

MARCH 20, 2025

GOOD NEWS

EDITION NEWSLETTER



Empowering Student Voices at St. Helens High School

The first meeting of the St. Helens High School Principal Action Committee (PAC) marked the beginning of an important initiative focused on amplifying student voices and turning their ideas into meaningful action.

To start, students participated in Story Circle training, a method designed to encourage open and inclusive conversations. This approach goes beyond traditional feedback, allowing students to share personal experiences, challenges, and solutions in a way that fosters real connection and understanding.

During the meeting, the group also established its guiding purpose:

"We gather student feedback, take action, and create positive change. By connecting students and staff, uniting student groups, and advocating for all voices, we work to improve the school experience and create new opportunities for everyone."

This mission isn't just a statement—it's a commitment to ensuring that every student has a platform to contribute to the school community. With Story Circles as a foundation, PAC aims to transform discussions into tangible improvements that benefit all students.

This is just the beginning. With a shared vision and dedication to student advocacy, PAC is ready to make a lasting impact. Stay tuned as this work unfolds!

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District Mission:

Strengthening Our Community Through Exceptional Schools

District Vision:

St. Helens School District inspires all students to learn, connect, and commit to a thriving future.

**LEARN
CONNECT
COMMIT**

Destination Imagination



Recently, a group of our bright young minds from St. Helens elementary schools took part in a **Destination Imagination** tournament at Evergreen Middle School in Hillsboro, OR. This event was designed for early learners (Kindergarten through 3rd grade) to explore **STEAM challenges** in a fun, hands-on way.

Our students showcased their creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving skills. Their presentation on sneaker waves was both engaging and informative, and we couldn't be prouder of their hard work.



Way to go, young innovators!

STUDENT COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD RECIPIENT

LEAH YARBOR



STUDENT COMMUNITY IMPACT RECIPIENT: LEAH YARBOR

At the board meeting held on March 12, 2025, Leah Yarbtor was presented with the Student Community Impact Award. Leah received this honor for her dedication to athletics, mentorship, and leadership, which have made a lasting impact on the St. Helens community.

Leah is a remarkable athlete and leader at St. Helens High School. A 2nd-degree black belt in Taekwondo, she has been competing at the national level since 2018. Beyond her own training, Leah gives back by teaching beginner white belt classes, mentoring young athletes, and helping children in the community build confidence and strength through the sport. In addition to Taekwondo, she is a multi-sport athlete, excelling in wrestling and track and field. She is currently ranked 10th in the state for high school girls' shot put.

Leah's leadership extends beyond athletics. As the Sophomore Class President, she plays a vital role in student government, spearheading initiatives to support elementary school students in St. Helens and organizing numerous fundraisers for non-profit organizations that benefit cancer survivors. Her commitment to giving back reflects her deep sense of community and service.

Outside of school and sports, Leah works part-time at the Pacific Athletic Club, enjoys working out, and is currently working on obtaining her driver's license. After graduation, she plans to attend the University of Oregon to pursue a degree in psychology while continuing her track and field career.

Leah's dedication, work ethic, and leadership make her an outstanding role model for her peers. Her passion for mentoring and supporting others embodies the values of perseverance, service, and teamwork that we celebrate at St. Helens High School.

Congratulations, Leah!

MYSTERY READER FUN IN PRESCHOOL



Columbia City, McBride, and Lewis & Clark Elementary preschools created a mystery readers program where a surprise guest from the community visits our preschools to read the students stories.

The goal? To show our students that adults in our community love reading just as much as they do! Teachers provide fun clues before the guest arrives, and the students love trying to guess who the Mystery Reader might be.

This week, our Mystery Reader was Brittnei Jackson, a local dental assistant! She shared a wonderful story with our students and helped strengthen the connection between our schools and the community.

STAFF COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD RECIPIENT

JILLIAN SEDERBURG



STAFF COMMUNITY IMPACT RECIPIENT: JILLIAN SEDERBURG

At the board meeting held on March 12, 2025, Jillian Sederburg was presented with the Staff Community Impact Award. Jillian received this honor for her exceptional leadership in transforming the Social Emotional Learning Center (SELC) into a thriving, supportive environment where students feel valued, empowered, and prepared for success in mainstream education.

