



Summer 2023

Connections

Community update from the Puyallup School District



Class of 2023!

Last month, 1,666 seniors walked across the graduation stage at the Washington State Fairgrounds with diplomas in hands and bright futures awaiting them on the other side. The 13-year journey from kindergarten to

graduation is not an easy one, but these graduates have persevered through their individual and collective challenges. We congratulate each of them and the countless hands who have supported and guided them along the way.

Watch any you might have missed here:

[youtube.com/@PuyallupSchools/streams](https://www.youtube.com/@PuyallupSchools/streams)



PUYALLUP SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Tradition of Excellence

Puyallup School District 3, P.O. Box 370, Puyallup, WA 98371

Upcoming Dates

AUG	12	Recruiting Team at Farmers' Market
AUG	15	Career Fair at Firgrove Elementary
SEP	6	First Day of School, Grades 1-12
SEP	11	First Day of School, Kindergarten
SEP	13	3.25 Hour Early Release, Fair Day

For more information:

Puyallup School District Communications
(253) 841-8703
communications@puyallup.k12.wa.us
www.puyallup.k12.wa.us

On the cover:

The Class of 2023 celebrated their graduations and accomplishments during ceremonies held at the Washington State Fairgrounds on June 16-17.

Puyallup 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, 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 following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination: Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator: Gordon Brobbey, brobbg@puyallup.k12.wa.us, (253) 840-8863; 504/ADA Coordinator: Gus Wessel, wesseab@puyallup.k12.wa.us, (253) 840-8848; Title IX Coordinator Staff: Amie Brandmire, brandmah@puyallup.k12.wa.us (253) 841-8645; Title IX Coordinator Students: Gordon Brobbey, brobbg@puyallup.k12.wa.us, (253) 840-8863. 302 2nd St. SE, Puyallup, WA 98372.

Dr. John Polm, Superintendent

In service and support,

I have also seen their character and kindness. They have uplifted each other, created strong friendships and built unity to help make our schools and spaces a place where everyone belongs. Thank you to everyone who helps make our school district the special place it is. I look forward to all we will achieve and experience in the 2023-2024 school year!

Superintendent's Message

As I reflect on this past school year, families, students, staff and community members who helped make it such an incredible year. One of the best parts of my job is being able to go into the schools and classrooms throughout our district to witness the amazing learning and successes our students are achieving. This would not be possible without the world-class teaching, support and guidance that is provided by our skilled, passionate and caring staff and volunteers, or the work of our families to support their children's education. Through their commitment to excellence, they have helped create opportunities and spaces where learning thrives and dreams are nurtured. I am so proud to see our students make the most of the support, resources and opportunities created by our staff, families and volunteers. I have witnessed their determination, resilience and commitment to their education. They have shown that they can achieve anything they put their minds to. Beyond academics,



Puyallup School District
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Meeker Elementary Celebrates 100 Years!



A community member looks for familiar faces in past Meeker Elementary class and staff photos.

Friends from near and far, young and old, came together on June 3 to celebrate Meeker Elementary's 100th Anniversary. The event featured an open house and tours of the school, where several classrooms were themed to different time periods spanning the past 100 years. In addition, attendees were able to take a step back in time and view a large collection of historical photos and memorabilia. Over 500 attendees experienced an unforgettable afternoon.



Scan the QR code to watch the highlight video on YouTube.

Discover More!

Summer Resources

We maintain a list of summer resources for families on our website. Visit it to find information about food banks, mental health support, summer opportunities and more.

PSD Job Fair on August 15

Are you looking for a career that makes a difference? Want to be part of an incredible team? Join us for our PSD Job Fair on Tuesday, August 15 from 3-7 p.m. at Firgrove Elementary School, 13918 Meridian Ave. E. Visit us to learn more about open positions, ask questions and apply for positions at the event. Some positions will also have on-the-spot interviews available, so be sure to bring your resume!

Register for Kindergarten

Do you have a child who will be five years old by August 31? It's time to register them for kindergarten! PSD offers free full-day kindergarten at each of our elementary schools. Registration is easy and can be completed online or in person.



Link to this news and more by scanning the QR code to the left or visit us online at www.puyallup.k12.wa.us

Puyallup PTAs Earn State Awards



Pictured L-R: WSPTA President Nancy Chamberlain, Hunt PTA VP Rebecca Demas, Hunt PTA Secretary Crystal Hartwell, Hunt PTA President Tiffani Rouchaud, Hunt PTA Treasurer Katie Diaz, WSPTA Program Director Laura Peterson, and Puyallup PTA Council President Chhunla McKeever.

