

MAY 5, 2025

GOOD NEWS

EDITION NEWSLETTER



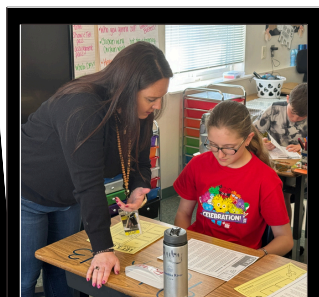
Teacher Appreciation Week 2025

This week, we are proud to celebrate **Teacher Appreciation Week** and recognize the incredible teachers of the St. Helens School District. Each day, our educators pour their energy, creativity, and care into helping students learn, grow, and thrive, often from early mornings to late evenings.

Teachers make a lasting impact in the lives of students. They inspire curiosity, build confidence, and help shape a lifelong love of learning and discovery. We are especially grateful for how our teachers walk alongside students, guiding and encouraging them every step of the way.

We hope you'll join us in expressing our heartfelt thanks for their commitment to supporting student success and strengthening our school community.

Happy Teacher Appreciation Week!



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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**



COLUMBIA CITY ELEMENTARY — BIRD BEAK EXPLORATION

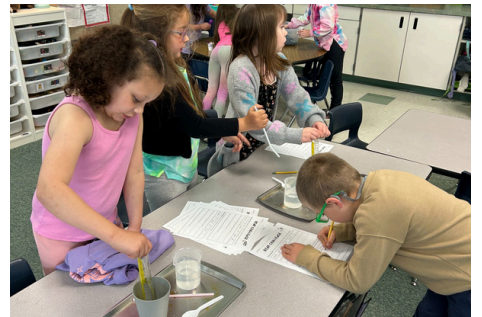
Our curious first graders at **Columbia City Elementary** recently took part in an engaging Bird Beak Exploration activity as part of their science learning. Students rotated through hands-on stations that simulated how different bird beaks are adapted to gather food in various environments.



Using tools that represented different beak shapes, students explored how birds might pick up worms, scoop fish, sip nectar, open shells for seeds, and collect bugs. They also got creative by using playdough to sculpt their own bird heads and beaks!

At each station, students answered three important questions:

1. What tool was best to pick up the food?
2. Why was it helpful?
3. What type of bird might have that type of beak?



This interactive experience helped students better understand how form fits function in the animal world, and they had a lot of fun while doing it!

