

JUNE 2, 2025

GOOD NEWS

EDITION NEWSLETTER



**Thank you, InRoads Credit Union,
and thank you, St. Helens
Community!**

A check for \$60,291.80 was presented by Community Engagement Coordinator Aimee Thompson to Acting Superintendent Dr. Karen Gray and Acting St. Helens High School Dr. Charlotte Ellis on May 27, 2025.

Developed by InRoads Credit Union, the **Team Up for Schools** program started in the fall of the 2017/2018 school year. When members pledge their support for the St. Helens High School Lions, the credit union sends them a special debit card with the St. Helens High School logo. The credit union, in turn, donates 0.05 cents back to the high school every time the debit card is utilized. Since the start of the Team Up for Schools program, the community of St. Helens has raised \$337,074.45 for St. Helens High School!

The St. Helens School District would like to thank **InRoads Credit Union**, students, staff, and community members who joined this program for their continued support of **St. Helens High School**.

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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**

LIONS, TIGER, AND BEARS,

Oh my!

Lewis & Clark Elementary second-grade students had a wild and wonderful adventure at the Oregon Zoo! This exciting field trip brought classroom learning to life as students explored animal habitats, observed wildlife up close, and made real-world connections to their science and literacy units.

Throughout the day, students marveled at lions, tigers, bears, and so many other fascinating creatures. They asked thoughtful questions, made observations, and deepened their understanding of animal behavior, adaptations, and ecosystems. For many, it was their first time seeing some of these animals in person, an unforgettable experience!

A big thank-you to our teachers, chaperones, and the Oregon Zoo staff for making this trip both educational and fun!





Crossing the Bar

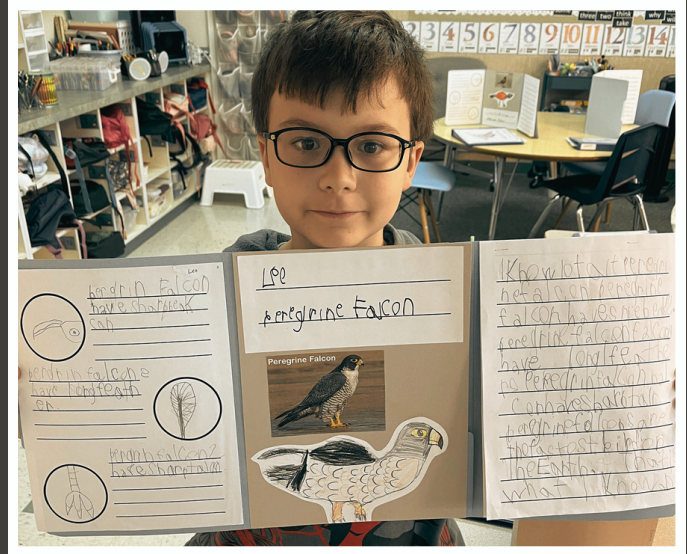
Third-grade students at **McBride Elementary** had a special visit from Mr. Eli of the Columbia River Maritime Museum, who presented an engaging lesson on Crossing the Bar. This interactive presentation introduced students to the unique challenges and history of navigating the Columbia River Bar, often referred to as the "Graveyard of the Pacific."

Through storytelling, visuals, and hands-on learning, students gained a deeper understanding of local maritime history, geography, and the science behind safe navigation. Mr. Eli's presentation sparked curiosity and a connection to our region's rich coastal heritage, leaving students excited to learn more.



We're grateful to the Columbia River Maritime Museum for bringing this educational experience directly to our classrooms and making learning come alive!

Birds, Blueprints, and Bright Ideas!



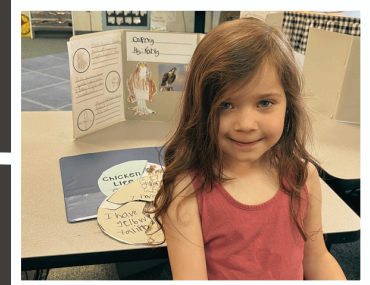
Columbia City Elementary 1st grade students wrapped up their bird study with a special Learning Share event, proudly presenting their projects to families and friends. From creative displays to thoughtful research, these young learners impressed everyone with their knowledge and curiosity about our feathered friends!



Adding to the excitement, the St. Helens High School construction class built custom bird hotels that will soon be installed in the school garden, a perfect example of student collaboration across grade levels.



