower bouquets sold quickly and her business began to thrive.

Now Sophia has her own business on Facebook called "Sophia's Blooms", managed by her parents. She also sells bouquets to community members and at some school-related events.

The flowers are grown at home or from her Babushka's (grandma's) garden, and placed into vases bought from local thrift shops. Several customers have also donated or returned vases to help her business.

Sophia's mother, Inna Pimental, says her daughter spends three to five hours after school to prepare bouquets the day before selling her flowers.

While some of Sophia's profits support her bouquet business and horse camps, 30-50 percent is donated to children in Ukraine who need medical procedures. Sophia is partially Ukrainian, and wants to be a doctor when she grows up.

"This is just the core of who Sophia is," Pimental said. "She is full of compassion and kindness. Since the war started in Ukraine, she has wanted to help somehow. She has found that 'how.'"

During the growing season next year, Sophia and her mother plan to buy more planters, soil, flower seeds, and vases to expand her operation. ■



The Compass is produced by the Peninsula School District Communications Department.

Peninsula School District Board of Directors: Lori Glover, Natalie Wimberley, Jennifer Butler, David Olson, Chuck West | Superintendent: Krestin Bahr

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