



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

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
ORTING, WA
PERMIT NO. 9

ECRWSS
LOCAL POSTAL CUSTOMER

SUMMIT

ORTING SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER | FALL 2024



**From Daffodil Queen
to Festival Leader: How
Orting Roots Inspired
This Year's Theme | 3**

**Introducing Get
Outside OSD! | 4**

**New Early-Learning Facility
and Preschool-Friendly
Community Garden | 5**

Facilities Update | 2



Superintendent Ed Hatzenbeler meets with Orting Elementary student Charlotte when she was principal for the day.

Dear community,

Thank you to our school community for voting in the November 2024 Election. In our facilities update, we discuss the next steps for a future bond and what we will do in the meantime. We are grateful for the community's engagement and support for our schools. We remain committed to providing the best for our students and will continue to work together to find ways to meet our district's needs.

While we did not pass the bond, we still have lots to celebrate. We received a grant from the Department of Commerce to help build a new early learning facility to support our littlest students and a grant to fund a preschool-friendly community garden. This year's Daffodil Festival theme puts a spotlight on our town and highlights our rich agricultural area. You can read about the exciting things happening in our district in this newsletter.

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

Facilities Update

We are over a month removed from election day. While we were pleased to see the final bond results grow by several percentage points since election night, we were disappointed that the district bond measure ultimately fell short of passing by just over one percent. The election was certified on November 26.

Across the state, just three of 14 bond ballot measures passed. While we were hoping for success this November, these last two years remain the worst stretch for school bonds across the state. Just 11 of 55 school bonds have passed, for a meager success rate of 20%. That is about half of what schools could historically expect pre-Covid. A supermajority of 60% yes votes is an incredibly high bar to achieve. Across the country, we believe just seven other states in addition to Washington have a supermajority approval of greater than 50% required to pass a school bond.

We were very encouraged by some of the results in this election. There were over 5,000 more voters engaged in the election than the last time we ran the bond in February 2024. And, despite many more people voting, we saw a significant increase in the number of yes votes. In this economy with the amount of people on fixed incomes, this is no small feat. Of the 22 voting precincts, support increased in 16 of them. While it is disappointing to know that the issues we face will persist for at least another year, I hope the increase in support means the needs of our children resonate with the local community. No other district was as close to passing as we were.

Where do we go from here? As there are no more classrooms at either school, we will be adding portable facilities to Orting High School and Orting Elementary School for next year. This will take up additional parking space. Unfortunately, this will not address many of the issues we face today that are a result of overcrowding and outdated facilities. We already face limited restrooms, long meal lines, congested parking and traffic, and inadequate lab spaces. With 5,800 more homes potentially coming to the district in the next decade, the added student load could lead to less-than-ideal learning conditions. The Board of Directors will likely solicit community feedback before making any final decisions on when a future bond might be put before the voters or what would be included.

For some of you, fixed incomes and limited affordability impacted your decision. For others, failed promises from Olympia from years past have broken trust. Unfortunately, antiquated funding systems for school construction at the state level continue to place the funding for new schools on the local taxpayer. We will continue to fight for better support at the state and county levels. It is a travesty that Pierce County has one of the highest construction costs in the state, but the lowest impact fee where one exists. Our Board of Directors believes growth should pay its fair share. And, the supermajority requirement puts schools at a significant disadvantage, meaning our children suffer. We hope the next time you see a measure that it not only reflects your values for our students, but that the economy improves to where greater support might be possible.

Thank you for your questions, support, and engagement in this process. We are committed to providing the best educational environment possible. Our children deserve it!

From Daffodil Queen to Festival Leader: How Orting Roots Inspired This Year's Theme



From reigning as Orting High School's Daffodil Queen in 2017 to soon leading the Daffodil Festival as its president, Marin Sasaki-Boyce has come full circle in a journey deeply rooted in her hometown. This year's festival theme, 'Growing Locally,' is a reflection of her own story— one of a childhood spent surrounded by the farmlands of Orting and a passion for celebrating the local community. We asked Sasaki-Boyce to explore how her Orting roots continue to shape the future of this beloved tradition.



■ Sasaki-Boyce's
Official Daffodil
Princess Portrait in
2017



■ Sasaki-Boyce's
Daffodil Festival
President-Elect
Portrait

Looking back to your time as Daffodil Queen, what are some of your favorite memories from that experience?

MARIN: I loved being able to represent our small town. It was such a special experience for me because I was the 4th Daffodil Princess in my family and the first to receive the title of Queen. Throughout the year, I was so lucky to be surrounded by 22 wonderful Daffodil Princesses, some of who are still my best friends. I vividly remember the Orting leg of the parade and how excited I was to bring my Court to my small town! The year went by so fast- I just remember spending so much time in the community and meeting so many really great people.