The first graders can't wait to see which birds come to visit!



Thank you to all the families who came to celebrate our students' hard work and to the SHHS construction crew for helping bring their learning to life in such a fun and meaningful way.





LEWIS & CLARK SECOND ANNUAL FAMILY ENGAGEMENT BBQ

Lewis & Clark Elementary families enjoyed an evening of Books, Bingo, and Burgers during our Second Annual Title Family Engagement Night on Thursday. The sun came out, and so did our families! Over 400 parents, students, and siblings gathered on campus for an evening filled with laughter, learning, and connection.

Events like these are a wonderful reminder of the power of community and the joy that comes from coming together in support of our students.

Thank you to all the families who attended and the staff who helped make this event a success.

We're already looking forward to next year!



DIGGING INTO LEARNING

VIRTUAL ACADEMY STUDENTS GET THEIR HANDS DIRTY WITH OSU MASTER GARDENERS



Our **Virtual Academy Elementary** students had the opportunity to participate in a hands-on planting event during a recent in-person session with special guests from the OSU Master Gardeners program.

Andrea Blankenship Ison and Toni Dockins joined us to teach students about the planting process, from learning about seeds and how they grow to preparing soil and caring for their plants at home. Students enjoyed digging in, getting their hands dirty, and creating their own take-home gardens while learning important lessons about nature, responsibility, and the joy of growing something from the ground up.

Thank you to our guests for sharing their time, expertise, and enthusiasm with our students!





CRÊPE DAY RETURNS TO ST. HELENS HIGH SCHOOL!

Recently, the delicious aroma of freshly made crêpes filled the halls of **St. Helens High School** as students from Chef Rousseau and Monsieur Doyle's French 1 and 2 classes teamed up to celebrate Crêpe Day!



This hands-on culinary experience blended cuisine, culture, and language as students prepared and enjoyed the classic French dish. Crêpe Day is a long-standing tradition at SHHS, originally started by former French teacher Madame Pearman.



Monsieur Doyle, an SHHS alum, carries on the tradition with the support of Chef Rousseau.



This year marks his second time leading the event, and it continues to be a student favorite!



Events like Crêpe Day provide students with a fun and memorable way to connect classroom learning to real-world cultural experiences.

Bon appétit!

MYSTERY READER FUN IN PRESCHOOL



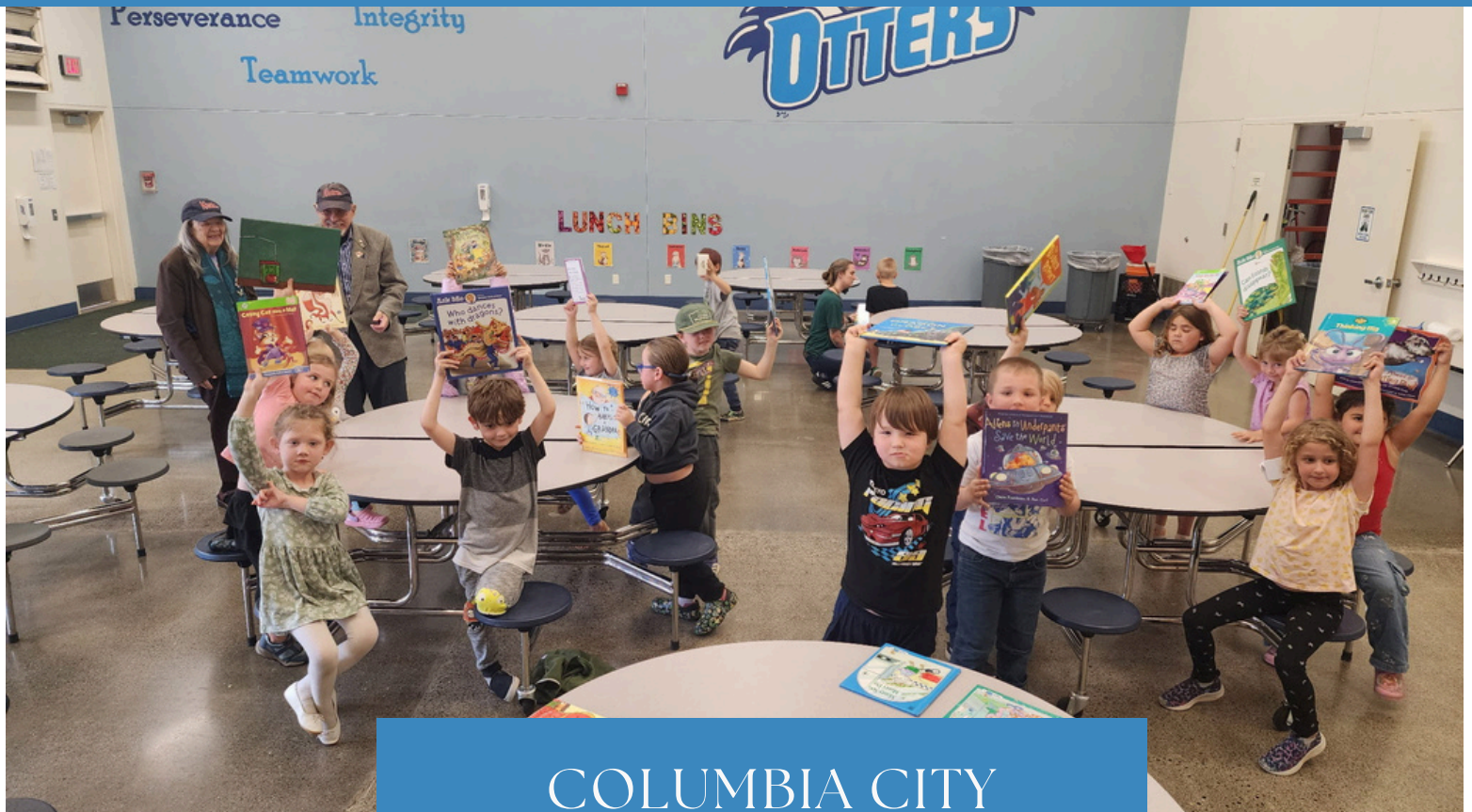
Columbia City, McBride, and Lewis & Clark Elementary preschools created a mystery readers program where a surprise guest from the community visits our preschools to read the students stories.

