



NEWS

VOLUME 17 ISSUE 3 SUMMER 2016

MERCER ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

Over 1,000 attend Northwood Elementary dedication and community open house

Northwood Elementary, the first new school building constructed on Mercer Island in more than 50 years, was dedicated on June 18 at a festive open house attended by hundreds of community members.

"This building is a fitting tribute to the dedication, the wisdom and the spirit of this Island community and what they hold dear in their hearts, and that is education," Superintendent Dr. Gary Plano said during the dedication ceremony in front of the new school. "It is education that enables our children to thrive, to grow, to learn and to create. I'm incredibly proud to open these doors and show the world what we have created."

Northwood will be the fourth elementary school in the district and will open for classes when the 2016-17 school year begins Aug. 31. It will serve about 400 students in grades Pre-K to 5. Attendance boundaries were redrawn over a year ago to accommodate the new school. Aimee Batliner-Gillette is principal and Jill Ravenscraft is associate principal.

Northwood was designed by Mahlum Architects of Seattle. Bayley Construction of Mercer Island is the general contractor. Brandy Fox of CPM Seattle, Inc. served as Owner's Representative managing the project.



The north side of Northwood Elementary as seen from SE 40th Street.

The building is 77,000 square feet and the site includes 20 general-purpose classrooms, two developmental preschool classrooms and eight shared learning areas. There are library, kitchen, commons, administrative and counseling areas as well.

The Northwood gym includes a high school-sized basketball court along with volleyball, badminton, and various other school sports.

Parking on the east side of the site will accommodate 67 high school students during the school day, after school use by Mary Wayte Pool, and event parking for various activities on the North Mercer Complex. A dedicated bus loop will serve the school off SE 40th Street, with parking and student loading on the west side of the building.

Frontage improvements have been made on 86th Avenue SE and along the south side of SE 40th Street, and the Madrone Grove has been restored at the corner of 86th SE and SE 40th St.

Northwood features an 8,200-square-foot green roof, a 99.9 kilowatt-hour solar array and radiant floor heating in classrooms.



Northwood Elementary PTA President Cindy Goetzmann, right, talks with visitors at the school dedication and open house on June 18.

TEACHERS AND SUPPORT STAFF OF THE YEAR

The District honored its *Teachers and Support Staff of the Year* at a recognition event June 8 in the Mercer Island High School library.

The Teachers of the Year are Kim Schjelderup, mathematics, Mercer Island High School; Adrienne Bylsma, physical education and health, Islander Middle School; and Kara Millsap, elementary technology specialist.

The Support Staff of the Year are Dave Irish, bus driver, Transportation Department, and Scott Sisk, grounds lead, Maintenance and Operations Department.

Schjelderup, affectionately called “Shelli” by her students, has taught at MIHS since 1994 and is the mathematics department chair.

“Kim is so dedicated to each and every one of her mathematics students,” said MIHS Principal Vicki Puckett. “She has devoted her professional life to helping her students grow.”

Bylsma has taught physical education and health at Islander Middle School since 2012.



Dave Irish



Scott Sisk

“Adrienne is an amazing teacher leader,” said IMS Co-Principal Mary Jo Budzius. “Improving teacher practice so that students receive the very best experience at IMS is her number one priority.”

Millsap was hired in 2001 as a teacher at Lakeridge, and then became elementary technology specialist in 2011.

“Kara’s goal is to make whatever experience she is involved with successful for both the teacher, and most importantly, for the students,” said Jennifer Wright, executive director of Learning and Technology Services.

Irish has been a district bus driver since 1984. During his tenure, Dave has received



Kim Schjelderup



Adrienne Bylsma

numerous awards for safe driving.

“Dave has found his place as a special ed bus driver,” said Dave Bynum, Transportation director.

“As an accomplished musician and singer/songwriter, one of Dave’s specialties is writing unique birthday songs for the students he carries each day.”

