



# EDUCATION MATTERS

FALL  
2019



Get to  
know a

STUDENT

## Spotlight on 5th grader Hannah Amugod

**Favorite subject:** Math, because I like to add numbers a lot.

**Favorite book:** *Guts* by Raina Telgemeier

**What I like to do (hobbies):** I like to play soccer and volleyball. It's fun and competitive.

**What I like about my school:** It has a really good playground and the teachers are really nice.

**If I was a teacher for one whole day, I would teach:** Probably math and science.

**When I grow up, I want to be:** A pharmacist or a physical therapist—that last one because my mom says I'm a really good massager.

## School district teams up with Clark PUD to save energy

From HVAC system upgrades and lighting improvements, to water conservation projects and in-house machine repair, being good stewards of resources is a long-standing tradition at Hockinson School District. As Michelle Scott, District Director of Business Services puts it, "we've always found ways to save."

Now, thanks to a partnership with Clark Public Utilities, the District has embarked on a new effort to save by participating in an energy conservation program known as Strategic Energy Management (SEM). The program, according to Bill Hibbs, Accounts Manager at Clark PUD, is designed to identify no-cost and low-cost opportunities to conserve through a detailed scan of a building's energy landscape and making smart,

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Maintenance team member Randy Dickinson checks an air cooling unit at HHES



# A MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT STEVE MARSHALL

As you would expect, the start of this school year has been filled with “firsts” for me. It is, after all, my first year as Superintendent of Hockinson Schools. So, even though I have attended my fair share of school events throughout my career, I have never had the opportunity to experience the Hockinson-ized version of those activities until this fall. Some events have introduced me to our district’s staff, students, families and community members, while others have acquainted me with the values of the HSD and the Hockinson community. In one way or another, all have inspired me. “How so?” you ask? Let me count the ways...

## Active & engaged families

While students may walk a few steps ahead or behind their parents at these events, these are valuable opportunities for all Hockinson families to get on the same page.

I was inspired to see such a high level of attendance and energy on display at each of our schools. By participating in these activities, HSD parents communicate to their students that education and school involvement are valuable. Their actions also convey encouragement and support—all of which are powerful factors in promoting student success.

## School & community spirit

Hockinson High School offers nearly 20 sports and all are equally important. That said, varsity football games are definitely unique. Maybe that’s because they coincide with the start of the school year when

excitement and optimism are high, or because they fall on Friday nights at the end of the work week...in the evening...outside.

These home games are community events at which Hockinson families—with the assistance of our amazing marching band and cheerleaders—showcase their unity and school spirit. Few things are more inspiring than a community that comes together to support its students.

## A love of arts & music

It is fairly commonplace for schools to have band concerts, but it is uncommon to have standing room only at those concerts like I have seen in Hockinson. It is also uncommon for concert goers to leave these performances impressed with the students’ high level of musicianship.

This is clearly a community that enjoys music, appreciates the arts and supports its students in these endeavors. Case-in-point: The remarkable attendance at the annual HHS Music Booster Benefit Dinner, Silent Auction and Concert. I cannot wait to see the HHS musical *The Addams Family* next month—as well as the turnout.

## Generous & supportive

I attended my first AAA Booster Auction this past month and...holy cow! The attendance was incredible, as was the generosity of the bidders and donors—most of which are Brush Prairie-based businesses.

While many of the stories in this newsletter illustrate Hockinson School District’s commitment to maximizing dollars and resources, funding gaps still persist. Enter the Boosters. They, along with our small and spirited business community, donate time and energy to supplement our schools’

academics, activities and athletics so that our students have the resources and support to achieve at high levels.

## Continuous improvement

Our teachers spend several days before school begins examining student achievement data and learning about topics such as the teacher evaluation framework and instructional strategies. Teachers can also get certified in Right Response—a proactive, holistic safety training. The days leading up to the start of the school year are also a time to welcome new staff members, improve practices and launch school culture initiatives.

The common thread running through all of these sessions was an inspiring focus on improving the learning experience for our students. This is clearly the #1 commitment of the Hockinson School District—as it should be.

## Final thoughts

When making observations, cultural anthropologists are trained to withhold judgment because they don’t want their emotions to get in the way of their objectivity. Well, I am not a cultural anthropologist! I am an educator with a much more subjective heart. My initial observations of the Hockinson community and of the HSD are full of enthusiasm. This is a community with a long history of caring about its schools and I am excited to work with you to carry on that special tradition.

Here’s to a school year full of continued inspiration for everyone involved in Hockinson schools!

Sincerely,  
**Steve Marshall**



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Learn about a  
**TEACHER**

## Spotlight on HSD teacher Becky Smarr

**Job:** Lead teacher for the Hockinson Transition Program (for students between the ages of 18-21) and the HSD Preschool, which serves both Special Education and General Education students. Worked in the HSD since 2017.

