



EDUCATION MATTERS

FALL 2018

HHS activities: more than just fun and games

The Hawks' homecoming football game showcased nearly two thirds of the High School's 596-member student body—players, cheerleaders, band members and the student cheering section.

It's the type of participation Assistant Principal Josh Johnson likes to see. "But," he notes, "still one-third wasn't there."

Research shows that involvement in school activities promotes greater academic achievement for every type of learner.

That's why over the past two years HHS's counselors and administrators have focused on reaching out to disengaged students to help them find—and create—activities they want to pursue.

"If we can give a kid a reason to come to school, then we can create one more reason to stay. One more reason to stay gives us one more opportunity to teach them," Johnson says. "There is no reason why we can't get to 100 percent graduation."

HHS's graduation rate is already at a noteworthy 96 percent, and between 60 and 65 percent of HHS students have been involved in at least one activity over the past couple of years.

"I know there are a few kids who, if it wasn't for band, wouldn't be coming to school," says HHS band director Corey McEnry. He says music and other activities provide a place for students to succeed when academics are hard.



Participating in activities teaches many skills, including how to balance multiple commitments.

"I don't really think it matters what the activity is—athletics, band, mock trial or robotics," observes Beth Tugaw, HHS's athletic coordinator, ASB Leadership adviser and PE teacher. "They're part of something bigger than themselves, and that experience is very beneficial."

Student-athletes Olivia Beuselinck, Peyton Brammer, Garret Gundy and Aidan Mallory say their activities have taught them time management, self-discipline, perseverance and trust.

"It becomes not just school," says Aidan, a senior involved in football, wrestling and track. "It's a community."

For Band Council President Olivia Gaines, being part of band, Key Club, swim team and National Honor Society has taught her how to make friends with all types of people.

"I've learned I have to reach outside my circle and find people who I may never have been friends with before," she says. "By the end of the season, we're like a family."

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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Community Members,

I am eager every autumn to see staff and students return to Hockinson's classrooms, courts and fields, but this year their return meant even more to me than in the past.

Because on Sept. 4, when buses began rolling toward our schools, it meant life in our community would start returning to normal.

Hockinson had never experienced a work stoppage before, and it brought out strong feelings for many people throughout our community.

Still, as the teachers union and school district administrators analyzed budgets and created projections to determine what the district's finances could handle, one thing remained clear. Hockinson's teachers, staff and administrators share a common goal: to inspire, teach and grow the students of Hockinson School District.

Throughout our work in the coming months, we will remember this shared purpose and make decisions that enable us to serve our Hockinson students to the best of this district's abilities.

I am so proud and thankful to be part of this community.

Welcome back to school.

Sincerely,
Sandra Yager

Overhaul of state education funding system creates local challenges

Negotiations lead to new contract

The Hockinson community watched collaboration in action last summer as teachers and administrators worked together to settle a new contract for certificated staff.

The effort was complicated, because it coincided with an overhaul of the state's education funding system, which sent districts into uncharted waters.

Hockinson's 2018-19 school year was delayed by only three days, and the district and teachers union settled on a 14.5 percent average raise for 2018-19. The 2019-20 school year will bring a 2 percent raise, plus step increases for experience and education.

What led to the work stoppage?

Here are a few factors that affected the bargaining season in many school districts, including HSD:

1. The state Supreme Court's McCleary decision said school districts have been too dependent on local taxes to fund basic education—and that had led to inequities.

2. In response to McCleary, the state Legislature increased state money for basic education by raising state property taxes. But it also decreased the amount of money school districts could raise using local levies.
3. Legislators touted the increased state funding without adequately explaining that districts would lose significant amounts of local money, some of which is used to help fund teacher compensation and key classified staff positions.

Where is the McCleary money?

Funding from the McCleary-related legislation is embedded in many areas of the district's budget. Although the goal of McCleary was to force the state to fully fund basic education, that has not been achieved. Local levies are still needed to help pay for special education, technology, staff and other expenses. Many needs have emerged since the state set up its school model, which guides district funding allocations.

Also, districts cannot use state money designated for basic education to pay for integral programs, such as those listed under "What's happening to HSD's levy?"

How does the new contract affect HSD's finances?

The state is budgeted to provide Hockinson with \$7.93 million for 114.7 certificated salaries in 2018-19. The district's new contract with certificated staff will cost the district \$8.96 million (including three teachers above the state allocation).

Over the next two years, as the new contract and the new state funding model are being implemented, Hockinson plans to dip into its fund balance to cover expenses but is working hard to minimize that.

