



YOUR EVERGREEN SCHOOLS

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Evergreen Public Schools

Evergreen Public Schools fulfills promise to protect the classroom despite severe budget shortfall



On-Board for Kindergarten - A young man and his mom pause for a moment before boarding a bus at kindergarten round-up. Full-day, every other day kindergarten is one of the changes that will be made to save funds in the upcoming 2009-2010 school year.

During the most recent district budget webcast on June 3, Superintendent John Deeder and Chief Financial Officer Mike Merlino walked viewers through a line-by-line explanation of every budget recommendation that will be presented for consideration to Evergreen Public Schools' Board of Directors on August 11.

The legislature was able to finalize a shortfall number of \$11 million for the upcoming 2009-10 school year. This allowed the district some room when considering the initial budget cuts that had been prepared for a shortfall as deep as \$15 million. Based on the feedback of parents, staff and community members submitted at budget forums and through emails and letters, Deeder and Merlino have finalized a list that cuts a total of \$11,002,000 from the 2009-10 operating budget. Despite the shortfall, Evergreen Public Schools was one of only three large school districts in the state of Washington

that was able to make such significant cuts without having to lay off any teachers.

The detailed list, (available on the district website), shows both the initial proposal and the final cuts that will be presented to the board of directors. "By not having to cut as much as \$15 million we were able to take some additional factors into account," explained Deeder. "Community members can see that some programs that were originally slated to be cut have either been modified or reduced instead of eliminated. Some, such as in the case of the Early Childhood Center recommendation, will see no changes for the upcoming school year because we want to ensure that we have the time to implement any changes correctly." He was also quick to point out that significant savings to the classroom were the product of the teacher's union, the classified clerical union and the administrative staff stepping forward to make concessions

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Sunset Elementary School nationally recognized as a "positive behavior school"

Sunset Elementary School has been designated by the University of Washington (UW) as one of only 44 schools across the nation to be a positive behavior school. This is based on the school's resulting drop in discipline referrals since beginning several programs to facilitate students learning appropriate behavior.

Sunset's efforts began with a grant from UW for the "Check, Connect, Expect" program which provided personal mentoring for students with high behavioral needs. Students would check in with a mentor, set goals for the day and be monitored at regular intervals by a teacher on how they were doing. At the end of the day they would check back in with the mentor and receive feedback on how to keep improving behavior.

"The purpose of that program was to provide key positive behavior support," explained Laura Buno, assistant principal at Sunset. "It was well-received and effective, but we also

wanted to implement something that could reach the entire student body and engage students in the process school-wide. That's how we came up with the 'Self-Manager' program."

The crux of the Self-Manager program is that it involves teaching, modeling and expecting students to be responsible for their own actions. All students are eligible to participate, but must first get a sheet signed by their teacher and other key staff members throughout the school to receive their self-manager

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For the third year in a row, Mountain View High School (MVHS) has made it into the top five percent of Newsweek Magazine's annual high school ranking list. This year the school received its highest ranking to date, 752 out of the top 1,500 high schools in the country. MVHS now ranks in the top 10 schools in the state of Washington. The complete list can be viewed at: <http://www.newsweek.com/id/201160>

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A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Looking ahead to 2009-2010 school year – changes on the horizon



John Deeder
Superintendent

Now that the 2008-2009 school year has ended and we look towards next fall, there are several changes on the horizon – including new school start times and full day kindergarten every other day. Both of these changes are a direct result of budget reductions and will have

a direct impact on families. And even though the school board will not approve the final budget until their August 25 meeting, they took action on these two items last April so we could get the word out in time for families to prepare.

Changing the school start times will allow us to create a transportation system that gets us to three shifts of school bus routes, down from four. By consolidating routes, we are able to save \$550,000. High schools and middle schools will now start and end 20 minutes later. Classes at the high schools will begin at 7:45 a.m. and get out at 2:20 p.m., middle schools will start at 8:15 a.m. and get out at 2:50 p.m. Four elementary schools – Burnt Bridge Creek, Burton, Crestline and Marrion, along with the Early Childhood Center will start at 8:40 a.m. and get out at 2:50 p.m. The remaining elementary schools – Columbia Valley, Ellsworth, Endeavour, Fircrest, Fisher's Landing, Harmony, Hearthwood, Home

Choice Academy, Illahee, Image, Mill Plain, Orchards, Pioneer, Riverview, Sifton, Silver Star, Sunset and York - will start at 9:25 a.m. and release at 3:35 p.m.

We will be switching from half-day kindergarten every day to full day kindergarten every other day beginning in the fall. This will save the district \$500,000 in transportation costs. We have looked at comparisons of these two models and have found that since students are receiving about the same amount of instructional time, there are no significant differences in student achievement. It is our goal that when the financial situation stabilizes, we can move to full day kindergarten every day.