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, Lewis & Clark, and Columbia City Elementary**, our Mystery Reader was **Corey Padron** from **Columbia County Emergency Management**! He visited all three preschool classrooms to read a story and stayed to answer students' curious questions about his important work in emergency preparedness and safety. From coordinating disaster response efforts to helping keep our community safe during emergencies, our young learners were captivated by his role.

We're so grateful to Corey for taking the time to inspire and educate our youngest students, and for showing them how reading and community service go hand in hand!

A SPECIAL GIFT FOR OUR YOUNGEST READERS!



COLUMBIA CITY *Elementary*

There's nothing quite like the joy on a kindergartener's face when they get to pick out a brand-new book to take home, and this week, **Columbia City Elementary** was full of excited smiles!

Each student had the chance to browse through a variety of stories and select one that spoke to them. Watching our young readers carefully make their choices, hug their books, and proudly share with classmates was a heartwarming reminder of how magical reading can be.

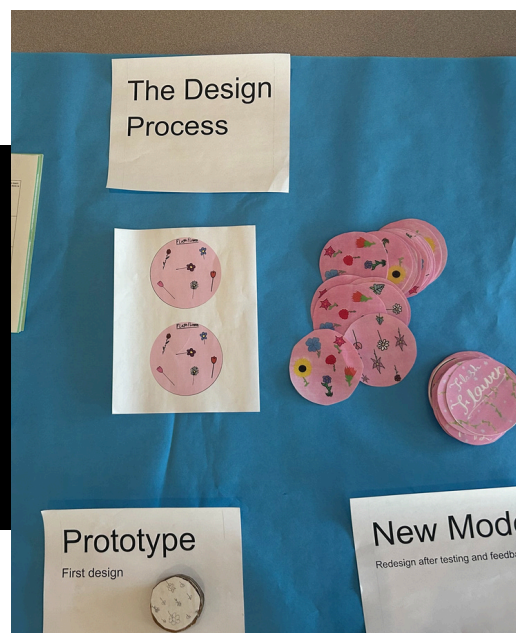
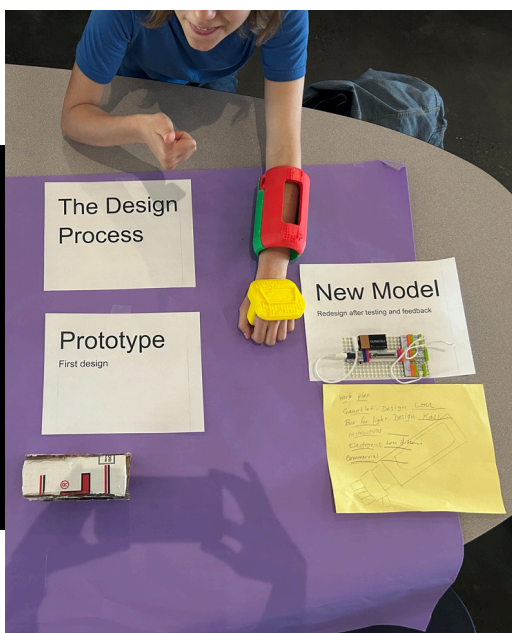
Special thanks to the **Kiwanis Club** for making these moments possible. Your generosity helps spark a love of reading that will last a lifetime.