What was it about your time as a Daffodil Queen that inspired you to stay involved with the festival and eventually serve on the board?

MARIN: I really just want the festival to stay alive. I felt that the Daffodil Festival provides such a unique opportunity for young women in our communities to grow and learn skills that last a lifetime, and I couldn't stand the thought of it no longer being a pillar in Pierce County. I also love the people involved with the festival. The Daffodil Festival is entirely volunteer-run. Our volunteers include past Royalty, folks involved from when they or their daughters were Daffodil Princesses,

community members, and more! I love the Daffodilians and I'm thankful for our teamwork and comradery.

The theme of this year's Daffodil Festival is inspired by your childhood in Orting. Can you share a bit about what aspects of Orting had the biggest impact on you?

MARIN: My family has lived in the Orting Valley for generations. My great-grandparents started a farm in the 1920s and survived the trials and tribulations of farming as well as the Japanese Internment during World War II. I chose the theme of Growing Locally to remind people of the importance of our farmers and community organizations that invest locally in our communities. I absolutely loved growing up in Orting and felt that it was important to me to reinvest in my community as I got older. I loved being involved in the community and hope to keep those feelings of community alive.



Are there any traditions or values from Orting that you have carried with you throughout your life and now want to pass on through this year's Daffodil Festival theme?

MARIN: I think just the value of community and how important it is to get involved and support others when you can.

What advice would you give to current high school students or young women who may be considering participating in the Daffodil Festival?

MARIN: I encourage students to give it a try or at least learn about the history of the festival and the valley. Even if you're not interested in being a Daffodil Princess, we could always use a helping hand with our events, parades, and community engagement!

If you could give one message to the festival-goers about what this theme means to you personally, what would it be?

MARIN: To me, this year is about celebrating the history of the Daffodil Festival, our local farmers, and the generations of folks who have been involved with the festival in some form or fashion. I hope to get more people involved with the festival and continue our legacy of community involvement!



■ **LEFT:** Sasaki-Boyce visiting KOMO News as Orting Daffodil Queen

■ **RIGHT:** Sasaki-Boyce volunteering for the Daffodil Parade

Introducing Get Outside OSD!

Get Outside OSD is our exciting new initiative aimed at encouraging students and families to adopt a healthier lifestyle by getting active outdoors and making nutritious food choices.

We're excited to launch Get Outside OSD, a new initiative that encourages students and families across the Orting School District to embrace a healthier, more active lifestyle. Through Get Outside OSD, we're motivating our students to make exercise and healthy eating a part of their daily routines, from exploring a local trail or cooking a healthy meal, to enjoying a walk around the neighborhood.

Data shows that 15 percent of children in Pierce County are obese, and one in eight preschool-aged children face the same challenge. These statistics highlight the need for proactive measures to combat rising health concerns and set students up for a healthier future.

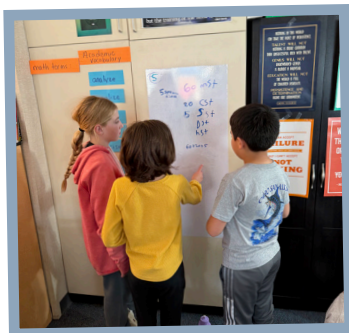
In partnership with the American Heart Association, the district will provide valuable resources to families, including tips for healthy eating, fun fitness activities, and guidance on a heart-healthy lifestyle.

To make it even more engaging, students will have the opportunity to earn fun stickers as they reach each milestone or achieve specific Get Outside goals. These milestones are designed to be accessible to everyone, from beginners to avid outdoor enthusiasts. Whether it's completing a hike, going for a bike ride, or simply playing outside after school, every effort counts!

Stickers can be collected at each school's front office, providing an excellent reward for students' dedication to their health and well-being. To participate, all you have to do is set a goal and achieve it! Parents or guardians are also welcome to share their adventures or healthy choices by using the hashtag **#GetOutsideOSD**, email us a photo at communications@orting.wednet.edu, or share with your school. As we grow and develop this program, be on the lookout for contests and competitions for students to partake in. With your help, we can encourage our community to get outside!

We can't wait to see our community embrace this initiative and inspire each other to stay active, eat healthy, and enjoy the beautiful surroundings we're so lucky to call home. Let's all **Get Outside OSD!**





Orting School District Launches K-10 Math Curriculum Initiative

Recognizing the importance of math in student success, our district is working to transform students' experiences with math, helping them view themselves as capable mathematicians.