We know that changing the school start times and going to full day kindergarten every other day will disrupt routines that families have. We are not making these changes to upset family routines – we really are not trying to do anything that would impact this. However, we are trying to protect the classroom and the only way we can do this is by making some changes and reductions in other areas. We are one of three large school districts in the state who did not send a teacher down the road due to a reduction in force. We made a commitment to stay away from the classroom and we are very proud that we have been able to do that.

We would not have been able to do this, however, without the support from our employee groups – the Evergreen Education Association, the Clerical Unit of Public School Employees, the

Evergreen Administrators Association, and the non-represented employees - these groups made concessions that totaled \$2 million.

As I have told every group that I have addressed regarding next year's budget – there is not a single thing on the list that is being cut or reduced that I like – everything impacts someone. The cuts and changes all hurt people by impacting salaries, eliminating jobs and disrupting families. But now it is time for everyone in the community to pull together and work with us to deliver the best education possible to our students based on the budget the state of Washington can afford to give us at this time.

There is one more change for next school year I would like you to be aware of. Traditionally school starts the Tuesday or Wednesday after Labor Day. This year, since the holiday falls later in the month, the first day of school will be Wednesday, September 2. The last day of school will be June 15.

I want to thank everyone who took the time to come to one of the community forums, school board meetings, Coffee and Conversations with the School Board or one of my Brown Bag Lunches. We appreciate your comments and suggestions. I will continue holding the Brown Bag Lunches next year - they will be held over the noon hour and are scheduled for September 16, October 21, November 18, December 16, January 20, February 17, March 17, April 21 and May 19. I hope you will take the time to join me.

New energy saving initiatives saved the district more than \$288,000 in five months

In the five-month period of December 2008 through April 2009, Evergreen Public Schools saved \$288,464 in utility costs, reported Dave Cone, Manager of Resource Conservation for the district. And there are many savings yet to come. Based on reports from a software program called Utility Manager which holds the data for all district utility usage including gas, sewer, garbage, water and electricity, the district is on track to save as much as \$600,000 in the upcoming year. The district holds records from nine years back and in the short period of time the district has adopted new energy saving initiatives, the savings are already exponential.

So what has led to these kinds of significant savings? Cone credits it to several factors including turning down building heat to an unoccupied level during winter break, the removal of unnecessary lights at many of the buildings and a renewed commitment to energy conservation across the district in order to significantly impact operations costs.

“The majority of the immediate savings we have seen are due to paying attention to the scheduling of the automated systems that control heating and cooling at the building level,”

explained Cone. “Each school has an automated system that will turn the building heat on at a certain time. We went through and found that some of the buildings were turning on hours before anyone was occupying them. Facilities and maintenance worked closely together to ensure that the buildings weren't being heated unnecessarily during unoccupied hours and that the automated system was working exactly as it was supposed to.”

Cone, who has only been in the district since November 2008, was an assistant facilities director in the Gresham-Barlow School District and brings a wealth of experience in energy conservation implementation from his time there. Gresham-Barlow has received numerous awards for their ground-breaking strides in energy savings and all of their schools are now ENERGY STAR certified. “What is very exciting to me about the initiatives here in Evergreen Public Schools, is that they are all supported from the top-down,” said Cone. “In order to be successful in energy conservation savings and then maintaining them, it has to come from the highest

level. The Board of Directors and Superintendent John Deeder have made this a very clear priority.”

Cone, who hit the ground running, is working on continuing to identify and implement changes on what he called, “the low-hanging fruit.” These are energy savings that can be implemented with relatively little cost, but that mean big savings to the district. For instance, Cone has taken a light meter out to schools and measured where there are too many fluorescent bulbs being used. The unnecessary ones were removed - four to five thousand at this point - thus saving costs in replacement and also in energy use. “There are industry standards for the lighting in educational facilities,” said Cone. “The goal is not to make it darker, but to create consistent lighting for instruction while not incurring waste.” In some places, such as Heritage High School, that meant

actually increasing the amount of light in some areas because it was too dark. New fixtures that put out four times the amount of light were installed. This will bring about cost savings of approximately 33 percent.

School participation has been “100 percent” said Cone. Part of the initiative is to get schools involved in finding innovative ways to conserve energy at their buildings. During the winter, the district offered an incentive program with some of the savings from previous months to be awarded to schools that came up with

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Energy-Savers - Crestline Elementary School's members of the Watt Watchers program volunteer to monitor responsible use of energy at the building.

Coalition created centralized out-of-school resource for parents and students

School's Out...Let's Go website lists more than 100 different youth programs

For the past three years, leaders in education, youth programs and the parks department have been meeting to discuss one of the most important questions facing kids today: what do they do when they're not in school? Not only during extended summer breaks, but also between the hours of 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., after school releases for the day and before many parents return home from work. Because of the importance of this issue, a formal coalition of organizations was formed, the Vancouver Coalition for Out-of-School Time.