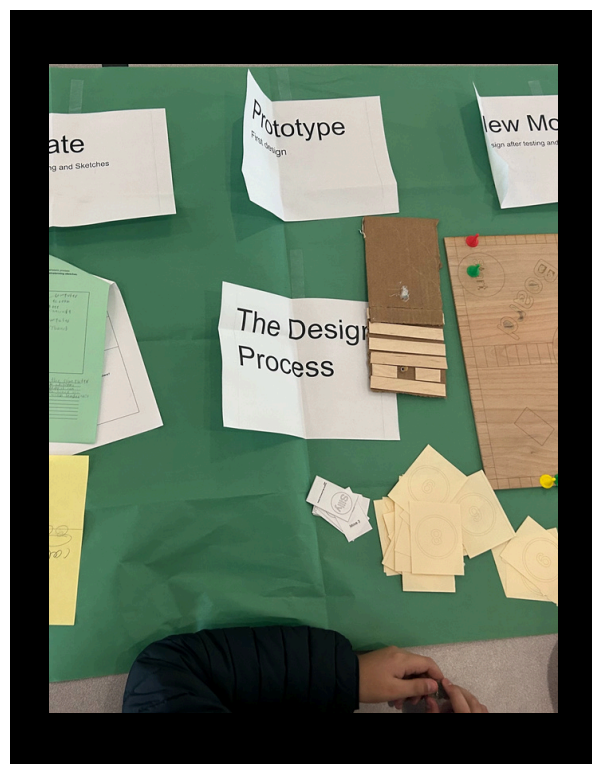
STEAM

Studio Spotlight



8th-grade STEAM Studio students at **St. Helens Middle School** put their creativity and critical thinking skills to the test as they showcased toy and game designs they developed in class.

These hands-on projects highlight innovation, problem-solving, and the power of imagination in action!



STUDENT COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD RECIPIENT

KHLOE ANDERSON

STUDENT
COMMUNITY
IMPACT AWARD
RECIPIENT

KHLOE ANDERSON



At the board meeting held on May 28, 2025, Acting Superintendent Dr. Karen Gray presented **Khloe Anderson** with the Student Community Impact Award. Khloe received this honor for her exceptional leadership, compassion, and dedication to academics, athletics, and service, which make her a true role model within the St. Helens Middle School community.

Khloe Anderson is an outstanding eighth-grade student at St. Helens Middle School who exemplifies leadership, service, and dedication in all she does. A consistent and positive presence in the school community, Khloe approaches every opportunity with kindness, humility, and a strong sense of purpose.

Khloe's leadership is evident through her involvement in school programming, such as Where Everyone Belongs (WEB), where she supports both peers and younger students. She serves as a teacher's assistant in sixth-grade classrooms, helps organize school events, and regularly volunteers her time wherever it's needed, often behind the scenes. Khloe's peers and teachers admire her for her reliability and willingness to step up in meaningful ways, always with a calm and positive attitude.

In the classroom, Khloe shines as a straight-A student. She balances her academic responsibilities with grace and determination, maintaining high standards while demonstrating a genuine love of learning and a strong work ethic.

Beyond academics, Khloe is a dedicated four-sport athlete, competing in football, basketball, wrestling, and track and field. In each sport, she leads by example, showing perseverance, sportsmanship, and a true team-first mindset. Her ability to juggle athletics, academics, and service is a testament to her character and resilience.