Sisk was hired in 2004 as grounds engineer and became grounds lead in 2006.

“There is only one staff member who cares full-time for Mercer Island School District’s 80-plus outdoor acres,” said Tony Kuhn, director of Maintenance and Operations. “Scott has a great sense of humor and is a very caring person.”



Kara Millsap

2015-16 RETIREES

Ten retiring District employees were recently honored for their decades of dedicated service to the children of Mercer Island.

"We wish them only the best as they begin a new chapter in their lives," said Superintendent Dr. Gary Plano.

The retirees are:

Polly Giovanelli, Lakeridge Elementary teacher.

Joleen Hiltner, West Mercer Elementary paraprofessional.

Yasuko Ishijima, Islander Middle School paraprofessional.

Nancy Johnstone, Island Park Elementary teacher.

Nancy Kidder, head secretary at Crest Learning Center.

Shelly Krispin, registrar at Islander Middle School.



Left to right are Robb Wick, Nancy Kidder, Yasuko Ishijima, Polly Giovanelli, Nancy Johnstone and Jan Vetter.

Doris Stuck, West Mercer Elementary paraprofessional.

Jane Sullivan, Mercer Island High School teacher.

Jan Vetter, Island Park Elementary teacher.

Robb Wick, Mercer Island High School art teacher.

Celebrating 75 years of educational excellence

As we close the school year, I'd like to thank you for your unwavering support of our students and staff this year. On Thursday, June 16 we bid farewell to 345



Dr. Gary Plano
Superintendent

MIHS seniors at Commencement 2016 at Key Arena in Seattle. I arrived as superintendent when our seniors were in 3rd grade! Those 13 years have gone by so quickly. We are already looking forward to welcoming our new kindergarteners — the class of 2029!

The Mercer Island School District is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year and has built a reputation for excellence, combining academics, cultural expression, and athletic achievement. We are educating more than 4,300 students with new century skills in critical thinking, collaboration, invention and creativity.

Our enrollment continues to grow as new families move to Mercer Island for our high quality public education. We are eagerly looking forward to the opening of our fourth elementary school, Northwood, when the 2016-17 school year begins Aug. 31. It was wonderful to see so many community members at the recent dedication and open house.

The fall will also see completion of new classrooms, commons and

gymnasium at Islander Middle School. Both projects were the result of a successful bond proposition supported by the community in 2014.

We continue to enhance our curriculum, with the addition of an elementary school Spanish-language program for all K-5 students beginning with the 2016-17 school year.

For frequently updated information about the district and its programs, please visit our website at mercerislandschools.org, find us on Facebook at facebook.com/mercerislandschooldistrict, and follow us on Twitter @mercerislandsd.

Have a wonderful summer and travel safely.

PATHFINDER AWARDS HONOR FOUR REMA

The District presented its new Pathfinder Award to four graduates of Mercer Island High School whose achievements, strength of character, and citizenship inspire and challenge today's youth.

They are:

Warren Brown, Ed. D., 1988.

Earle Canfield, PA, 1965.

**Dariush Mozaffarian, M.D.,
Dr.P.H., 1987.**

**Michelle Flowers Taylor, Ed.D.,
1988.**

"Growing up on an island with exceptional schools and residents who strongly support public education, these four individuals used their formative years to embrace the larger world around them and to push the boundaries of their potential," said Superintendent Dr. Gary Plano.

"These award winners exemplify the amazing impact our high school graduates can have in our local and global communities. Each of them is a pathfinder aspiring to improve our way of life and to make this world a better place."

They were honored at the Mercer Island Schools Foundation's *Breakfast of Champions* on April 26, and a permanent Pathfinder Award display was created at Mercer Island High School alongside previously recognized distinguished graduates.

This year's Pathfinders were selected from nominations submitted by the community at large and chosen by a 13-member selection committee.