The coalition has been meeting for several years and in May, at the Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Washington, they unveiled the fruit of their labor, an online website resource that allows parents and kids to enter in their geographic location and find a range of out-of-school activities in their area including free activities and classes. The website, www.schoolsoutlets.go.org is essentially a search engine that also has the capability to sort activities

by category of interest. It currently contains more than 100 different programs throughout the Vancouver area.

Evergreen Public Schools' Superintendent John Deeder explained the value in providing such a resource to the community. "Engaging youth in activities after-school and during the summer when they might otherwise go unsupervised is an excellent way to ensure positive outcomes for that time of day. Our kids are most vulnerable during those times and it's important that we find resources to help keep them engaged in positive activities."

The coalition includes members from At Home At School – Washington State University Vancouver, Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Washington, the City of Vancouver, Educational Service District 112, Evergreen Public Schools, Vancouver School District, Fort Vancouver Regional Library, Police Activities League (PAL), Vancouver-Clark Parks & Recreation, The Parks Foundation and YMCA

of Columbia-Willamette: Clark County Family.

The group received a grant from The Community Foundation of Southwest Washington to help with initial funding, but every organization listed also contributed funding to develop the site and to hire an intern to maintain it. In addition, the coalition received a technical assistance grant from the National League of Cities. "It's significant to see this many organizations joining together in partnership to find ways to serve youth and families in the community," said Carol Fenstermacher, Evergreen Public Schools' Director of Community Relations who sits on the steering committee. "It has created a strong sense of collaboration around working together to find the gaps in services to best meet the needs of kids."

In addition to the website, the coalition also worked to develop a list of standards for out-of-school programs and providers. Evergreen



Public Schools' Community Education Manager Don Aguilera was influential in creating the criteria, a list that the coalition hopes will influence providers in how they offer and develop programs and also provide parents a resource in what to look for in an effective out-of-school program.

The website will continue to be updated with new programs. Contact information is available at www.schoolsoutlets.go.org "The after-school hours can be a time of great risk or great opportunity for youth," said Vancouver Mayor Royce Pollard. "It is our responsibility to ensure that children have the chance to take advantage of this time and grow as active participants in our community."

Data walls personalize individual student achievement



Achievement Data - Members of Sunset Elementary School's literacy team pose in front of the data walls, which are used to monitor individual student literacy needs throughout the year.

Though it seems contrary that something with the title "data walls" would personalize individual student achievement, at Sunset Elementary School, that's exactly what's happening. This year the school has implemented a new system of tracking student data on literacy and writing and presenting it in a wall-sized format. The resulting conversations and collaboration have been so successful, that the school plans to continue them next year and add additional ones for math.

Sunset's Professional Development Specialist (PDS) Mychal Irwin, explained how data walls work. "Four pocket charts are placed on the wall in my office with every student in the school represented by a card. Students are placed on

the chart that best represents their literacy level at the beginning of the year. The first chart includes the most at-risk students, those who are reading below grade level and struggling with comprehension. The fourth chart are those who are most advanced. The cards can be updated from each level as often as a teacher wants, but every six weeks, the literacy team meets as a group to discuss every student and re-evaluate where each one is individually."

The literacy team wholeheartedly agreed that the new model has opened up a support system that has made them more effective educators.

Teacher Sheila Pearce said, "It's the village model, the weight of the world as a teacher is no longer just on your shoulders. In the old model we would meet twice a year instead of as an ongoing process. It felt very separate. Now we're pulling everyone into one room for regular conversations and it feels like it's less about looking at data and more about the kids."

For teacher Deneane Boyle, the data walls have made a huge difference in how she is able to view literacy progress across the entire school. "I'm a big picture person, so being able to come in and see those walls representing every student gives me an instant way to visualize where the entire school is and then to focus my energies on exactly where to move next."

Irwin agreed that providing a way for each person to see the school as a whole has been one of the most valuable results of the walls. "At Sunset we are focusing on moving from the model of 'my kids and my classroom' to 'our kids and our school.' The data walls increase that collaborative feeling, they give the teachers and specialists the opportunity to have conversations about instruction as it relates to each student specifically and that translates into the classroom. Students experience a much more consistent educational experience."

The literacy team has been rewarded by being able to observe firsthand the results of that collaboration on student learning. "Reading specialists and teachers are now more connected," said teacher Barbara Hatch. "The students realize that, they know that everyone at the school is a team. By observing us working together, students are more excited to read together in groups and focus on helping one other." The data speaks for itself. Irwin said that at the beginning of the school year, each chart had a fairly equal number of students. By the end of the year, most students had moved into the third or fourth chart, meaning they were reading and comprehending at or above grade level. "It's exciting," said Irwin. "It's making forward progress by actively supporting kids where they are. The wraparound process that these conversations have created has allowed us to do exactly what our goal is, to get kids what they need for a quality education, right away."