According to Ms. Kelli Warren, Khloe is an exceptional teacher's assistant who not only helps with classroom tasks like making copies and supervising students, but also supports peers with behavioral challenges, offering walking breaks and one-on-one support with compassion and maturity.

Khloe's contributions extend far beyond her own success; she makes a lasting difference in the lives of those around her. Her example inspires others to lead with empathy, work hard, and stay grounded in service to their community.

Please join us in congratulating Khloe Anderson as the Student Community Impact Award recipient for May.

STAFF COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD RECIPIENT

DR. CHARLOTTE ELLIS

STAFF
**COMMUNITY
IMPACT AWARD
RECIPIENT**

DR. CHARLOTTE ELLIS



At the board meeting held on May 28, 2025, Acting Superintendent Dr. Karen Gray presented **Dr. Charlotte Ellis** with the Staff Community Impact Award. Dr. Ellis received this honor in recognition of her bold, compassionate leadership that restored trust, rebuilt community, and reignited pride at St. Helens High School during a time of profound transition.

In December, during a time of uncertainty and transition, Dr. Charlotte Ellis stepped into St. Helens High School as our Interim Principal and immediately began the courageous work of restoring trust and rebuilding the community. From day one, Dr. Ellis brought clarity, energy, and a deep commitment to healing, all while keeping students at the heart of every decision.

Her greatest accomplishment was undoubtedly the relationships she built with students. Through her presence, honesty, and genuine care, Dr. Ellis became a trusted leader and advocate, not only for our youth but for their families and our entire school community.

At the same time, Dr. Ellis recognized the urgency of strengthening instructional practices. She partnered with instructional coaches, set high expectations, and supported the growth of our educators. She modeled servant leadership, led difficult conversations with grace, and brought needed change with a fearless spirit.

In just a few short months, Dr. Ellis improved the school climate, restored staff morale, introduced new systems of support, and left a lasting mark on the culture of St. Helens High. With a blend of directness, compassion, and unstoppable energy, she reminded us what bold, heart-centered leadership looks like.

As one student shared, “Ellis has brought enthusiasm, a sense of pride and belonging, and joy back to our high school. She demonstrates an unmatched investment in our students and staff. She knows how to have fun while working hard.”

And as a staff member beautifully said, “Ellis has brought a sense of stability and leadership since being at SHHS. She has brought a sense of pride back to our school. Ellis has made students and staff feel welcome and valued. Her impact has been immeasurable.”

We are deeply grateful for her impact and proud to honor her extraordinary service to our students, staff, and families.

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Charlotte Ellis as this month’s Staff Community Impact Award recipient.

COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD RECIPIENT

JOANNE DOMINA

**COMMUNITY
IMPACT AWARD
RECIPIENT**

JOANNE DOMINA



At the board meeting held on May 28, 2025, Acting Superintendent Dr. Karen Gray presented **Joanne Domina** with the Community Impact Award. Joanne received this honor for her selfless dedication, unwavering support, and the warmth and joy she brings to every student and classroom she serves.

Joanne Domina, affectionately known as Grandma Jo, is a devoted classroom volunteer whose kindness, dedication, and tireless service have made a lasting impact on the students and staff she supports. Her consistent presence in the third-grade classrooms provides both instructional and organizational support that helps create a nurturing and successful learning environment.

Grandma Jo brings with her not only a wealth of experience and patience, but also a warm, encouraging spirit. She regularly works with small groups of students, assists with art projects, science explorations, and lends a hand with the everyday routines of classroom life. No task is too small, and her willingness to jump in wherever needed is matched only by her generosity of heart.

Staff members describe Grandma Jo as gracious, dependable, and quick with a smile. Her genuine care for students and her advocacy for teachers make her an irreplaceable part of the school community. Whether it's helping a child feel confident in their learning or assisting a teacher in managing the day, she does so with humility, dedication, and an infectious positivity.

As one staff member shared, "Not much keeps Grandma Jo away from our students. Her dedication and commitment are truly commendable."

Joanne Domina's impact reaches far beyond academics. She helps foster a classroom culture rooted in kindness, support, and belonging. Her selfless contributions have left a meaningful imprint on all who have the privilege of working alongside her, and we are a stronger school because of her.

Please join us in celebrating Joanne "Grandma Jo" Domina as this month's Community Impact Award recipient.

COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD RECIPIENT

DR. KAREN GRAY

COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD RECIPIENT

DR. KAREN GRAY



At the board meeting on May 28, 2025, Director of Teaching and Learning Lisa Tyler presented **Dr. Karen Gray** with the Community Impact Award. This marked Dr. Gray's final school board meeting with the district, and we were honored to recognize her unwavering commitment and support to the students, staff, and families of the St. Helens School District.

Since stepping in on February 1st, Dr. Gray has led St. Helens with remarkable strength, compassion, and unwavering focus. In a time of uncertainty and transition, she brought the calm, steady leadership we needed, and she did it with grace, honesty, and heart.

Dr. Gray jumped in immediately, fully present and fully committed. From the very start, she spoke of *our* students, *our* families, and *our* staff, modeling a sense of shared ownership and purpose that reminded all of us what leadership rooted in service truly looks like.

In her short time with us, Dr. Gray has accomplished so much. She wrote the district's Blueprint for Success, refined and distributed responsibilities to complete the Corrective Action Plan, and ensured that these both aligned with our Strategic Plan. Through this, she emphasized important actions and systems, pushing the District forward with clarity and purpose.

She also helped us manage budget challenges, launched a new District Attendance Committee, created a Superintendent Advisory Committee, and unified district leaders with a spirit of true collaboration.

Whether working with associations, families, or staff, Dr. Gray consistently modeled that *we do this work together*. Her calm presence under pressure, her willingness to process thoughtfully before responding, and her tell-it-like-it-is honesty have earned deep respect across our district.

And at every decision point, she asked one powerful question: "What's best for our students?" That focus has anchored us, inspired us, and reminded us of our shared mission.

Today, we honor Dr. Gray for her exceptional interim leadership that has made a lasting impact on St. Helens. Thank you, Dr. Gray, for being all in, for your heart, your honesty, and your unwavering dedication to *our* district.

You will be greatly missed!

SCHOOL NEWSLETTERS



[CLICK HERE](#)



Plymouth
High School
Panthers

[CLICK HERE](#)

St. Helens
Virtual
Academy

[CLICK HERE](#)



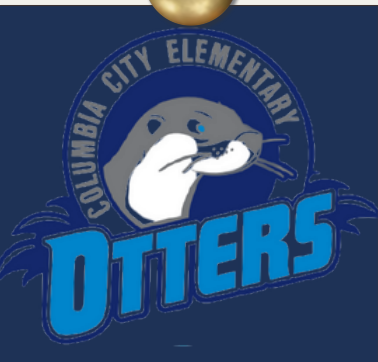
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We're excited to share that we've added each school's newsletter to our Good News Edition!

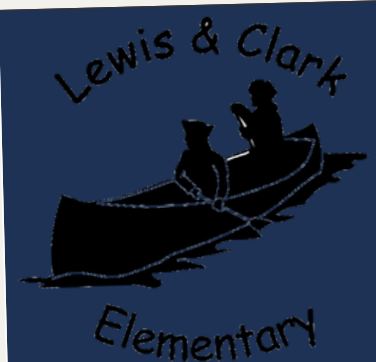
Now, families can easily see what's happening across all of our schools, from classroom highlights and student achievements to upcoming community events and celebrations.

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](#)



[CLICK HERE](#)

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

CLICK HERE



Spanish Speaking
Community
Event

JUNE 4, 2025
7:00 PM
-
8:00 PM

ONLINE EVENT



Kate Sinkins, Esq.



HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER CREDIT RECOVERY

The SHSD will be providing a **high school summer credit recovery** session during the summer of 2025, held at **Plymouth High School**. The credit recovery program is limited to core high school classes (Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies). Credit recovery classes will not be offered for elective classes. All courses will be taught using our online Edmentum curriculum, however, students are expected to attend in person each day.

The deadline for completing this registration form for HS Credit Recovery Summer School is **Friday, June 20th**. Any requests after that date are on a first-come, first-served basis as space is limited. Please check in with your teachers/counselor in the next two weeks to determine if you should register.

Unofficial Transcripts are available for viewing in StudentVUE to see if you are on track to graduate.

If you need assistance or guidance, please contact your counselor.

SESSION DATES AND TIMES:

- **Monday, July 7, 2025 - July 31, 2025**
- **Monday - Thursday ONLY**
- **8:30 am - 12:30 pm**



Sign Up

For questions regarding summer programming, please contact Mr. Robby Plowman at robbyp@sthelens.k12.or.us





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.

