



Ian Henry <ian.henry@mercerislandschools.org>

May Message From Superintendent Rundle

1 message

Fred Rundle <communications@mercerislandschools.org>

Mon, May 1, 2023 at 5:01 PM

Reply-To: communications@mercerislandschools.org

To: Ian.Henry@mercerislandschools.org



MERCER ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT #400

4160 86th AVE SE • Mercer Island, Washington 98040

www.mercerislandschools.org

T: 206-236-3300 F: 206-236-3333

Fred Rundle, Ed.D, Superintendent

fred.rundle@mercerislandschools.org

Dear Mercer Island Families,

The students, staff, and community continue to amaze and inspire me. Students are excelling in and out of the classroom through athletics, clubs and organizations, and even personal pursuits beyond MISD. Some of our staff members are gaining recognition by local, state, and national organizations. And our families, they are volunteering through the schools and PTA, supporting the Mercer Island Schools Foundation, and sending eager learners to school each day. I will highlight specific events coming in May, but also invite you to read more about recent accomplishments and points of pride at the end of this letter.

Celebrations and Recognition in the Month of May

[Asian Pacific American Heritage Month](#)- our schools and school district will celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. I think it is helpful to learn about a few statistics about our students and the number of them who identify as Asian, Pacific Islander, or Native Hawaiian.

- Four of the five top languages spoken by Mercer Island students and families other than English are Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Japanese.
- 27% of MISD students identify as Asian or Pacific Islander and 14% of our students identify as two or more races (the majority of our multiracial students are inclusive of Asian)

The theme of Asian Pacific Heritage Month this year is Advancing Leaders Through Opportunity. This resonates with our school district's focus, particularly the commitment to student voice and belonging. Our student group at the high school, Education Coalition for Asian American Representation, is a visible example of leadership. In fact, on May 10, students from ECAAR will be recognized for a student leadership award at the Washington Association of School Administrators.

Jewish American Heritage Month

May is also home to [Jewish American Heritage Month](#). Some members of our community and staff asked me why I have recognized religious observances rather than sticking to just race, ethnicity, and culture. While schools certainly fall under the umbrella of "separation of church and state," it does not preclude schools from teaching about religion so long as the teaching is not specific to or gives preference to one religion.

Mercer Island is home to a very large percentage of families and students who identify as Jewish. Our district is committed to making sure every student belongs. This deep sense of belonging transcends race, gender, culture, ethnicity, and religion.

National Teacher Appreciation Week

May 8-12 will be an opportunity to lift up and acknowledge our outstanding educators across Mercer Island. Whereas most of the country focuses on teachers, we have a long history of using this week to honor all of our staff for their tireless efforts to support students and make the magic happen throughout the school year.

National School Nurse Day

On May 11, please take a moment to reach out and thank one of our school nurses on National School Nurse Day. These staff members provide more than ice packs and band-aids. Our nurses offer social, emotional, and psychological assistance to our students. They have goals to impact students that extend well beyond the health room.

Military Appreciation Month and Memorial Day

May is Military Appreciation Month, capped off by Memorial Day observed on the last Monday in May. Memorial Day calls our attention to remembering and honoring those who served and lost their lives in the military. I invite us all to pause and think about those near and far who sacrificed for the country.

Our Students In and Out of the Classroom

Below is a snapshot from April of the accomplishments of our students both in and out of the classroom. We include this snapshot to showcase the great stories and accomplishments of our students.

- Our Physics 2 and Chemistry 2 students at MIHS [built Stirling Engines](#) with the help of a grant from the Mercer Island Schools Foundation as part of a STEM Culminating Project.
- MIHS junior Subhadra Vadlamannati [attended the National Youth Leadership Council](#) in Tennessee.
- Students at Crest [heard from former Washington State Governor Gary Locke](#) in early April. Students learned from the governor's experience but they also peppered him with questions on a wide array of topics in a lively question and answer session.
- MIHS senior tennis player Jaya Manhas was [profiled by the Mercer Island Reporter](#).
- MIHS students [hosted a Culture Night](#) in the high school Commons on April 23. Island Park second grader Sri Vadlamannati [won three awards at the Washington State Science and Engineering Fair](#).
- The MIHS SAFE Club, along with MIYFS, [launched the Island Space Campaign](#).
- We had 24 MISD Destination Imagination Teams take [part in the at the regional tournament and 20 teams take part in the state tournament](#).
- MIHS junior Sebastian Foss is one of [four Sea Scouts nationally to be selected to spend a week on board the US Coast Guard Barque Eagle \(WIX 327\) this summer](#).
- Students in the PETRI Club at MIHS are [hosting a STEM Summer Camp](#).
- The MIHS DECA team competed at the National Tournament [in Orlando, Florida, in late April and five students were named finalists in their area of expertise](#).
- The MIHS Spring play, [Shakespeare In Love, opened on April 27](#).

Sincerely,

Fred Rundle

Mercer Island School District 400 would like to continue connecting with you via email. If you prefer to be removed from our list, please contact Mercer Island School District 400 directly. To stop receiving all email messages distributed through our SchoolMessenger service, follow this link and confirm: [Unsubscribe](#)

SchoolMessenger is a notification service used by the nation's leading school systems to connect with parents, students and staff through voice, SMS text, email, and social media.