Student life

Highlights and reflections from the year

The students:

Zack Burdick

Evergreen High School (EHS) graduate Zack Burdick described his feelings of being done with high school as, "Surreal. Especially saying goodbye to classmates in band who have become like family to me." Burdick plans to attend Whitworth University in the fall. His hard work in high school paid off and he received a generous scholarship and loan offer from the school for all four years. "I'm really looking forward to the quality of teachers and the opportunity for small classes," he said. "I feel like that's one of the ways that taking AP (Advanced Placement) classes really helped me. I was able to form close relationships with my teachers. My teachers from Evergreen are some of my favorite people in the world." As he looked back on his years at EHS, Burdick had nothing but praise for his experience there. "I feel that I'm really fortunate to have gone to Evergreen High School. The administration and teachers are outstanding. I feel privileged to have been a Plainsman."

Bright Future -
Evergreen High School senior Zack Burdick graduated in June and is looking forward to attending Whitworth University in the fall.



Jasmine Rucker

When asked for the highlights of her freshman year at Heritage High School, Jasmine Rucker laughed and said "The first day of school for sure and I'm really excited about the last day too." Rucker also listed meeting new people second semester and field trips taken through the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program as great opportunities. As for any advice she has for incoming freshmen, Rucker said, "Most importantly, don't always think you can finish your schoolwork at home. Take advantage of class time, it will take you a lot less time to complete."

Summer Dreams -
Heritage High School's Jasmine Rucker smiles in anticipation of summer.



Samantha Cahill

At the end of the school year, Union High School sophomore Samantha Cahill was looking forward to a final volleyball tournament in June and having the month of July free before she started volleyball again in August. She was excited for a summer where friends are beginning to get their driver's licenses and hoped to get hers soon as well. As she looked back on the year she said, "I pretty much had fun all year. I had to work a little harder on classes this year and I already have homework for next year, but it helps to have volleyball to balance it out."

Looking Forward to a Break - Union High School's Sam Cahill is excited for at least a month off before volleyball starts up again.



Sean Fraser

Mountain View High School student Sean Fraser looked back on his junior year with absolutely no regrets. "It was a really good year," he said smiling, "the best so far." Fraser added senior class president to his plate for the upcoming year, but isn't too worried about the additional time commitment. "Student class council is an actual class so you do have time to get most things done during school," he said. When asked for advice for incoming students Fraser added, "Balance your time in school with giving yourself time to enjoy yourself. Don't overcommit, focus your energy on the things you enjoy."

No Regrets - Mountain View High School's (MVHS) Sean Fraser said that the past year at MVHS has been "the best yet."



Energy

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and implemented the most ingenious ways to save energy. Crestline and York Elementary Schools, Shahala Middle School and Heritage High School received \$1,000 each for their efforts. Evergreen High School, Pacific Middle School and Fircrest, Harmony, Burton and Illahee Elementary Schools all received \$500. "This is a district-wide effort," said Cone. "I know that the schools who won all had strong support from their custodial staff, so it has absolutely been contributions from everyone, above and beyond their job responsibilities that have made

the difference."

In the upcoming months, Cone will continue to work with departments throughout the district to create and implement specific plans to save energy. One of the first will be an automated program that will allow all portable classroom thermostats to be controlled from a central location. This allows portables to be put into unoccupied mode at night, on snow days and breaks, regardless of whether occupants remember to turn them down. The program will be piloted at Frontier and Pacific Middle

Schools in partnership with the Clark Public Utilities Department (PUD) which offers incentives for energy saving programs. Clark PUD will pay for 35 percent of the pilot program and if it saves as much as Cone estimates (at least 30 percent), they will fund 35 percent of the cost to implement the program at all schools.

"The exciting thing about energy conservation is that by doing things a little differently, you can see significant results almost immediately," said Cone. He can cite multiple examples of this, such as

Frontier Middle School cutting their March gas bill in half from \$20,000 last year to \$10,000 this year, despite the fact that this past March was colder than last year's.

"Energy conservation is never going to drive the district," Cone was quick to clarify. "Instruction always needs to be at the forefront of what is driving our policies, but by working to adhere to industry standards on heating, cooling and lighting and working to become ENERGY-STAR certified, I believe we could use two to three times less energy than we do now."

Eighty-three year old former educator brings her knowledge back to the classroom



Friend to Fisher's Landing – Helen Jane Wilson spends at least two days a week volunteering at Fisher's Landing Elementary School.

Helen Jane Wilson has done a lot in her life, much of it involving education and social services. The 83-year-old mother of five and grandmother of 13, spent years working on family literacy programs, early childhood education

and adult education programs. She has been a middle and high school teacher, helped high school students achieve their GEDs (General Education Development) and been Chairwoman of the National Honor Society, but what she now

calls “the most productive parts of my day,” are spent volunteering at Fisher's Landing Elementary School.