In May, the Washington State PTA Conference celebrated the work of local PTAs, councils, and individuals who are making a difference in their school communities. Congratulations to the following school PTAs on their prestigious state recognitions!

Outstanding PTA of the Year Award

This prestigious award recognizes the effective use of WSPTA best practices as a guide to be child-focused, member-focused, knowledgeable, fiscally responsible, involved, and well-trained. Congratulations to Hunt Elementary PTA for receiving platinum-level recognition!

Leadership Service Award

The purpose of this award is to recognize and acknowledge leadership skills attained by PTA leaders throughout all levels of the association. This award acknowledges PTA leaders who serve on educational committees, present classes, attend conferences, and other WSPTA and National PTA events. The award identifies four leadership levels from bronze to crystal. Congratulations to Crystal Hartwell, Hunt

Elementary PTA Secretary, for receiving gold-level recognition!

100% Staff Membership Awards

Presented to PTAs that enroll at least as many school staff members as there are full-time certificated employees at the school, this award recognizes the value of teachers and school staff as stakeholders advocating for all children through PTA membership. Congratulations to the following PTAs for receiving this award!

- Carson Elementary PTA
- Dessie Evans Elementary PTA
- Hunt Elementary PTA
- Pope Elementary PTA
- Ridgecrest Elementary PTA
- Shaw Road Elementary PTA

Emerald Ridge Senior Named the AJAC Youth Apprentice of the Year

Emerald Ridge High School 2023 graduate Noah Cushman recently won the Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee (AJAC) 2023 Outstanding Youth Apprentice of the Year!



Noah Cushman, Emerald Ridge Hight School graduate wins Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee award.

AJAC is an advanced manufacturing apprenticeship program for high school students and adults in the Pacific Northwest. Cushman was in the program during his junior and senior years between 2021-2023, as the opportunity caught his attention a couple of years before he started.

"I was inspired to join the program because I went to a career night at Emerald Ridge High School," Cushman said. "I learned that machining was an option for my future, and I decided that it would be a great opportunity for me."

During his two years as an apprentice, he says it helped him tremendously. "The program gave me an advantage because it gave me the experience I needed to work as a machinist," Cushman said. "It also helped me get the opportunity to work as a paid apprentice for 18 months during high school."

When Cushman found out he was the AJAC 2023 Outstanding Youth Apprentice of the Year, he was honored and surprised all at once. "I was shocked and excited," Cushman said. "I was not expecting to win an award that night. It meant a lot to me and showed how much I have grown in this field."

"When we talked to his (Cushman's) employer, his mentors simply said this—he strived for excellence and happily helped anywhere he was needed. He never had downtime as he always looked for something to do or a new skill to learn," said Youth Apprenticeship Manager Tracey Turcotte. "He is the type of employee we will be looking for, for years to come."

Cushman recently started a job as a full-time machinist. He says he thoroughly enjoys what he does and the people he works with.

New District Website

In August, our school district will launch a redesigned website to enhance communication, accessibility, and overall user experience for everyone in our community. The launch will also introduce an updated URL/email addresses using puyallupsd.org. Web users and emails will automatically redirect during this transition.

The new website will feature a modern and intuitive interface, making it easier than ever to navigate and find relevant information. We have prioritized accessibility. The website will be compatible with all device sizes and available in numerous languages.



Meeting the Needs of Our Growing District

The Puyallup area is growing rapidly, and we want to ensure that our schools have the space and resources necessary to provide our students with a safe and welcoming classroom environment. That's why we invite you to follow **Foundations for Our Future**, an initiative highlighting the various construction, maintenance, and technology projects currently underway throughout our district.

By staying up-to-date on these important developments, you can help us ensure that our schools continue to meet the needs of our students and families for years to come. Thank you for your support!

Follow us on:
Facebook: facebook.com/PSDFoundationsForOurFuture
Instagram: instagram.com/PSDFoundationsForOurFuture
LinkedIn: linkedin.com/showcase/psd-foundations-for-our-future

Rogers High School Aquatic Center



The crew members from Evergreen Concrete Cutting, Inc. remove the plaster and concrete from Rogers High School Pool to expose the filter system and drainpipes below the surface.