Warren Brown, Ed.D. began his tenure as the 16th President of North Seattle College on July 1, 2014. He previously served as Executive Vice President for Instruction and Student Services at Seattle Central College. Additionally, he served as an adjunct faculty member for Seattle University's doctoral program in



Pathfinder Award recipients Michelle Flowers Taylor and Warren Brown stand alongside the new display just inside the main entrance to Mercer Island High School.

educational leadership.

His previous responsibilities include serving as Dean for Student Learning at Cascadia Community College, Associate Dean for Academic Support at Whatcom Community College, tenured instructor in communication studies at Pierce College and an instructor at Portland State University.

Earle Canfield, who is retired after more than 20 years as a physician assistant, was honored by the American Association of Physician Assistants as Humanitarian of the Year 2013 for spending his lifetime helping people in the third world through medical mission work. He was particularly singled out for his first-hand experience working with underserved communities and impoverished children in Nepal, that

led him to start American-Nepali Students' and Women's Educational Relief—ANSWER—in 2001. He first saw the need for such an organization during a medical mission trip to that nation.



Pathfinder Award recipient Earle Canfield with Superintendent Dr. Gary Plano.

MARKABLE MERCER ISLAND GRADUATES



Dr. Warren Brown speaks to sophomores in Erica Hill's honors English class about how his years at MIHS set him on a path toward higher education administration.

Canfield serves as the volunteer executive director of ANSWER, which relies on sponsors in the West to fund education efforts for children from very poor and low-caste communities in Nepal. Today, ANSWER has more helped more than 1,000 children in 120 schools and colleges throughout the country. Every high school graduate in the program, 117 in total, has gone on to college. The program also offers medical assistance to their families.



Dariush Mozaffarian's parents, Dr. G. Ali Mozaffarian and Nahid Arasteh of Mercer Island, accept the award on behalf of their son.

Dariush Mozaffarian, M.D., Dr.P.H. has served as Dean of the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University in Boston since July 1, 2014. He previously served as an associate professor of Cardiovascular Medicine at Harvard Medical School and an associate professor at the Harvard School of Public Health.

A cardiologist and epidemiologist whose research has illuminated the connection between lifestyle and heart disease, he is deeply passionate about food and how it influences our communities, our environment, our families, and our selves.

Throughout his career, he has used scientific evidence to enhance nutrition policy, noting that providing basic nutrition advice to people, and relying on personal responsibility, hasn't been enough to improve public health. He led an international team looking at issues of diet and chronic disease, including the first analysis of sodium intake of populations worldwide.



Pathfinder Award recipient Michelle Flowers Taylor and her father, Earl Flowers of Mercer Island.

Michelle Flowers Taylor, Ed.D. currently serves as the director of the Institute of Engineering Community and Cultural Competence (IEC3) at USC's Viterbi School of Engineering. In this role, Dr. Taylor leads the development and implementation of intervention strategies, programs, and ongoing research aimed at eliminating the gender gap in STEM with emphasis on the high-demand fields of computer science and engineering. IEC3 has emerged from Dr. Taylor's doctoral research, and it is specifically focused on empowering African American and Latina girls and women to enter STEM fields, and advancing their career readiness in technologies of the future.

Dr. Taylor is also a co-founding member of Black Women: State of the Union (BWSOTU), which is a California-based performing arts organization that represents and celebrates black women. Through live theater and community events, BWSOTU demonstrates its dedication to encouraging and inspiring black women and girls.

POINTS OF PRIDE



▲ Mercer Island High School has again been recognized among the nation's Best High Schools in the 2016 annual rankings by U.S. News & World Report for student achievement.

▲ The Mercer Island High School drill team was honored as the 3A academic state champion for the 2015-16 winter sports season by the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA).



◀ The Mercer Island High School Unified Soccer team won the gold medal at the district playoff tournament. Unified Sports are a collaboration of schools and Special Olympics Washington, dedicated to promoting inclusion through shared training and competition for students with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team. Unified soccer teams are made up of five athletes with intellectual disabilities and five unified partners without intellectual disabilities.