Wilson moved to Washington from Ohio in 2003. When her husband died in 2005, she contacted Joe Segram, Principal of Fisher's Landing Elementary School where her granddaughter Jessica Iverson is a teacher. Wilson wanted to know if there was anything she could do to help out and four years later, her volunteer work a couple times a week helps support multiple classrooms in the school.

“She's a special lady,” said Segram. “She is an inspiration to all of us.”

For Wilson, - who works primarily with students on language literacy, journaling and reading, - being with elementary students has been a new and joyful experience. “My very first reading student had no books at home. I had the

opportunity to give her a first book. The one-on-one time is very important to them and finding someone to relate to. They love to talk.”

Wilson always knew she wanted to be a teacher and to be able to observe her granddaughter follow that same path has been especially rewarding. “I have a lot of admiration for what she does every day,” said Wilson. “When we get together at family gatherings we have a hard time not just talking the whole time about school. I see that same passion for teaching and learning that I've always had.”

Wilson plans to continue volunteering at Fisher's Landing as long as she can. “The best part of volunteering is helping someone – you don't know those victories until later. Mr. Segram, the staff and students here are so special. They have become my community.”

Professional Development Specialists and Academic Coaches improve quality education

One of the tenets of Evergreen Public Schools' is to provide a quality 21st-century education for all students, providing them with the skills necessary to be world-competitive upon graduation. To reach this ambitious goal requires continuous evaluation and improvement of student curriculum and assessment of teaching instruction in the classroom. Research has shown that the quality of teaching methods has a direct impact on student learning. To make sure that every teacher in the district is providing a quality education, every elementary school in the district has a Professional Development Specialist (PDS) and every secondary school has an academic coach. These positions work in collaboration with teachers to provide feedback, knowledge of best practices, teaching method support and facilitation of professional development for teachers.

Superintendent John Deeder is passionate about the PDS program, “We are committed to the PDS program because our goal is to continually improve the system. Research shows that coaches are key to improving the quality of instruction. We are always striving for that.”

Fircrest Elementary School PDS Darcy Mitchelson described her position as first and foremost to “provide support for teachers and instruction. Best practices have changed dramatically,” she said. “You have to stay current and in the midst of working to reach the needs of every student. Teachers don't always have the time to do all the research on new methods. The PDS position provides collaboration, feedback and the knowledge that you're not alone in your own classroom. There is someone else there able to provide support for implementing best practices.”

Endeavour Elementary School teacher Stuart Anderson wholeheartedly agreed. “I worked with the PDS at Columbia Valley Elementary School a

lot before I came to Endeavour. The opportunity to have a PDS in your classroom observing your teaching methods and then asking a specific question such as, ‘why are you doing it this way?’ or providing encouragement is invaluable to your growth as an educator.”

Because the school's PDSs work throughout the school and not just one classroom, they can also suggest alternative classrooms or even schools for teachers to visit in order to observe and learn different methods. “Observation time with our PDS is focused,” said Fircrest teacher Laura Fleming. “Darcy does a good job of keeping discussions focused on education and what our goals are. I've received feedback that I never would have thought of on my own.”

“We are committed to the PDS program because our goal is to continually improve the system.”

Fircrest teacher Josh Krzysiak is in his first year of teaching and has found the PDS resource helpful. “It's something you have to take advantage of,” he said. “I'm constantly in Darcy's office asking her about different things. I believe it's how it should be in teaching. People should be collaborative and the PDS position allows them to step in and over barriers to that collaboration.”

JoAnn Eaton, Secondary Coach of Instructional Literacy at Covington Middle School, has seen a significant change take place since she took the position five years ago. She believes her position has evolved. “In the beginning, I was doing eight to 10 observations every week, traveling with teachers to different schools and classes, providing a

great deal of new resources and attending every professional learning community (PLC) meeting,” she said. “We have finally reached a point where teachers now come to me and tell me what they'd like me to look for during observations. Teachers are now meeting together, team teaching and collaboratively writing lessons that span the entire grade level. The sixth grade science teachers here actually take turns teaching in one another's classrooms because they all have different strengths and now all students receive the benefits of those.”

Dean Strawn, PDS at Endeavour stated that having someone singularly focused on the facilitation of best practices, quality teaching instruction and development is a tool that reaps benefits in all areas. “At Endeavour, we are a lab school that follows the workshop model,” he explained. “The workshop model means that instead of the teacher standing up and telling students what to learn, they function more as a facilitator of learning. It gives students choices within a structure on how they learn the material. As a lab school, every one of our classrooms is open for observation and you should be able to walk into any of them and find best practices going on.”

“If the PDSs were not there someone else would have to be there in a different role.”