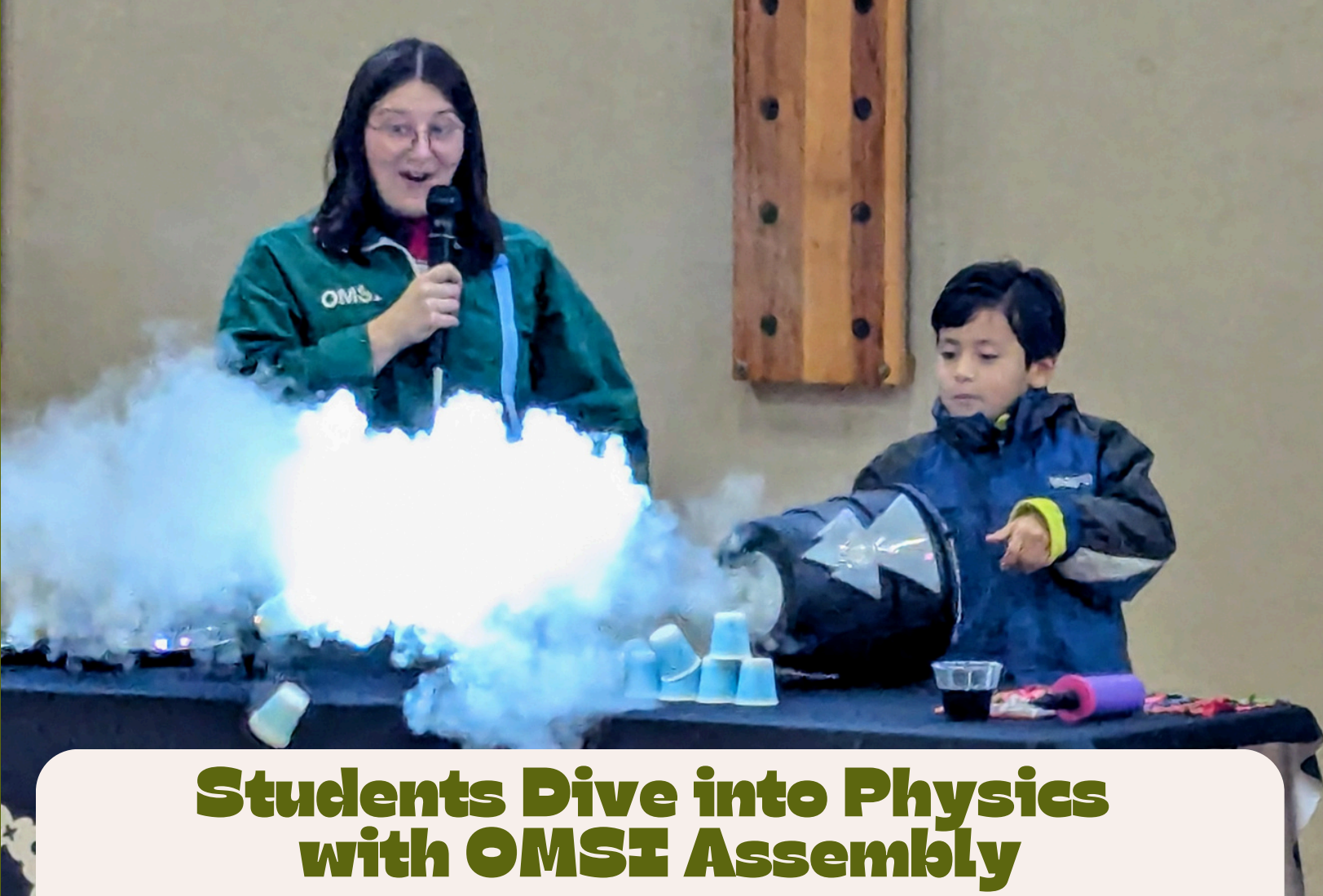
MYSTERY READER FUN IN PRESCHOOL



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, at McBride Elementary, our Mystery Readers were firefighters from Columbia River Fire & Rescue. After reading a story to the students, they showed off their gear, answered lots of curious questions, and shared how they help keep our community safe. The visit sparked excitement, inspired awe, and reminded us all that reading and community connection go hand in hand.



Students Dive into Physics with OMSI Assembly

Students at **Lewis & Clark Elementary** recently enjoyed an exciting and educational assembly presented by OMSI (Oregon Museum of Science and Industry). The interactive presentation focused on physics, with a special spotlight on Sir Isaac Newton and his Laws of Motion.

Throughout the assembly, young scientists had the opportunity to participate in hands-on experiments that brought the Laws of Motion to life. From exploring inertia to witnessing the effects of action and reaction, students were fully engaged in learning through discovery and fun.



STUDENTS ATTEND CESAR E. CHAVEZ LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



St. Helens High School students recently had the opportunity to attend the Cesar E. Chavez Leadership Conference, where they connected with peers from across the region to learn about leadership, advocacy, and higher education pathways.



The day began with an inspiring keynote address from a first-generation college graduate who shared her personal journey navigating college and building a successful career. Throughout the day, students attended engaging workshops focused on topics such as local government, policy-making, and legislative advocacy. One session highlighted the history of the conference itself, where students had the unique experience of meeting one of the original co-founders, an advocate who, in the 1970s, worked tirelessly to support university access for students of color.



The conference concluded with a college fair, giving students the chance to speak directly with university representatives and explore future academic opportunities.

This meaningful experience encouraged students to reflect on their own goals while learning from leaders who continue to inspire change in their communities.



