

# SUMMIT

ORTING SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER | FALL 2023



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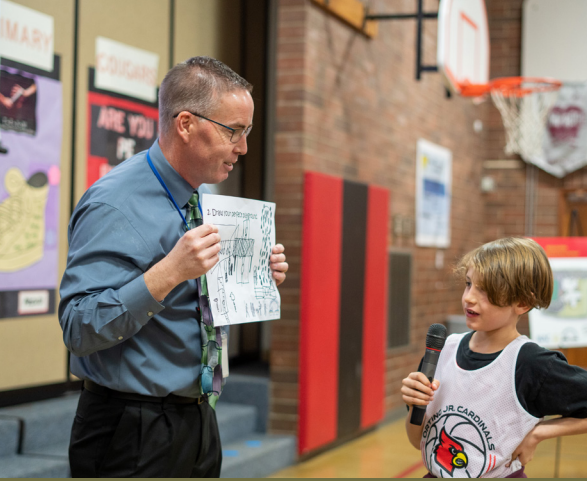
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Orting School District  
121 Whitesell St. NE  
Orting, WA 98360







*Superintendent Ed Hatzenbeler talks with students at a Bond Engagement Night last January.*

Dear community,

I am happy to share the first edition of Summit, our community newsletter, for the 2023-24 school year. We will use this newsletter to share accomplishments, highlight progress, put a spotlight on staff and students, and share new and ongoing initiatives.

In this newsletter, we have many exciting things to share, including our partnership with local colleges and universities, work and stories from our students and families, and a facilities update and next steps on placing a bond on the February ballot.

Please be on the lookout for additional news and updates about bond information nights and more. As always, I am grateful for this wonderful community that supports our students and staff in so many ways.

Ed Hatzenbeler  
*Superintendent*

#### Board of Directors

Carrie Thibodeaux ● Melissa Kinzler  
Michael Melot ● JoAnn Tracy  
Kathy Madigan



# Orting's 2023-26 Strategic Plan

Our Mission begins intentionally with "In strong partnership with our families and community members..." To ensure students feel connected, inspired, and empowered, it takes all of us. I specifically mean, you – the person reading this message, me, the School Board, our neighbors, local businesses, parents, grandparents, community partners and the dedicated team serving throughout the district. Each person within this district has a stake in life as we know it here. There are no bystanders.

Just like Orting students, you have opportunities to be inspired, to learn something new, to create, and to engage in making our community a better place. If you opt out, that loss will be felt deeply. When you opt in, imagine the possibilities for Orting!



**Carrie Thibodeaux**  
**School Board President**

Orting schools are improving every day. While we preserve the values and important connections that make us who we are, our students, staff, and leaders are using agency to make learning relevant and dignity to move forward together. I invite you to lean in, discover more about our schools in these pages, and find inspiration in Orting schools.

## Registration for Kindergarten Opens February 1, 2024!

Calling all future class of 2037 students! Do you know a child who will be five on or before August 31? Maybe it's your neighbor, friend, or even your own child. That child is eligible to enroll in kindergarten for the 2024-25 school year! Registration opens February 1, 2024! Save this link to register:  
**[OrtingSchools.org/Register](https://OrtingSchools.org/Register)**

## Make Your Vote Count! Register to Vote.

There are three ways to register to vote: online, by mail, or in-person. You can register online, 24 hours a day, at **[VoteWA.gov](https://VoteWA.gov)**. Scan the QR code to register today!



The Orting 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 Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination: Debi Christensen, Title IX Coordinator & Civil Rights Coordinator, 360-893-6500, ext. 4028 [christensend@orting.wednet.edu](mailto:christensend@orting.wednet.edu); Jennifer Westover, Section 504 Coordinator, 360-893-6500, ext. 4027 [westoverj@orting.wednet.edu](mailto:westoverj@orting.wednet.edu), 121 Whitesell Street NE, Orting, WA 98360.



# Facilities Update

## Current Thinking for a Proposed 2024 Bond: Areas of Investment

A Citizen's Facilities Advisory Committee (CFAC) started meeting in the summer of 2021 to identify facilities with the highest needs, as well as review projected growth within our district boundaries. They recommended several projects as identified in the 2023 school bond put before the voters. While the school bond did not pass, the growing needs in our district remain.