Strawn spends much of his time modeling lessons for teachers, facilitating cross-school observations and ensuring that collaboration and dialogue stays rich. In the past year

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2009 Evening of Excellence recognized more than 100 outstanding students



Evening of Excellence - Evergreen Public Schools' Board of Directors member Holly Williams congratulates a student at the annual Evening of Excellence.

On May 28, the Evergreen and Hockinson Boards of Directors, principals and parents came together at Union High School to honor the outstanding academic and civic achievements of 129 high school students. The student honorees came from Evergreen, Heritage, Hockinson, Mountain View and Union High Schools and the Clark County Skills Center.

The evening began with a guest

reception where attendees were treated to a performance by the Mountain View High School Jazz Ensemble 1 and refreshments donated by Chartwells. They then moved into the auditorium where students were congratulated by Schuyler Hoss, from Governor Gregoire's office, representatives of the two districts' Board of Directors and keynote speaker Jim Jacks, Representative from the 49th Legislative District. KATU's weekend news anchor Dan Tilkin served as emcee of the event.

Jacks lauded the students for their high achievements and success, exhorting them to continue their good work throughout the rest of their lives. "I hope our community gets to meet you," he said, "because if they did, any pessimism that they may have held towards youth and education would turn to optimism."

A slideshow tribute featuring all the students was shown and then certificates were handed out. The principals from each high school described the category and read the name of each honoree. Students were handed their certificates by a member of each of the school boards. Students received recognition for

categories such as National Merit Finalists, YWCA Community Service, Advanced Placement Scholars and competitions such as Envirothon, Science Olympiad and Mathematics League.

"Recognizing student academic achievement isn't something we do enough of," said Hockinson Board of Director's President Erik Mattson. "We are proud of the challenges you have embraced." Evergreen Public Schools' board member Holly

Williams added, "You are truly amazing students. You are people who we know will go on to do great things."

This year's event marked the fourth year that the district recognized student achievements in the areas of academics and civic leadership.

For a full list of student honorees please visit the district webpage at: <http://www.evergreenps.org/News/Headlines/Pages/EveningofExcellence2009.asp>



Envirothon Excellence - Union High School Envirothon team members (L-R) Minerva Zhou, Catherine Nguyen, Evan Fessler, Patty Tang and Victoria Do were among the honorees at the Evening of Excellence.

Illahee Elementary School's *Raven News* creates school community



Film Students - Students at Illahee Elementary School get camera-ready for their weekly taping of the school's *Raven News* program.

Every Friday, students at Illahee Elementary School race to be in class on time. From kindergarten to fifth grade, students are all eager for their weekly viewing of the school-produced *Raven News*, a 5-to-7 minute video written, anchored and filmed entirely by students.

The popular program is in its fourth year at Illahee and relies upon the talents and dedication of 17 fifth-grade students and teacher Martha Hurlburt. Using the school video camera and microphone, two teams of students rotate every other week to write scripts, film interviews and create commercials. They

showcase school spirit activities such as "Twin Day," special classroom projects or activities and publicize upcoming events. Neighboring Union High School has also made an appearance to publicize sports camps for elementary school students.

"The idea was to create student ownership over the whole process from start to finish," said Hurlburt, who was asked to lead the project by Principal Joel Hauge who had done something similar at his former school, Ellsworth Elementary School. "It's a way to create awareness throughout the

student body of what is going on and to publicly recognize students who are doing well."

As part of the show, Hauge does a weekly appearance with all students who have received "Raven Spirit Awards," where each student is recognized for exactly what areas they have excelled in. This feature has become so popular that parents now come to the school to watch their students be honored.

For students Josh, Lexi and Olivia -all who are on staff this year- being a part of *Raven News* is an honor and a place to find talents they didn't know they had. Josh has found that he "really likes doing the commercials because he likes to be funny" and how to write his own scripts. Lexi, who prefers to be behind the camera, has enjoyed learning more about the technology that goes into filming. She also feels that being involved in something like this has helped her shyness and given her the opportunity to be a part of a team. Olivia has always wanted to be a part of *Raven News*. "I've been watching it since I was in second grade and it always looked like fun. Being a reporter is the best. We pick students to interview, you have

to learn how to trust your instincts on whom to interview and you have to set your own times to film and do interviews."

Hurlburt agreed that teaching students how to be responsible and self-confident is a key benefit for *Raven News* participants. "Every student has to apply," she explained. "Homework completion and being in good standing in class are two of the most important parts of participation. I coach the students on how to appear on-camera and we do one 15-minute weekly assignment meeting, but other than that, they take care of all their filming and interviews. There are very few times it doesn't get done."

The program relies heavily upon the devotion of Hurlburt, who is the final editor and pulls the entire piece together each week on her iMovies software. However, she gives all credit to the students. "The school as a whole has embraced *Raven News* as an important part of the school culture," she said. "It has created a sense of school spirit and community. It's something that every student at Illahee can get behind because it truly is student-driven."