STEAM

Lewis & Clark Elementary



Fifth-grade STEAM students at **Lewis and Clark Elementary** explored the art of Georgia O'Keeffe and created stunning pieces inspired by her iconic style.

Using chalk pastels and, in some cases, a special water-blending technique, they produced vibrant, expressive works that reflected O'Keeffe's bold use of color and form.

STEAM



ST. HELENS HIGH SCHOOL NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTION CEREMONY



Congratulations to all the **St. Helens High School** students who were inducted into the **National Honor Society!** We're proud of your hard work, leadership, and commitment to excellence.



Ready Freddy Event at Lewis & Clark Elementary!



We had a fantastic time at our 2025 Ready Freddy event at **Lewis and Clark Elementary!**

Incoming kindergarteners were welcomed with smiles and excitement as they got a sneak peek at the school experience. The event kicked off with a reading of *The Rainbow Fish*, sparking conversations about kindness, sharing, and friendship.

Students then tapped into their creativity by making colorful paper plate fish, each one as unique as they are! They also enjoyed a fun and tasty activity by creating their own ocean-themed snacks.

To help ease first-day jitters, students received a special first-day-of-kindergarten book to take home. The event wrapped up with a school tour, led by staff, helping students feel confident and excited about walking through the doors on their very first day.

We're so grateful for the families who joined us and can't wait to keep the Ready Freddy fun going!

Upcoming Event:

- **KINDERGARTEN WELCOME**

May 8, 2025

5:30 – 7:00 PM

Join us at the school your child will attend: McBride, Lewis & Clark, or Columbia City.

Otter Pups Earth Day Garden Clean Up



As part of our exploration of the plant life cycle, we've been growing and caring for our own plants in the classroom. To extend our learning, we decided to pull weeds and help care for the garden outside. We were very careful to pull only the weeds!

While working, we discovered something curious in the soil—a pupa! After some investigation, we learned it was most likely a cutworm pupa getting ready to emerge as a moth. What a great reminder that being responsible can be fun and full of surprises!





St. Helens High School Leadership team was honored with the OASC Gold Council Award—the highest recognition a student leadership program can receive from the Oregon Association of Student Councils.



What an honor to have earned this prestigious award six years in a row, dating back to the 2019–2020 school year.

In addition to receiving this top honor, four of our student leaders stepped up to present workshops at the OASC Fall Conference in formal wear donation drives, art show fundraisers, and a self-care club.

We are so proud of their leadership, innovation, and the positive impact they are making in our school community!

Elks Teen of the Month

Jaxon Burgard

Jaxon has been a standout leader and role model throughout his time at SHHS. He's actively contributed to the school community through his involvement in Student Council, Lion Crew, AVID, Key Club, and the National Honor Society. As a dedicated student-athlete, he's competed in Cross Country and Track & Field all four years, serving as a team captain in both sports during his junior and senior years. He also wrestled in his sophomore year and has supported the girls' wrestling team as a manager for the past two seasons.

Among his academic interests, Jaxon's favorite class has been Holocaust, Genocide, and Tolerance within the Language Arts department. "At first, I didn't think I was going to like the class, but it really opened my eyes. It helped me see how lucky I am and made me appreciate the opportunities I have," he reflected. His teacher, Ms. McCallum, shared, "He works diligently on all of his assignments, and even when he doesn't enjoy something, he handles the task with poise and aplomb."

When asked what he considers to be his strongest trait, Jaxon points to his determination. He credits running as the force that's taught him the value of persistence and giving his best every day. One SHHS teacher remarked, "Jaxon is a kind-hearted person who listens to both praise and constructive feedback with open ears and humility."

Beyond the classroom and athletic fields, Jaxon has given back by volunteering with the middle school's track and cross country programs and regularly helping at summer track events. His passion for sports will continue beyond high school; he's committed to attending Pacific University, where he will study Kinesiology and compete on the university's Cross Country and Track & Field teams. His ultimate goal is to earn a Doctorate in Physical Therapy and work with athletes.