▶ Island Park and West Mercer Elementary were named recipients of 2015 Washington Achievement Awards by Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction Randy Dorn and the Washington State Board of Education. Island Park Elementary earned awards for High Progress and English Language Acquisition and West Mercer Elementary for High Progress.



POINTS OF PRIDE



◀ Three Mercer Island teams are among the best in the world by virtue of their outstanding results in the global Destination Imagination event held recently in Knoxville, Tenn. Destination Imagination is an educational program in which student teams solve open-ended challenges and present their solutions at tournaments. Team "This Isn't Legible" finished in fifth place out of 89 teams in the Middle Level Structural Challenge. Team "Syntax Error" finished fifth out of 59 teams in the Secondary Level Technical Challenge. Team "PinaCashadows" finished in 11th place out of 76 teams in the Elementary Structural Challenge.

▶ Mercer Island High School student Grace Hunter placed third overall in her event - accounting - at the recent International DECA conference in Nashville. Seventeen MIHS DECA students and their teacher Jennifer McLellan joined more than 18,000 from around the world at the International Conference. DECA helps students to develop skills for successful business careers, build self-esteem, experience leadership and practice community service.



◀ The annual Mercer Island High School band food drive collected over six tons of food and \$1,500 for Mercer Island Youth and Family Services and Northwest Harvest. The MIHS band has been collecting food for the past seven years as a community service activity. All high school band members, roughly 300 students freshman through seniors, participate in this event. This year's food drive was organized and led by two student volunteers, Adrian Ashley and Alison Rorem.

SUMMER DISTRICT NEWS

Mercer Island School District

4160 86th Ave. S.E.

Mercer Island, WA 98040

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Permit # 19
Mercer Island, WA

ECRWSS

Postal Customer

Inviting all Islander Alumni to connect with us!

The Mercer Island School District has established an Alumni Relations program to connect MIHS graduates to the school and honor graduates through the Pathfinder Awards. Please visit mercerislandschools.org/alumni to update your contact information and learn more about upcoming reunions and the Pathfinder Awards. We also invite our community to like us on [Facebook.com/mercerislandschooldistrict](https://www.facebook.com/mercerislandschooldistrict) and follow us on Twitter @mercerislandsd.



MERCER ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS

MISD Board of Directors

Ralph Jorgenson, President

ralph.jorgenson@mercerislandschools.org

David D'Souza, Vice President

david.dsouza@mercerislandschools.org

Adair Dingle

adair.dingle@mercerislandschools.org

Tracy Drinkwater

tracy.drinkwater@mercerislandschools.org

Dave Myerson

dave.myerson@mercerislandschools.org

Dr. Gary Plano, Superintendent

gary.plano@mercerislandschools.org

The Mercer Island 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, marital status, 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. The Mercer Island School District offers classes in many College and Career Readiness programs, admission to which is non-discriminatory. Lack of English-language proficiency will not be a barrier to admission and participation in those programs.

Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Compliance Officer:

Erin Battersby, Senior Director of Compliance and Legal Affairs,
(206) 230-6227

erin.battersby@mercerislandschools.org

Title IX Compliance Coordinator:

Erin Battersby, Senior Director of Compliance and Legal Affairs,
(206) 230-6227

erin.battersby@mercerislandschools.org

Section 504 & ADA Coordinator:

Dr. Lindsay Myatich, Director, (206) 236-3326

lindsay.myatich@mercerislandschools.org

Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator:

Erin Battersby, Senior Director of Compliance and Legal Affairs,
(206) 230-6227

erin.battersby@mercerislandschools.org

**Come share your ideas about the
2016-17 MISD budget**

**Connect with the School Board
at a public hearing:**

**Monday, Aug. 22, 2016, 6 p.m.
City Council Chambers
Mercer Island City Hall
9611 SE 36th St.**