Evergreen community rallies around budget crisis



Todd Yuzuriha
School Board Member

As a district, our mission is clear - continually improve the quality of education while using your tax dollars efficiently. We remain firmly behind this mission even through the current economic recession. Here's a snapshot of what

the recession means for Evergreen Public Schools - past, present, and future.

- **Last year:** needed to trim budget by \$4 million
- **This year:** latest estimate, we need to trim budget by \$11 million
- **Next year:** maintenance and operations (m&o) levy of \$38.5 million expires

The current task is to balance our budget by trimming \$11 million while keeping in mind we will also be going for a new m&o levy in 2010 to replace the expiring one.

Community-Based Approach to Solving Budget

The approach used by the Superintendent and Board of Directors is to be open with our current thinking, provide opportunities for community involvement, and listen to feedback.

An example of our community-based approach was the formation of three ad hoc committees last fall. Each committee consisted of more than

a dozen district citizens and staff. There was the Budget Review Ad Hoc Committee, the Facilities Review Ad Hoc Committee, and the Technology Review Ad Hoc Committee. These ad hoc committees examined how to best cope with last year's bond failure and this year's budget shortfall. Each group met numerous times throughout the fall and winter. The Facilities and Technology Ad Hoc Committees each held two public forums to summarize their findings. Their recommendations were then submitted to the School Board for consideration.

In addition, a series of three budget forums were held in March with extensive community participation. For instance, the budget information posted on www.evergreenps.org was accessed close to 3,000 times. Feedback was taken from the community at these forums and proposals were modified. Then, after getting more refined budget numbers from the state legislature, a series of three more budget forums were held in May and early June.

Working Towards a Solution

Budget cuts are gut-wrenching. And cuts of this magnitude affect every student. Through this process, our mission continues to be to improve the quality of education while using tax dollars efficiently.

There will be deep cuts in administration. School start times and kindergarten schedules will be altered to use our buses more efficiently. We are becoming a "greener" district in order to

save utility costs and help the environment. And the unions representing the teachers, classified staff, and administrative staff are all making concessions in their contracts to save money.

No Teacher Layoffs

We remain committed to the classroom. The budget cuts for next year do not have any teacher layoffs. And on top of that, we keep a high priority on continued staff development for our teachers at all levels-elementary, middle, and high school. As a board, we recognize how crucial it is to continually develop our teachers in order to improve the achievement of our students in the classroom.

Looking forward

Our budget will be refined throughout the summer. Final approval will occur at the School Board meeting on August 25, 2009 for the new school year, which begins in September.

And as we look forward to the following year, our existing operations levy expires at the end of 2010. As stated earlier, this maintenance and operations levy represents \$38.5 million a year. We will put forth a new levy in 2010 for voter approval.

Thousands of you have participated in our budgeting process this year, and we appreciate that very much. We will need your involvement next year to pass a new m&o levy in order to avoid budget cuts that would be many times the amount we're experiencing this year.

Please keep watching the district website at www.evergreenps.org for updates.

Positive behavior

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badge. The badge entitles students to go first to lunch and recess, attend an extra recess and receive special classroom privileges such as taking things to the office.

"It's been very successful this year," said Buno. "We had kids working very hard to get their badges and to keep them. If you lost your badge, you had to go through the entire process all over again. The goal was to get kids thinking about what positive behavior means and to have everyone on board from staff to the kindergarten students."

At the end of the school year, roughly half of the students at the school were self-managers. Fourth-grade student, Kyle had

been a self-manager early in the program and experienced benefits including extra recess times and ice cream floats. "The fourth-grade also did a party for self-managers," he said.

The Self-Manager program also helped students like first-grade student Davante to work extra hard to get his badge. "I like to write, especially about wolves and I'm trying to turn it in on time," said Davante. "The data shows that the program is working" said Buno. "Sunset reported their behavior referral data to a third-party database that tracks programs for UW. The school has seen a significant drop in referrals but more than anything, we are really proud of what our students are doing."



Sunset's Self-Managers - Students at Sunset Elementary School are learning to manage their own behavior with the highly-successful Self-Manager program.

YOUR EVERGREEN SCHOOLS

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Evergreen Public Schools

Facilities Executive Director wins Planner of the Year award

Reg Martinson honored for 30 years of "improving the places where children learn"



Planner of the Year - Reg Martinson, Evergreen Public Schools Executive Director of Facilities was honored with a Planner of the Year award by the Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI) Pacific Northwest Region.

Evergreen Public Schools' Executive Director of Facilities Reg Martinson has been awarded the Planner of the Year Award from the Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI) Pacific Northwest Region.

CEFPI is an international professional organization whose principal purpose is to improve the places where children learn. The diverse group of professionals embraces the single goal of building healthy, safe, high performance and sustainable

learning environments that enhance student and teacher performance and support culture and community vitality. The Planner of the Year award is the organization's most distinguished honor, presented once a year to the individual whose professional facility planning activities have "produced a positive and significant regional, national and/or international impact on educational facility planning, adding to the store of knowledge and best practices in the field."