Jillian has developed student-centered routines and supports that address the emotional and social needs of her students, ensuring they have the confidence and skills to participate in general education classes for the majority of their school day. Her work has not only strengthened students' social abilities but also provided them with effective coping strategies to manage difficult emotions, allowing them to remain engaged in dynamic learning environments alongside their peers.

Under Jillian's leadership, the SELC classroom has seen a remarkable transformation. Incident reports and crisis support calls have drastically declined, a testament to the positive and structured environment she has cultivated. Through her dedication and advocacy, Jillian has given her students the tools, resources, and confidence necessary to succeed as typical middle school students.

Jillian's unwavering commitment to her students and her passion for fostering an inclusive, supportive educational setting make her an invaluable asset to our district. She is a compassionate leader, a champion for students with social and emotional disabilities, and a true example of the impact that dedicated educators can have on a school community.

Congratulations, Jillian!



FIRST RESPONDERS

St. Helens School District staff and local first responders came together for our quarterly First Responders meeting. This gathering was an opportunity to exchange ideas, share expertise, and learn from our guest speakers. A special thank you to the Portland Police Bureau for their insightful presentation.



MICHAELA DUECK

Elks Teen of the Month

St. Helens High School is proud to announce that Michaela Dueck has been selected as the March Elks Student of the Month. She was both surprised and grateful upon receiving this recognition, viewing it as a humbling acknowledgment of her hard work and dedication.

Throughout her high school years, Michaela has been deeply involved in athletics. She plays volleyball, basketball, and softball, and this year, she is excited to join the flag football team. SHHS Girls Varsity Basketball Coach Ross shared, "I've been lucky enough to coach Michaela for the past three years. Michaela is accountable, hardworking, and a person of integrity who constantly leads by example. She always gives her best effort and strives to improve." In addition to her athletic achievements, Michaela is an active member of the Letterman's Club, which celebrates the accomplishments of student athletes.

Beyond sports, Michaela has made a meaningful impact in her community through volunteer work. She has helped run youth basketball and softball camps, mentoring children ages 6–13 and fostering their love for sports. Additionally, she has volunteered at the Volcano Classic youth basketball tournament, assisting with tasks such as running the scoreboard, refereeing, and managing concessions and admissions. Her contributions have played a vital role in supporting her school's sports programs and providing opportunities for younger athletes.

Looking ahead, Michaela plans to pursue a career in nursing. While she is still deciding whether to start at a community college before transferring to a university or attend a four-year institution directly, she is committed to earning her Bachelor of Science in Nursing. She also hopes to continue her education by pursuing a master's degree to become a Nurse Practitioner, potentially specializing in psychiatric care. Her passion for mental health was sparked by her love for psychology, her favorite subject in high school.

Michaela's positive attitude is one of her defining qualities. She believes that optimism is essential to overcoming challenges and leading a fulfilling life. Miss Ross, a counselor and coach at SHHS, shared, "Michaela Dueck's kindness, determination, and unwavering spirit have left a lasting impact on those around her, both academically and athletically."

Outside of school and sports, Michaela enjoys music and spending time with friends. One of her favorite high school memories is winning Winter Ball Court with her best friend, Kaeley, this past February—a moment she will cherish for years to come.

As she looks ahead to the future, Michaela is eager for the opportunities that lie before her and remains dedicated to making a positive impact wherever she goes.

Congratulations, Michaela!

Congratulations

ST. HELENS HIGH SCHOOL CHOIR STUDENTS SHINE



St. Helens High School choir students recently participated in two prestigious festivals, showcasing their hard work and dedication. At the George Fox Festival, a highly respected state-wide event hosted by George Fox University, our choir earned scores that placed them in the upper third of all performances that day.

Additionally, at the District III Festival, which featured ensembles from 2A-4A schools across northwestern Oregon, our students delivered an outstanding performance, earning a spot in the State Championship Tape Pool.





JUSTICE STANTON

Rotary Student of the Month

The Columbia County Rotary Club and St. Helens High School are proud to recognize Justice Stanton as the March Rotary Student of the Month.

Justice is a dedicated senior whose hard work, perseverance, and commitment to both academics and athletics have made a lasting impact on his school and community.

An accomplished athlete, Justice has excelled in varsity soccer, golf, and basketball. His leadership on the field is evident through his role as varsity soccer team captain, where he was named Best Defensive Player and earned All-League recognition. His academic dedication is equally impressive, as he has achieved OSAA Academic All-State honors in golf and a 4.0 Scholar-Athlete distinction in soccer, basketball, and golf.