Fortunately, student enrollment appears to be increasing, so the money generated in per-student state allocations will absorb some of the impact of the levy funding loss, described below.

What's happening to HSD's levy?

In 2016, Hockinson voters agreed to a levy of \$3.43 per \$1,000 assessed value. In 2018, that levy brought in \$4.7 million. However, because the Legislature capped local levies at \$1.50 per \$1,000 AV, the district will collect only \$2.4 million in 2019 instead of the \$5 million voters had approved.

The current local levy expires in 2019, and the district anticipates asking its residents to approve another levy—at \$1.50 per \$1,000 AV.

This local money remains a key piece of the district's budget, enabling the district to continue meeting its commitment to educators, providing important educational programming, athletics and extracurricular activities for Hockinson students, and providing for improvements, including security and safety. (See graphic.)

HSD'S STATE & LOCAL LEVY FUNDING



State Funding

81% of HSD's 2018-19 budget comes from the state and pays for:

- "Basic education" (as defined in RCW 28A.150.210)
- Special education, limited
- Smaller class sizes, grades K-3
- Maintenance, supplies, operational costs
- Most salaries
- Transportation
- Other programs, such as LAP, Bilingual, HiCap

Local Levy

13% of HSD's 2018-19 budget comes from the local levy and pays for:

- Additional funding for special ed
- Safety & security improvements
- Technology improvements
- Teachers and counselors beyond the state's funding model
- Additional support staff, such as aides, nurses, custodians
- Athletics, fine arts and other extracurricular activities
- Supplemental days for professional development

**6% of budget comes from local non-tax support and federal special purpose funding*

Community Education Opportunities

Hockinson Community Education has some great classes this fall. Find these classes and more at www.hocksd.org/administration/community-education.

- Jazzercise (adults)
- Tae Kwon Do Kids (ages 5-12)
- Tae Kwon Do (ages 9-adult)
- Men's Basketball (adult men)
- Youth Basketball (grades 3-6, boys and girls)
- Clark County Youth Wrestling (grades K-8, boys and girls)
- Chocolate classes (ages 10-adult)

Seeking instructors

Would you like to teach a class? Do you have a hobby or knowledge in a certain subject? We are looking for new class offerings!

Contact us

For information on classes, teaching and facilities rentals visit our website at www.hocksd.org and click on the Community tab, or call Charity Schadt at (360) 448-6480.

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Facilities team does much with little

With the old District Office bursting at the seams and the new Middle School reaching completion, staff began seeing the old Middle School buildings with new eyes.

Located just behind the District Office, the lower part of the old building housed a double-sided line of eight classrooms separated by closets and hallways. It almost looked like a horizontal office building.

That vision kicked off an improvement project that rehoused district administration and created a ripple effect that touched nearly every campus—and was accomplished on a shoestring budget:

- The age 18-21 transition program moved from the High School into the old District Office.
- The preschool moved from a portable at the Elementary School into the transition program's portable at the High School.
- The Elementary School turned the preschool classroom into space for the Highly Capable program.

"Everyone ended up in more suitable spaces," said Superintendent Sandra Yager. "And almost the entire project was completed by our people, mostly reusing and repurposing existing materials."

The whole domino-like project cost \$75,000 in materials, and because it involved repurposing facilities at the Elementary School for a growing student body, it was funded using impact fees—not levy or general funding.



ABOVE: Preschoolers don coats at their new location at the High School.

RIGHT: Eirik Huset leans against the maple District Office counter that he salvaged from the old Middle School's wood shop.

(Earlier this year, the cost to bring two portables—four classrooms—to the Elementary School cost the district more than \$200,000 per classroom, including the buildings, site work and related expenditures.)

Maintenance staff member and High School shop teacher Eirik Huset took the lead on the District Office challenge, repainting the old Middle School's bright-orange cabinets "Hockinson blue"; bringing in old High School lunch tables for a staff break room; and building a reception desk out of maple butcher block counters salvaged from HMS's former wood shop.

Once district staff moved into the new space in early July, work began on the old District Office. The maintenance team of



Huset, Maintenance/Operations supervisor Shaniko Ristau, and summer crew members Chris Crawford and Matt Dawson created a kitchen accessible to people with disabilities and turned a restroom into a laundry room, for starters.

Where administrators once prepared budgets and managed the district, students now spend their days learning how to cook, do laundry and solve math problems.

"I do like it," said student Cecil Strode. "Everything."