



MEAD MATTERS

BACK TO SCHOOL 2023

EACH STUDENT
FUTURE READY

FOSTER BELONGING

INSTILL PURPOSE

CULTIVATE CURIOSITY

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DISTRICT ANNOUNCES REPLACEMENT LEVY

What a joy to see school buildings full of kids once again! September has long been my favorite month of the year, as in addition to the generally beautiful weather, educators get to enjoy the excitement, energy, and optimism associated with the beginning of the school year! Thanks to the hard work and professionalism of so many amazing people throughout this district, the 2023-24 school year is off to a fantastic start. I look forward to working with staff - and with all of you! - to continue providing exceptional educational experiences for kids in this community.

Speaking of this community, Mead School District has long been the recipient of extraordinary community support. There are so many ways that parents and patrons alike partner with district staff to make our school district the special place it is. The Mead community has always been immensely supportive, demonstrating a willingness to provide the resources necessary to help kids learn and flourish.

In just four months, Mead voters will be asked to renew the expiring Educational Programs & Operations Levy. Every three years, the district must seek voter approval to replace the expiring levy. Without renewal of the voter-approved local levy, the district would be faced with a loss of approximately 14% of its annual revenue.

Now in my 19th year working in district leadership, it has become crystal clear to me that there are the schools our state funds (what the state refers to as “basic education” funding) and there are the schools our community wants and expects. Local levy dollars allow schools to provide so much more than a “basic” education. Aside from fundraising and booster support, voter-approved levies are the sole source of funding for all of the district’s extracurricular programs and activities, such as performing arts, athletics, and clubs - elements of the school experience on which families have always placed great value.

Additionally, local levy dollars supplement instructional support positions, nursing services, custodial services, facilities & maintenance, transportation, information technology...and much, much more! If you’re someone who needs more specific information, here are a few particulars: Levy funds cover 10 nurse positions, which allows us to have a nurse in every school building at all times, nearly 40 teacher positions to help keep class sizes at reasonable numbers, as well as nearly 20 custodial positions that keep our schools clean and safe. You can find this information and much more related to how local levy dollars are spent at www.mead354.org/levy. Again, thank you for your ongoing partnership and support!

For our Children,
Travis W. Hanson || Superintendent



Tell us what else you want to know about levy funding! Scan the QR code or go to tejoin.com and enter code 660-979-891

MSD EXPANDS TRANSITION-TO-K AND DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM

As the Mead School District continues to focus on meeting the priorities and objectives of our Strategic Plan, building out choice programming for families is taking shape in the growth of both the Transition-to-Kindergarten program and Dual Language Immersion program.

After working through the opening of a successful Transition-to-Kindergarten (TTK) pilot in two 20-student classrooms in Shiloh Hills Elementary last year, the Mead School District expanded TTK to an additional three elementary schools are serving a total of 127 four-year-olds this year. The expansion of the program also includes providing shuttle service for any students who meet the age and program criteria from all 10 elementary boundary areas to our four TTK schools. This growth resulted in a 300 percent increase for children between the ages of four and five, who may not have otherwise had access to free preschool learning opportunities.

In our Dual Language Immersion program, housed at Midway Elementary, the growth also continued. The program moved from a Kindergarten-only first year in 2022-23, to Kindergarten and First Grade classes this year. Between the two classrooms, 41 students are learning to become bilingual and biliterate in English and Spanish!

As a continuous plan, a new Kindergarten class will be added each year, making a full K-5 DLI program by year 2027.

DISTRICT-WIDE TEAM EFFORT

Once the first buses leave the bus barn or first doors open to the buildings on the morning of Day One, it's full-go, and there's little time to celebrate all that has gone on over the summer to get ready for school! With more than 10,000 students and hundreds of substitutes and volunteers, it takes a team effort of the district's 1,300-plus staff members to ensure classrooms are ready, grounds are manicured, systems are checked, technology is in place, buses are routed, meals are prepared and class schedules and rosters are set.

The work being done in preparation this summer comes with some astounding numbers. In Human Resources, staff reviewed more than 2,700 applications, made 177 hires and completed 35 orientations for full-time, part-time and substitute staff. Nutrition services not only prepared meals for the bulk of students, but processed allergy needs for more than 600 students to ensure they have access to the nutrition they need. Transportation routed more than 7,000 daily riders on more than 80 bus routes. And the copy center is on pace to average a million copies per month. Those are just a few of the many examples of colleagues pulling together through challenges like staffing shortages, position movement and being ready to go for Day One!

FARWELL 3RD GRADER TO D.C.



Just like her mother 24 years earlier, Farwell Elementary third-grader Natalie McNichols was selected as one of five delegates from Washington state to go to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Children's Congress in mid-July. Also like her mother, Emily, Natalie was diagnosed at a young age with Type 1 Diabetes and is relentless about advocating for finding a cure.

"Children's Congress was important to me because I know that one day when there's a cure, I helped to get us there," Natalie said after returning home.

Every two years, more than 130 children with Type 1 Diabetes between the ages of 4 and 17 gather in Washington, D.C., to meet with decision-makers. This year, Natalie and her family made the trek to the nation's capital as part of the delegate that got to meet with members of Congress to inform them how legislators can help support finding a cure for Type 1 Diabetes. The delegation also heard updates about the progress towards finding a cure and how Children's Congress has directly helped with advancements.