Over spring and summer, we conducted two community surveys to solicit feedback on the bond proposal. The most important issues from the community perspective included addressing overcrowding, improving safety/health/security, and supporting Career and Technical Education. Minimizing the tax increase and limiting portable classrooms surfaced as the most important factors respondents wanted the board to consider.

Using community input, the board identified three core priorities and is reducing the scope of the previous bond. While these projects do not remedy all of our urgent needs in the system identified by the CFAC committee, it does put a big dent in the issues respondents want addressed at a more affordable price point. The board will vote on placing a bond on the February ballot at the November board meeting. You can view board meetings and agendas on our website at [OrtingSchools.org/SchoolBoard](https://OrtingSchools.org/SchoolBoard)



### 1. EXPAND ELEMENTARY CAPACITY

Rebuild Orting Elementary School for 600 students. A new gym for Ptarmigan Ridge Elementary to allow for consistent P.E./Health instruction and cafeteria expansion.



### 2. HIGH SCHOOL ADDITION FOR CTE AND STEM PROGRAMS

Build a new 200 student addition to Orting High School focusing on Career and Technical Education (CTE) and STEM programs. Remodel the existing culinary and STEM lab for agricultural sciences.



### 3. SAFETY, HEALTH, AND SECURITY UPGRADES

Upgrade to keyless control/lockdown systems and make significant improvements to the heating and cooling systems at Orting Middle School and Ptarmigan Ridge Elementary.



Scan the QR code to see the Bond Feedback Survey Results



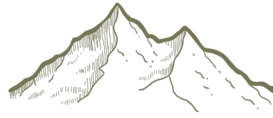
### OTHER PROJECTS:

#### *Cardinal Stadium gets a new look*

Over the summer, Cardinal Stadium got a much needed update. Typically, fields are replaced after eight to ten years. After the 15 year mark, the stadium field was well worn and in dire need of replacement. The district used capital project funds to complete the restoration. You can learn more about the funds used to replace the field on our YouTube Channel video titled Regular Board Meeting - June 1, 2023.



# Our Summit Story



*Reaching the highest peaks (no matter how big or small) should be celebrated!*



**Mauricio Portillo** was recognized as a BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) Trailblazer of East Pierce County for the Tacoma News Tribune (TNT). Mr. Portillo has been a teacher at Orting High School for the past 5 years and is the Culture Club Advisor. He was born in San Salvador, El Salvador before moving to the U.S. in 2001 when he was 5 years old. Joseph, a senior at OHS, says that, "Mr. Portillo is an incredibly inspiring person." Congrats, Mr. Portillo!



**Gabe** is a senior at Orting High School and has played percussion since 6th grade at Orting Middle School. At the annual kickoff event for our staff in August, Gabe and the OHS band performed an original piece written by Gabe. "Ever since I was young, I've always liked playing drums, so it was like hopping into my element," Gabe shares. Gabe just started writing songs in December 2022. He plans on attending either University of Washington or University of Florida for aerospace engineering.



**Roman** is a 7th grade student at Orting Middle School in Robotics 1 class. In this class, students use Legos to build and test their own robots. "Robots are everywhere and especially in the future," Roman said on how this class will prepare him for future careers. Roman is in the picture to the left, testing his robotic grabber. Teacher Oliver Chadwick says that the stakes are low at this level, but building Lego robotics helps build "confidence in their ability to creatively solve smaller examples of challenges that exist in every industry."

## Partnership with Local Colleges and Universities Leads to Increased Rigor

*Students can earn college credit and even their Associates Degree while attending Orting High School*

Orting High School provides access to 144 possible college credits. Through partnerships with institutions such as Pierce College, Clover Park College, and Bates Technical College, students can earn up to 55 credits. Through our 4-year university partnerships including the University of Washington, Central Washington University, and Eastern Washington University, students can earn up to 89 possible credits. These courses are taught by our dedicated high school teachers, trained and approved as adjunct professors. These courses allow our students to kick-start their educational journey right here in Orting.

Through our partnership with Green River College and Pierce College, students can use these combined credits to pursue an Associate of Arts (AA) degree from either college. This means our students could potentially earn a college degree without ever leaving Orting High School! All college credits are entirely free for our families. We are committed to ensuring that every student has access to top-notch education and a bright future.