Martinson is more than deserving of the award, having devoted more than 30 years to his career in K-12 facilities management including time spent in Spokane Public Schools, Portland Public Schools and San Diego Public Schools prior to joining Evergreen. He has led capital improvement projects valued in excess of two billion dollars including new construction, remodel and renovations and ongoing small works projects and he was instrumental in developing strategy that resulted in the 2002 passage of a \$267 million bond campaign for Evergreen; the largest bond to ever pass in Clark County. Martinson and several colleagues also established the Oregon/Southwest Washington Chapter of CEFPI in which he has served actively for more than 20 years.

In addition to his direct work with the school district, Martinson has been heavily

involved in assisting in comprehensive educational planning with state and local government aimed at improving public education facilities. "Reg has worked tirelessly in helping to appropriate funding, pass bonds and levies and raise the bar for educational facility design," said CEFPI Pacific Northwest Region President Robert Esau. "His influence and counsel with state and local educational planners through the exchange of ideas and practices has had a positive impact on the quality of the educational environment."

In the eyes of his colleague Sue Steinbrenner, Manager of Capital Projects, some of Martinson's greatest accomplishments have come in the form of his communication skills, integrity and the deep respect that he inspires from everyone who knows him. "Reg has excellent organizational and technical expertise in the planning arena, but his hallmark is the ability to listen and communicate," said Steinbrenner. "He has the ability to make clear presentations that demystify complicated issues, present alternatives and help stakeholders make difficult decisions. He exemplifies the highest professional standards while maintaining an approachable demeanor that promotes trust and confidence amongst his staff, the instructional team, Board of Directors and citizens in the community."

Martinson received his award at the Annual Regional Conference in May in Vancouver, British Columbia.

PDSs

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Endeavour has hosted more than 100 visitors through their classrooms. Strawn will also take over classes so teachers can go learn and observe while not having to get a substitute. "If the PDSs were not there," he said, "someone else would have to be there in a different role."

"The best thing about this process is that it's creating an environment full of students who want to be here," said Strawn. "The teachers get full credit

for the fact that at Endeavour, despite a 52 percent free and reduced lunch rate, we have a zero percent truancy rate. By continuing to support teacher development we are able to model and implement a teaching method based 100 percent on the needs of each and every student. Lessons are created based on the needs of each and every student. We are creating a true community of learners here- students, teachers and staff."

Coffee & Conversation

Interested in knowing about the district initiative of quality education for all students? Have a question or comment to share? Join members of the Evergreen Public Schools' Board of Directors for an informal coffee and conversation session Tuesday, July 14, 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at Frontier Middle School, 7600 NE 166th Avenue, in the Media Center.



Budget

continued from page 1

such as unpaid leave and salary freezes that lessened the impact on programs.

One program that will see steep reductions instead of elimination is the Community Education program. Reductions will include moving the course catalog online only and no longer funding classes that are not self-sustaining. Programs such as strings, cheer and dance will see staffing reductions and changes, but no change to program offerings. Merlino clarified that extracurricular offerings and sports will still continue to be fully funded. "There may come a time when we can't afford to fund as much," said Deeder. "But we

know the value in providing school involvement activities for students."

Two of the proposed changes have already gone before the school board and have been approved. School start times have been changed in order to eliminate a fourth bus run which will save the district \$550,000. High schools will run from 7:45 a.m. to 2:20 p.m., middle schools from 8:15 a.m. to 2:50 p.m., Burnt Bridge Creek, Burton, Crestline and Marrion Elementary Schools will change their times to 8:40 a.m. to 2:50 p.m. and the other 17 elementary schools will continue on the late start schedule of 9:25 a.m. to 3:35 p.m. The district will also implement full-day kindergarten

every other day instead of half-day every day. Students will attend Monday and Thursday or Tuesday and Friday and each group will attend every other Wednesday. By eliminating the midday bus run, the district will save \$500,000, a cost that the state did not fully fund.

Deeder said, "We wanted to get these changes before the board and approved early because we know that it affects parent and student schedules."

Deeder and Merlino will present the recommendations at the Board of Directors meeting on August 11. The board will approve a final budget at the August 25 meeting. That is the latest date it can be

approved as the district's fiscal year begins in September.

"There is nothing on this list that makes us happy," Deeder said at the end of the webcast. "We understand that everything on this list hurts someone, however, from the very beginning of this process we said that we were committed to staying away from cutting classroom instruction and we did that. We will continue to do our best to deliver a quality education to all of our kids that the state of Washington can afford to support us in."

To watch the full webcast and see the list of proposed cuts please visit: <http://www.evergreenps.org/AboutUs/VideoServices/Pages/Budget2009.aspx>