**Education:** I graduated from Charlotte Country Day High School in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Go Buccaneers! After high school I attended William Peace University before transferring to Appalachian State University, where I graduated with a bachelor's degree in Special Education. Fun fact: ASU is located in Boone, NC, which is named in honor of Daniel Boone.

**Hobbies:** My favorite hobby is horseback riding, though I don't have a lot of spare time for hobbies. When I do have free time, I fill it by spending time with family. All five of my children are in careers of public service.

**Talents:** I enjoy preparing delicious food. I credit my mom for passing along her culinary skills!

**What I enjoy most about Hockinson School District:** I enjoy working with families to ensure that our preschool students' first experience with the District is a positive one. I also enjoy preparing our 18-21 transition students for future success by developing their academic, life and job skills. I admire the District's strong focus on students, and appreciate how everyone on staff does whatever it takes to help kids overcome obstacles, whether their challenges are personal or academic. I work with the best paraprofessionals in the area and credit my co-workers for inspiring me every day. They are always willing to go above and beyond to assist and encourage students!



## Cafeteria conservation efforts garner attention

Students and staff at Hockinson Heights Elementary School were recently recognized by Clark County Green Schools for their years-long efforts to reduce cafeteria waste. A video produced by the county highlighting the school's new waste-saving milk dispenser and reusable cups has received more than 10,000 views. You can watch the video by visiting the Hockinson School District Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/HockinsonSchools](http://www.facebook.com/HockinsonSchools).

## Clark PUD helps district save

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calculated adjustments.

"Typically, the biggest opportunities to save energy come from making changes to building controls," explained Hibbs. "Most schools have a user interface with different temperature sensors and air pressure sensors. Based on feedback from those sensors, the building is controlled with scheduling; the HVAC system starts up at a certain time and shuts down at a certain time—it's the same thing for lighting. Once we sort through those controls and other information received during the scan, we can suggest changes."

Some changes, Hibbs noted, will take a lot of effort and result in minimal savings. Others, he said, won't take much effort at all. The District has assembled a team of staff members to go through the different suggestions and prioritize them.

"There are a lot of facets to strategic energy management," added Scott. "Capital investments help with long-term returns, but we don't have the resources to make those investments right now. With that in mind, our focus is on the little things we can do to make big changes that don't take a lot of time or investment."

While it's difficult to forecast exactly how much the District will save through Strategic Energy Management, Hibbs said that conservation and efficiency efforts like these ultimately save the community a lot of money.

"Even with all the new people moving to Clark County, our load growth has remained the same over the past five years because we've been offsetting that growth with energy efficiency," he said. "That's really a testament to the projects and efforts like what you see the folks at Hockinson School District doing. If we had to build additional infrastructure, like a transmission station or a substation, that's a big cost to the community."

"It's really great work, what they've done and are doing in Hockinson," added Hibbs. "I'm really excited and look forward to seeing what they accomplish. I think there's big savings ahead."

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Catch up  
with a  
**GRADUATE**

## Spotlight on 2018 HSD graduate Colton Wheeler

**Favorite subject:** Math

**Favorite school activity or memory:** My favorite memories would have to be any Friday night football game at home. The crisp fall air, dew forming on the field, and the whole Hockinson community there to support the team.

**What I value or appreciate most about my Hockinson School District education:** The relationships that I was able to build between classmates, faculty and people in the community.

**What I'm doing now:** I am a Freshman (Plebe) at the United States Military Academy at West Point in New York. I am also a member of West Point Cheer team. This year, I have been blessed to travel with my team to Michigan and Kentucky. I will finish the season going to Georgia and Colorado, cheering for Army Football. I attend a beautiful school, which has produced United States presidents, astronauts, political, and military leaders since 1802.

**What's next for me (career or other plans):** In 4 years, I will graduate and commission as a second lieutenant in the US Army. I will work in the Army for at least 5 years as an Army Officer, potentially stationed around the world.

**My advice to younger students:** Don't ever give up on your dreams. Pursue those dreams with tenacity and vigor. Take advantage of every opportunity that is put in front of you and be willing to step outside your comfort zone, because that is where you will grow and learn the most. Also, don't forget to take some time here and there to slow down and appreciate the little things.



## Grant award brings large print edition books to Middle School Library

Thanks to a state grant, the library at Hockinson Middle School now boasts an impressive collection of large print edition books.

With increased white space and larger text than standard editions, these books are designed to help readers who have trouble seeing and focusing while reading. The large print books are the same overall size as standard editions and feature the same cover art, minimizing any stigma associated with needing a different kind of book.

Paid for with funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences (IMLS) through Washington State's Library Sciences and Technology Act (LSTA) allotment, the large print collection is valued at approximately \$400.