Natalie had the opportunity to meet with staff at the U.S. Capitol, and even met American Ninja Warrior competitor Katie Bone and actor Derek Theler, both who live with Type 1 Diabetes.

"Natalie was very intrigued to see the inner workings of our Capitol and was excited that (Washington state) Senator Patty Murray spoke during the opening statements of the Senate Hearing we attended," her mother Emily said.

Natalie and her family finished their trip with some site-seeing that included a tour of the U.S. Capitol, the International Spy Museum, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial.

460 STUDENTS TAKE PART IN STEM CAMP



Robots, nature, rivers, rock-climbing, food, cameras, graphic design, planes, the human body, gravity and veterinarians. What does that seemingly random collection of words have in common? It was all part of the Mead Summer STEM Academy, hosted at Northwood Middle School this summer.

The annual summer camp, themed "Curiosity" this year, featured three one-week sessions of each of 11 different camp modules during the month of July. It provided opportunities for more than 460 Mead School District students entering Grades 2-8. Along with 20 staff members and a host of amazing volunteers, this year's academy also included the addition of a Special Education director, who designed modules around the needs of all learners to help create proactive accommodations for kids with special needs.

The project-based camp opportunities ranged from robotics, space, graphic design and photography, to learning about the earth's forces, human body systems, food chemistry and veterinary sciences, to nature, rivers and rocks. For some students, it was an introduction into the STEM world, and for others, it only accelerated their path toward being future ready and thinking about what their future careers might hold.

"This year's camp was awesome," said director Dave Gamon, also a science teacher at Northwood Middle School. "Everywhere I looked, I saw team-based problem-solving. Whether it was launching rockets or hot air balloons, or canoeing the Little Spokane River, students were working together, learning and enjoying each other. We are showing our students what is possible in the next generation. There is fun and learning everywhere you look, and that's what I love most about what we are doing for kids."

Students had wonderful experiences in each module, including a field trip to the Historic Flight Foundation to sit in the cockpit of historic aircraft, building catapults, go-karts and robots, or showing off their creativity through photos and graphic design.

The Mead Summer STEM Academy began in 2016 with fewer than a handful of teachers and has grown immensely through the encouragement, support and appreciation of the community. It is part of the district's STEM Forward Series that provides opportunities for students to explore the world of STEM, get curious about their surroundings and find their purpose. STEM Forward features additional events like Medical Mystery Investigation, STEMPllosion and field trips to Historic Flight Foundation throughout the year.



ANATOMAGE TABLE

Anatomy and physiology are going to the next level in the Mead School District! Thanks to a highly-competitive state grant intended for high-end classroom equipment and Perkins funds -- with no cost to the district's operational budget -- the district was able to purchase two state-of-the-art Anatomage Tables for the Biomedical Sciences and Sports Medicine programs.

An Anatomage Table is a life-size, interactive learning tool that allows students to do virtual dissections on 3D cadavers. It displays human body systems in a way that lets students learn and explore a wide variety of systems such as vascular, muscular, and skeletal at the touch of a button. Menus allow users to turn on or off everything from whole body systems to individual bones, muscles or even teeth. Students can zoom in and out, change angles, flip and turn the digital cadaver with just the swipe of their hand.

Anatomage Tables are a regular feature for most post-secondary healthcare training programs, allowing students on a healthcare pathway to get hands-on experience while still in high school.



Plan ahead with the 2023-24 academic calendar at www.mead354.org/calendar

MEAD MATTERS
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Questions or Concerns? Call (509) 465-6000

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LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

As shared in my Superintendent Entry Plan, one of my primary goals in these first few months (and throughout this first year) is to do a lot of listening. I have much to learn! I look forward to hosting a number of small group meetings to share some dialogue with parents and community members about our schools. Perhaps you're interested in hearing about some of the great things going on around the district, or maybe you'd like to learn a little more about what's on my mind as the school year gets under way. I know this, I would love to hear what's on your mind and have an opportunity to answer (or find answers to) your questions.

Please use the QR code or URL below to access a booking page to sign up for one of these small-group opportunities. For those interested in connecting in the morning (7:30 AM to 8:30 AM), you'll see a sign up for "Coffee and Conversation." For those who would like to share some dialogue over lunch (11:30 AM to 12:30 PM), there's "Soup with the Superintendent."

There are a number of open dates in the coming weeks for groups of up to 15 people. If there's strong interest in these initial event dates and they fill up quickly, I'll be happy to add some additional dates. I am excited to sit down with people in the Mead community and have meaningful conversations about our students and the future of this district!



Sincerely,
Travis Hanson



To sign up for Coffee and Conversations or Soup with the Superintendent, scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/meadsupt!

COMMUNITY MEMBER E-NEWS SIGNUP

Are you a community member with no children currently attending Mead Schools, but you want to stay up-to-date on the latest news and updates from the Mead School District? Go to mead354.org/email to sign up to receive news about latest happenings around the schools, board meetings, bond & levy information and more! If you have a current student or are a current staff member and already receive emails from the District or your child's school, need to sign up!

REMEMBER TO VOTE!

The Nov. 7 General Election is coming soon, so register to vote! The deadline to register online or via mail is Oct. 30, and the deadline to register in person is Nov. 7. Ballots will be mailed to registered voters beginning on Oct. 18-20 and will include three Mead School District Board of Directors positions for voters who live in the boundaries of the Mead School District.