In his free time, Jaxon enjoys gaming, catching movies with friends, and spending quality time with family. "I'll never pass up the chance to go to Barnes & Noble with my mom," he says, adding that it's not just the hobbies, but the people he shares them with, that make those moments special.

Congratulations, Jaxon! We are proud of all you've accomplished and can't wait to see what's next.



When Jaxon first heard the news, he was both surprised and humbled. "I was honestly surprised and a little shocked. It took a moment for it all to sink in, and then I felt proud and grateful. It's always a little exciting when you've been working hard and people recognize it," he shared.

SCHOOL NEWSLETTERS



[CLICK HERE](#)



Plymouth
High School
Panthers

[CLICK HERE](#)

St. Helens
Virtual
Academy

[CLICK HERE](#)



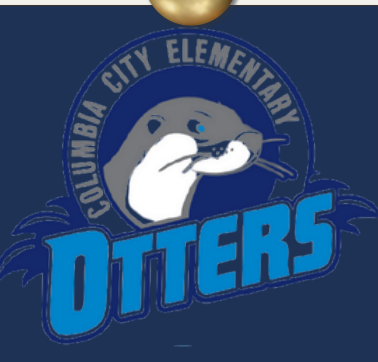
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We're excited to share that we've added each school's newsletter to our Good News Edition!

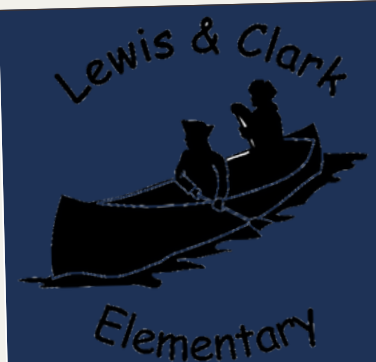
Now, families can easily see what's happening across all of our schools, from classroom highlights and student achievements to upcoming community events and celebrations.

It's never been easier to stay connected and celebrate the amazing things that happen every day in our district.

Check it out and discover the amazing stories unfolding in our schools, one big update at a time!



[CLICK HERE](#)



[CLICK HERE](#)



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CINCO DE MAYO

MEET AND GREET WITH ST.
HELENS SCHOOL DISTRICT
ACTING SUPERINTENDENT
DR. KAREN GRAY

We warmly invite our **Spanish-speaking** families to a special meet and greet with our Acting Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Karen Gray. This is a fun and welcoming opportunity to connect, share, and learn more about our schools and community.

DETAILS:

Date: Monday, May 5, 2025
Time: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Location: St. Helens School District Boardroom
Address: 474 North 16th Street
St. Helens, OR

This event will be conducted entirely in **Spanish!**
We want to hear your ideas, questions, and experiences in a welcoming space—in your language.

Questions: Please contact Kirsten Humbird
Multilingual/ELD Program Coordinator &
Instructional Coach
503-366-7208 or kirstenh@sthelens.k12.or.us

Food will be provided.



NEW

**ONLINE
FORMAT**



New online format!

SAVE THE DATE!

School Board **CANDIDATE FORUM**

The St. Helens School District invites students, families, staff, and community members to attend a

May 6, 2025

4:45 pm – 5:45 pm

School Board Candidate ONLINE Forum on Tuesday, **May 6, 2025**, from **4:45 PM – 5:45 PM**. This event will be **livestreamed from the district's YouTube channel**.

This professionally moderated event, led by a representative from the Oregon School Boards Association, is an opportunity to hear from the candidates running for the school board and learn more about their vision and priorities for our district.

St. Helens School Board Candidate Forum – Update & Exciting Community Opportunities

We are excited to share an important update to our upcoming school board candidate forum. We've decided to transition the forum, originally scheduled as an in-person event, to a **live-streamed online format**. This adjustment was made in response to community feedback and in an effort to ensure accessibility, neutrality, and transparency. This change also allows us to create a welcoming space for all candidates and community members, while avoiding potential scheduling conflicts and concerns about logistics.