■ *Students at Ptarmigan Ridge Elementary use new math curriculum*

Recognizing that math can either inspire or intimidate, our goal is to provide an engaging, supportive math education that develops critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration skills.

To achieve this, we are implementing a new curriculum options across grades K-5, 6-8, and 9-10, each designed to challenge students at grade level, strengthen foundational skills, and show the relevance of math in real-world contexts. The selected programs offer rigorous content to prepare students for both academic advancement and their future careers.

Orting School District is committed to reimagining how students experience math, aiming to empower all students to see themselves as capable mathematicians.

Equally important are the teaching strategies we're implementing to make math accessible and engaging. These methods include hands-on activities that foster active learning, collaborative group work that builds communication and reasoning abilities, and opportunities for students to demonstrate their thinking and explore multiple approaches to solving problems. Additionally, we're focused on cultivating independence, resilience, and confidence, helping students tackle complex challenges with a positive mindset.

This comprehensive approach amplifies student voice and ownership in their learning. Research demonstrates that, through inquiry, conversation, and collaboration, students can overcome learning barriers, leading to accelerated growth and success in math for all.

New Early-Learning Facility and Preschool-Friendly Community Garden

The Orting School District was selected to receive grants to support early learning within our district.

The Orting School District is honored to have been selected by the Department of Commerce to receive \$1.01 million in funding to support the development of a new early learning facility. In the next legislative session, the district will be working with elected officials to receive an additional \$3.5 million to construct an eight-classroom early-learning facility housed at Ptarmigan Ridge Elementary. This significant investment will help create a dynamic space for our youngest learners, setting the stage for a strong start to their education.

In addition, Orting was one of only four districts in Pierce County chosen to receive a portion of a \$500,000 federal grant to construct a preschool-friendly community garden. This outdoor learning environment will give students hands-on experience with nature, aligning with our commitment to engage in healthy and enriching educational opportunities.

■ *FFA students share their pumpkins with preschool students in 2022*



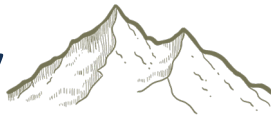
Make Your Vote Count! Register to Vote.

You can register online, 24 hours a day, at **VoteWA.gov**. Scan the QR code to register today!



The next election date is **February 11, 2025!**

Our Summit Story



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



The Washington State Patrol's annual inspection of our school buses shows that our district has again demonstrated exceptional results. For the past two years, the results in our district have been outstanding! "These results demonstrate your understanding that student safety is paramount," OSPI (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction) shared in their congratulations letter. "... the care you take in safely transporting students to and from school and extracurricular activities is evident." Congratulations to our transportation team!



The Daffodil Festival is an honored tradition within our community. Orting High School was the first stop for the Daffodil Festival princess selection process. We had seven candidates participate and crowned student Alexis Peterson as our 2024-25 Orting High School Daffodil Princess! Alexis exemplifies the values of leadership, service, and community that are the heart of our district. Her dedication and passion make her the perfect ambassador for Orting, and we are thrilled to see her shine as she participates in this beloved regional tradition. Congratulations, Alexis, on this well-deserved honor- we know you will represent our schools and community with pride and grace!



Taste Washington Day celebrates Washington-grown foods served in our schools during the fall harvest season. This year, our Nutrition Services Department partnered with Duris Farms, Bastinelli's Gourmet Sauces, Medallion Foods, and Charlies Produce to provide our students with a nutritious and locally grown lunch! The meal included pickles (with the recipe and cucumbers from Duris Farms!), pasta, and tomato sauce donated from these local farms. We appreciate their partnership and look forward to incorporating more local produce in our school lunches!



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, marital status, 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 and their offices are located at 121 Whitesell St NE, Orting, WA 98360: Civil Rights Compliance/ Title IX/ADA Coordinator Debi Christensen, Executive Director for Human Resources, 360-893-6500, ext. 4028, christensend@orting.wednet.edu. Section 504 Coordinator Dr. Jennifer Westover, Executive Director for Student Support Services, 360-893-6500, ext. 4027, westoverj@orting.wednet.edu. Information about the nondiscrimination and sex-based discrimination policies and grievance procedures, and how to report a concern or complaint can be accessed here. Title IX inquiries may also be directed toward the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

Questioning why you are receiving this publication?



An estimated 75 percent of the residents and voters within the school district boundaries do not have school-aged children in the Orting School District. The purpose of this publication, therefore, is to let those members know about the programs and activities taking place in their school district. To greatly reduce the cost of postage, we use a bulk mailing process that has it delivered to every residential customer on each carrier's route.

Be the first to know! Follow us on social media and be sure to be checking our website for updates!



@OrtingSchoolDistrict



OrtingSchools.org