### POST-HIGH CREDITS BY THE NUMBERS

In fall 2023, our college credit program at OSD's high school offers

4

7

colleges and universities to earn credits from

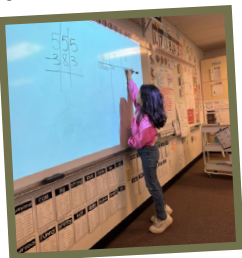
with a combined **144** college credits earned through **Orting High School.**

2

colleges from which students could earn their AA degree.

## Academic Growth and Success is Climbing

A strong academic foundation paired with life ready skills are key to long-term success. We are proud to say a majority of state tested areas improved over the previous year! Our staff have been working tirelessly to accelerate learning and close learning gaps. We are proud to share some of our recent successes with you.



### Elementary Math Marvels

Every elementary student has one hour of math instruction daily as well as an additional 30 minutes for intervention and support. When students require additional support, we employ small group sessions, consisting of four to six students. In these focused settings, teachers address the specific needs of students who may face challenges in mastering grade level concepts.

One remarkable success story recently emerged from our intervention efforts. A 3rd grade student who initially grappled with place value and regrouping has transformed into a peer mentor! They now skillfully guide fellow classmates in mastering the intricacies of adding three-digit numbers.

### Elementary Students Thrive with New Literacy Curriculum

A crucial component of a well-rounded education is literacy, and the choice of reading curriculum can significantly impact a student's journey towards becoming a proficient and confident reader. Last year, the Orting School District adopted Bookworms as our new reading curriculum. This curriculum is providing strong research-based elements of teaching reading in a developmental approach that builds from Kindergarten through 5th grade. Over the last school year and throughout the start of this school year, we have seen remarkable gains that students are making in their reading abilities and confidence in themselves as readers.



### Math Teachers are Building a "Falcon Mindset" in Students at Orting Middle School

Last May, several members of the Orting Middle School math team attended a two-day training at Stanford University to prepare them for teaching a "YouCubed" math summer camp curriculum aimed at building students' self-confidence and skills in math. Our math team is committed to instilling what we call a "Falcon Mindset" in students, where students see mistakes as an important part of the learning process, where they see themselves as learners, and they believe in their ability to learn. The math team is continuing to integrate the methods learned at the YouCubed training and we are excited to see the positive impact it is having on our students' learning and their experience in math classrooms!

## Meet Our School Board Student Representatives



*Junior Board Representative*  
**Jaedin Soto**

### What are you involved in at Orting High School?

I play soccer, I'm in ASB,

I like to be very involved with school events, and I love helping others!

### Why did you want to be a School Board Student Representative?

Mikayla, our senior board representative, inspired me to be a board representative because of the way she can accomplish and handle things because it teaches me how to handle things well in the future. I also wanted to know the inside scoop of how things are done and be able to give my opinion on how things could be done.



*Senior Board Representative*  
**Mikayla Jeffries**

### What are you involved in at Orting High School?

I am an executive board member on ASB and a representative of the senior class. I am an active member in National Honor Society (NHS), and I have been a member of the Orting golf team for three years. I have newly been crowned this year's Orting Daffodil Princess.

### Why did you want to be a School Board Student Representative?

I wanted to have an influence in making each child's journey through the Orting School District just as amazing as mine has been. I will graduate this spring as a 13-year senior, and I really do have so much love for this community.



# Orting kids have IT!

In each of our newsletters, we want to highlight our students' work! These are hand picked by our fantastic teachers and principals.



Lyons' Kindergarten Class  
Orting Elementary



Peyton  
Orting Middle School



Abbey  
Orting High  
School



Alex  
Ptarmigan  
Ridge  
Elementary

## Kids Creative Center

### Hidden in the pages:

Did you see something strange hiding in our newsletter? Check this box if you found all four of our cartoon mascots hiding spots!



*Pssst! Some are hidden in plain sight!*

### Word search

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Orting  
School  
Cardinals  
Falcons  
Cougars  
Mountaineers

Mountain  
River  
Homework  
Connect  
Inspire  
Empower

### Help the Mountaineer climb Mount Rainier!