The virtual format offers several benefits: more people will be able to attend from any location, the event can be recorded and shared afterward, and we can ensure a smooth, well-facilitated discussion. The forum will include an opportunity for all candidates to answer questions submitted by students, staff, and community representatives, providing a thoughtful and balanced platform for all voters to hear from those seeking to serve on the school board.

To help ensure a respectful, balanced conversation, we've partnered with the **Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA)** to provide a **professional, neutral moderator**. OSBA is the governing organization that supports and trains public school boards across the state, including our own. Their mission is to empower boards with the knowledge and tools to lead effectively and improve student outcomes:

"The Oregon School Boards Association empowers all public-school boards with the knowledge, skills, tools, and resources to govern, lead, and advocate for improving student success and positive outcomes for every learner."

– Oregon School Boards Association

Most recently, OSBA facilitated a well-received **candidate forum for the Seaside School District**. We are hopeful that by partnering with this trusted organization, we can provide a **professional, inclusive platform** for all voices to be heard.

Due to the shift to an online format, the **moderation fee has been reduced to \$195.00**. While participation in the event remains free for attendees, this cost ensures professional moderation, neutrality, and that all candidates' voices are heard.

We adjusted the time and format of our event to accommodate the in-person forum being organized independently by St. Helens School Board candidates and a community moderator. Our goal is to avoid conflicting events and to encourage the highest possible community participation by giving space for both forums to take place.

We are grateful to our engaged community and to the candidates for participating in these events. A robust conversation with candidates fosters transparency, civic involvement, and informed decision-making.

Details for the Online Forum

Date: Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Time: 4:45 – 5:45 p.m.

Format: FREE Online Livestream on our YouTube Channel

Features:

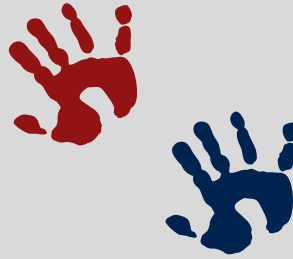
- Moderated by a professional from the Oregon School Boards Association
- Neutral, respectful space for all candidates
- Livestream recording available to watch later



ST. HELENS SCHOOL DISTRICT

KINDERGARTEN

Welcome



MAY 8TH
5:30 PM- 7:00 PM

Columbia City
Elementary

2000 2nd Street
Columbia City, OR

Lewis & Clark
Elementary

111 South 9th Street
St. Helens, OR

McBride
Elementary

2774 Columbia Blvd.
St. Helens, OR



EVENT INCLUDES

- tour the school
- ride a school bus
- student activities
- registration information

WHAT TO BRING

- birth certificate
- proof of address
- immunization records



Students must be 5 years old by **September 1, 2025**, to enroll.



SUMMER PROGRAMMING

Registration is open!

bit.ly/shrecprograms



SPORTS! PAINTING! BAKING! OH MY!

We are now accepting registrations for a wide range of summer camps, programs, and classes on our RecDesk page!

Whether your littles are growing artists, future business bigwigs, ready to hit their first home run, or just want to have FUN, now is your chance to get signed up for these exciting opportunities all summer long. Visit bit.ly/shrecprograms to get started.



SUMMER *ACADEMY*

July
7 - 31

Are you looking for an exciting
opportunity to support your child
with a love for school this
summer? We want to help!

WHEN: JULY 7-31
DAYS: MONDAY-THURSDAY
TIME: 8:30 AM-12:00 PM
WHERE: LEWIS & CLARK ELEMENTARY

Apply Now



MISSION STATEMENT

The St. Helens School District's Summer Academy is an enrichment program for students who are working on content grade level standards to students entering 1st through 3rd grade, plus a limited number of students entering 4th grade, the opportunity to expand their knowledge and skills through a variety of hands-on activities and experiences.

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!

UPCOMING CALENDAR DATES

- May 26 - Holiday - NO SCHOOL

Stay **CONNECTED!**

St. Helens School District Media Platforms:

St. Helens Schol District Website

Facebook Page

Instagram Page

X Page

YouTube Channel

LinkedIn Page