Beyond athletics, Justice is passionate about giving back. His commitment to service began in his freshman year, helping clean McCormick Park and repaint benches. Since then, he has volunteered at the local food bank, assisting with stocking and organizing supplies.

Academically, Justice enjoys the challenge of physics, which he sees as one of the most practical subjects, alongside economics. With a strong sense of determination, he is eager to pursue higher education and a career in medicine, where he hopes to make a meaningful impact as a doctor.

Outside of school, Justice values time spent with friends, working out, playing video games, and building Legos. Some of his best high school memories come from bonding with his soccer team outside of practice, forming friendships that feel like family.

For all these reasons, the Columbia County Rotary Club and St. Helens High School are pleased to honor Justice Stanton as the March Rotary Student of the Month.

Congratulations, Justice!

Congratulations

SUPERINTENDENT'S CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL

On March 12, 2025, the Board of Education of St. Helens School District voted to approve the Corrective Action Plan (CAP) with Action Steps for Accountability. The CAP is part of the District's ongoing work to make sure that the students in our school district are safe.

One step in the CAP is the creation of a Superintendent's Citizens Advisory Council made up of a variety of community members interested in the growth and development of the SHSD. This committee will be co-led by the superintendent and a community member. If you would like to apply, click the link below.

The deadline is Friday, March 28, 2025.



St. Helens High School

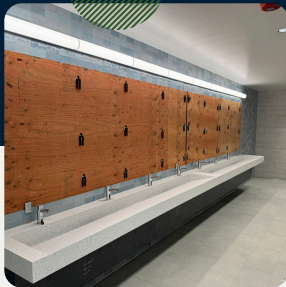


Varsity Baseball Field



Counseling Center

Construction Updates



Student Restrooms



Media Center



Culinary Classroom

Celebrate Our Amazing St. Helens Kids

AMAZING *Kids*

Do you know an amazing student who goes out of their way to make a difference? This May, Pamplin Media will celebrate exceptional youth from communities across Oregon—students who stand out not just for their achievements in academics, sports, or entrepreneurship but for their kindness, leadership, and service to others.

Here in St. Helens, we are fortunate to have so many incredible students making a difference in their schools and community. This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase their hard work, dedication, and impact!

Honorees will be featured in a special edition published in print, online, and through email newsletters. If you know a young person making a positive impact through volunteerism, academics, athletics, the arts, or community service, take a moment to recognize their contributions.

Kindergarten - 12th-grade students are eligible.

Let's shine a light
on our amazing
St. Helens
students!

Submit your
nomination today
using the link
below!



Nominate
NOW!



Ready Freddy 2025 EVENTS

**Open to all incoming 2025-26
Kindergarten students!**



APRIL 2

Kindergarten Ready Event 1

5:00-6 pm, Columbia City Elementary

APRIL 16

Kindergarten Ready Event 2

5:00-6 pm, McBride Elementary

APRIL 30

Kindergarten Ready Event 3

5:00-6 pm, Lewis & Clark Elementary

MAY 8

Kindergarten Welcome

5:30-7 pm, McBride, Lewis & Clark, Columbia City (go to the location your student will attend school)

Please RSVP to:

<https://forms.gle/VzkXPWFSPJDjdVg6>

Or Scan The QR Code



St. Helens School District

Volunteer Application



*Make a Difference in Your
School Community*

**APPLY
NOW!**



Volunteers can really make a big difference in the educational experience for our students. Whether you're interested in a one-time, one-hour project, or an ongoing opportunity, we can find something for you!

SPRING Break

All St. Helens schools and offices will be closed
from Monday, March 24, 2025,
through Friday, March 28, 2025.

Classes will resume on Monday, March 31, 2025.

Enjoy a fun safe and restful spring break!



UPCOMING CALENDAR DATES

- March 24 - March 28 - Spring Break - **NO SCHOOL**
- April 11 - Teacher Work Day - **NO SCHOOL**
- May 26 - Holiday - **NO SCHOOL**

Stay **CONNECTED!**

St. Helens School District Media Platforms:

St. Helens School District Website

Facebook Page

Instagram Page

X Page

YouTube Channel

LinkedIn Page