Riverhawk Lit Launch: Find Your Voice

Riverhawk Lit Launch: Find Your Voice is a four-week literacy program designed to help middle school students improve their reading and writing skills while discovering their unique voice. Through engaging lessons, creative projects, and fun enrichment activities, students will build confidence and community.

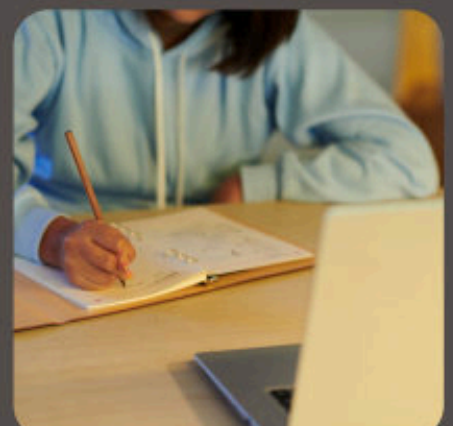
When: July 7 - July 31

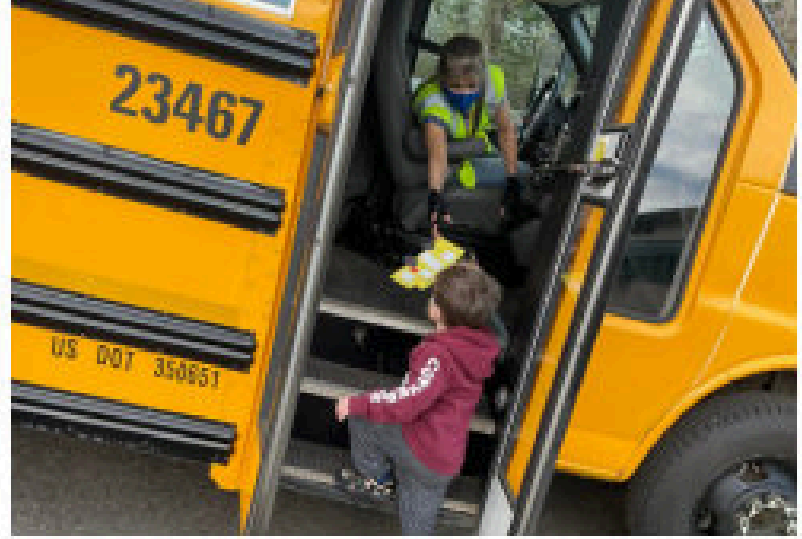
Days: Monday - Thursday

Time: 8:30 - 1:00

Where: St Helens Middle School

Sign Up





Kinder Camp: July 28-31, 2025

St. Helens School District

KINDER CAMP IS A 4 DAY PROGRAM RUNNING FROM 8:00 AM-1:00 PM, JULY 28-31, FOR CHILDREN ENTERING KINDERGARTEN IN THE FALL, GIVING THEM A JUMP-START ON FEELING READY FOR SCHOOL. YOUR CHILD WILL GET FAMILIAR WITH THE ROUTINES AND ACTIVITIES OF KINDERGARTEN WHICH WILL BOOST THEIR CONFIDENCE AND COMFORT WITH THIS IMPORTANT TRANSITION INTO SCHOOL.



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.



AGES 18 &
UNDER EAT
FREE

St. Helens School District

SUMMER MEALS PROGRAM

JUNE 23, 2025 - AUGUST 15, 2025

No meal service: July 3 & July 4



LOCATION:

Lewis & Clark Elementary
111 South 9th Street
St. Helens, OR 97051



CONTACT:

Angela Hileman
503-366-7609



TIMES:

Breakfast - 8:00 am - 9:30 am
Lunch - 10:30 am - 12:30 pm
Served - Monday - Friday



ADULT COST:

Breakfast \$3.50
Lunch \$5.00

THIS INSTITUTION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER

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!

Stay CONNECTED!

Wednesday, June 11, 2025 - NO EARLY RELEASE
6th & 7th grade SHMS students - last day of school

THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 2025 - LAST DAY OF SCHOOL (EARLY RELEASE)

Elementary release time: 12:45 pm
8th grade SHMS release time: 1:30 pm
High School release time: 1:50 pm

St. Helens School District Media Platforms:

St. Helens School District Website

Facebook Page

Instagram Page

X Page

YouTube Channel

LinkedIn Page