The Rogers High School (RHS) Aquatic Center will be closed to the public until early November. PSD will be performing health code-required upgrades to the RHS Aquatic Center this summer after a lengthy closure in 2022 due to failed equipment. This work will take place with an anticipated completion of mid-August to be ready for fall aquatic school sports. The pool will then reopen to the public on November 13. Information on registration for swim lessons at the RHS Aquatic Center will be available in early November.

The work that will be done during the closure includes the upsizing of the main pool drains to be compliant with the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act, the addition of a redundant pump, motor, electrical switch gear and new sand filters. The total project investment is estimated at \$1.4 million.

Wildwood Kindergartner Wins National Book-It Reading Challenge Grand Prize

If you’ve attended elementary school anytime since the mid-1980s, you’ve probably participated in or heard of the Book-It Reading Challenge.

Each year since 1984, millions of young readers from across the nation have read 10-15 minutes each day during the national reading challenge sponsored by Pizza Hut to earn coupons for the much sought-after personal pan pizza and dreams of winning the nationwide grand prize.

Thanks to her love of reading—particularly Dr. Suess and animal books—the dream of winning the grand prize has become a reality for one Wildwood Elementary kindergartner student. Sadie Bell was recently announced as this school year’s Book-It Challenge grand prize winner, earning herself a \$10,000 scholarship and a \$5,000 grant for her school’s library to use to purchase books.“I felt excited,” said Bell. “It’s a lot of dollars!”

On her way to being drawn as the grand prize winner, Bell read more than 130 books over the course of six months to bolster her chances of winning. She also earned six free pizzas during her reading spree, which she seemed almost as excited about. “I really like cheese and pepperoni pizzas,” said Bell.

Bell intends to continue reading regularly and hopes to be a veterinarian when she grows up. Based on her love of animal books and reptiles, she is well on her way there.



Wildwood Kindergartner Sadie Bell

School Capacity Task Force Begins Their Work



Members of the task force begin their work during their first meeting on June 8.

As part of the Puyallup community, we are aware of the rapid growth in the area and the challenges it poses for our schools.

As we look towards the future, we're concerned by the data which indicates that all our elementary and high schools are over our built classroom capacity. It is also projected that our junior highs will exceed our built capacity in 2028. Our schools support more students than we have classrooms for inside our buildings. Although portable buildings are helping to alleviate space issues at many sites, there are several limiting factors that we need to consider, including:

- State-mandated teacher-to-student ratios limit the seats we can assign to each class.
- Physical building space, including classrooms in our school buildings and portable classrooms.
- Property limits to the number of portables we can add to a location, including water, sewer, restroom availability and access, and security.

Without additional bond or levy funding for school construction, this issue requires urgent, creative attention and action to provide our students with the best learning environment.

Puyallup School District is actively engaging with the community to address our schools’ space and capacity issues. In April, we asked for your help, and more than 90 students, parents,

and community members from across the district volunteered. Fifteen members from that list, representing a diverse cross-section of community members, will participate in 17 meetings over the next year to ensure that all perspectives are represented.

The School Capacity and Utilization Task Force, which held their first meeting last week, will provide recommendations that support current and projected enrollment, building capacity, and address space issues within our existing facilities until future capital projects are funded and constructed.

The Task Force will review information on the following topics, among others, as it considers interim solutions to ensure our buildings have the capacity to support students:

- School attendance boundaries
- Location of districtwide programs
- Student attendance waivers (existing, new, and transfers)
- Alternative housing strategies
- Alternative grade configuration models
- Building condition and future building sustainability

Community-Wide School Supply Drive

Each year, Community in Schools of Puyallup teams up with Red Canoe Credit Union for **Fill the Canoe**, a community-wide school supply drive to collect items for all Puyallup School District students. Several local businesses and organizations partner with CIS of Puyallup and serve as collection sites for the public to drop off school supplies. You can participate by dropping off school supplies across the Puyallup community at participating **Fill the Canoe** locations! Scan the QR code to find where you can donate near you!



Scan the QR code to find where you can donate near you!

Free Summer Meals

Free lunches will be available for youth 18 years of age and younger at Sunrise Elementary, 2323 39th Ave. SE, through August 4. Meals include a deli sandwich, fruits and vegetables with milk. Lunches will be available on Monday-Friday from 11:00-11:30 a.m. They will be served under the school play shed and must be consumed onsite in accordance with USDA summer meal rules.

For more about summer meal programs: fns.usda.gov/meals4kids