

# SCHOOL NOTES

SEPTEMBER 2007

PORT ANGELES SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL NEWS & EVENTS IN OUR COMMUNITY

## SCHOOL DISTRICT THANKS YOU

It's been a very busy summer for Port Angeles School District staff and teachers, even though school has been out of session since mid-June. By now community members are well aware of the changes being implemented in our schools in September. With changing demographics in our county, a shift to an older population, our schools continue to face declining enrollment. The decision was made early on last school year to "right size" our schools to maintain fiscal responsibility into the future. It's likely that most students and their families were affected by these difficult changes. Boundary adjustments were made to all elementary schools. Bus routes are changing dramatically. Middle school students will be housed on one campus at Stevens Middle School. Sixth graders will remain at the elementary level. Long-time, loved and respected schools, Fairview Elementary School and Roosevelt Middle School were shuttered, and teachers, staff, and students said their good byes and now will say their "hellos" to new beginnings.

Thank you to our community partners for support during these challenging times, particularly to the business community and individuals, who asked the tough questions but also supported our schools during the levy and transition changes this year.

Thank you to our teachers and staff who have gone "above and beyond" in the classroom, and at the same time, served on curriculum and transition committees during transition planning. An amazing 108 teachers were moved this summer! Imagine the amount of time spent arranging classrooms, books, computers and supplies to create a "welcoming" place for students.

Thank you to our district's maintenance staff. This team has been the "action" behind the transition planning, moving, building, framing, digging, installing, hanging, all on time for a September 4 opening.

Thank you to our technology staff, who not only moved approximately 300 computers, printers and phones, but have also managed to move our district team to a new and more efficient Outlook® email system.

Thank you to our leadership team, and those teachers, staff and community volunteers, who served on the Elementary Transition Team, Middle School Transition



Port Angeles High School ASB President Loni Grinnell speaks to the Port Angeles Chamber of Commerce in late August.

Team and Parent Leadership Group. Your challenging questions and careful study of how these transitions have and will continue to impact students, their families and our staff was invaluable as we have create an outlook of opportunity for this new beginning.

We are excited about the future of our schools and look forward to a very smooth transition this September!

### Our Next Steps

As transitions and adjustments to our "new schools" continue to be a focus throughout this year, our school board and district leadership have begun to plan for "beyond" transitions.

- Full-day kindergarten will begin throughout the district beginning in September 2008. Our greatest opportunity to assist students is through early intervention at this level.
- The district will continue developing strategy for replacement of aging technology in our schools. As the use of technology increases, and as student achievement continues to grow, the challenge of delivering the required support also increases significantly.
- A Long-Range Facilities and Capital Bond Committee will be preparing an assessment report and long-range facilities plan. "Phase One" of the plan involves a facility evaluation and school-by-school inspections to determine the condition of the school facilities; "Phase Two" will examine long range needs and identify projects for potential bond financing over the next 20 years.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**September 4**  
School Opens

**September 10**  
Regular School Board Meeting  
7:00 p.m.  
Central Services Building

**September 18**  
KONP PASD Discussion  
1:05 p.m.  
"Live" with Todd Ortloff  
Radio 1450

**September 24**  
Community Conversations  
6:00 p.m.  
Hamilton Elementary School  
1822 West Seventh

**September 24**  
Regular School Board Meeting  
7:00 p.m.  
Hamilton Elementary School

### LISTEN IN

Newsradio 1450 KONP broadcasts live interviews with Port Angeles District staff and students on the third Tuesdays of the month during the school year at 1:05 p.m. On September 18, host Todd Ortloff will interview district staff on transitions progress. Listen Live, or download the podcast from the KONP website: [www.konp.com](http://www.konp.com).

### COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Now's your chance to speak to board members about issues of concern: budget issues, the levy, transitions, busing, or whatever is on your mind. Join us on Monday, September 18 at 6:00 p.m. at Hamilton School, 1822 West Seventh for Community Conversations.

## DISTRICT UPDATES CHAMBER

School district officials, Superintendent Gary Cohn and School Board President Charlie McClain, and Port Angeles High School's Associated Student Body President Loni Grinnell updated the chamber membership on the district's successes and fall transition plans at its Monday, August 27 meeting. Fairview Elementary has closed and all middle school students will now be combined on one campus at Stevens Middle School. Roosevelt Middle School has now been transformed in to Roosevelt Elementary School, and all elementary schools will house first through sixth grades. Grinnell talked about student beautification efforts and other plans that student leadership has to improve the high school campus.

## ELIST

You can sign up to receive school district news and updates via ELIST email newsletter by visiting the district's website: [www.portangelesschools.org](http://www.portangelesschools.org) Look for "Mailing List" sign up instructions on the home page.

## EMAIL SYSTEM SWITCH

Beginning August 31, the school district will switch from First Class® to Microsoft Outlook® for its district email system. Staff email addresses will change. Generally, emails will consist of a first name initial, followed by the lastname@portangelesschools.org.

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# DISTRICT WASL SCORES RELEASED

"Given Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) testing covered four subjects at seven grade levels in 2007, we fared well in comparison to the state," Port Angeles Superintendent of Schools Gary Cohn said. "Frankly, after seven years of constant and remarkable improvement, our scores throughout the district were mixed this past year. Reading and math dipped a few percentage points; we remained stable in writing; and we increased in science. Statistically, the changes were not significant at many grade levels, but it's obvious that student performance did not rise as much as we are used to in this district."

"It's been an unusual year for the Port Angeles School District," Cohn explained. "I'm grateful we were able to hold our own despite the impact of closing schools, moving students and 108 teachers, and re-designing our schools at the middle and elementary levels. This has to have impacted our students' WASL testing. During this year, we have leaned heavily on our teachers and staff for their time and energy as we have made changes to our district configuration and curriculum. I have no doubt, though, that our teachers and students are fully capable of resuming the upward trend at all grades in all subjects over the next few years."

For WASL results, view the Washington State Report Card at the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's web site: <http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/>.



# LEGISLATURE MAKES CHANGES TO WASL GRAD REQUIREMENT



Recently, state lawmakers made changes to the WASL graduation requirement, including postponing the passing of math and science until 2013.

For the graduating classes of 2008-2012, students must pass the reading and writing WASL, a state-approved alternative to the WASL or an assessment for students in special education. Students can meet the state's math requirement by passing the math WASL, a state-approved alternative or an assessment for students in special education, OR, they can continue to earn math credits until they graduate. Students who pass the reading, writing and math assessments earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement or Certificate of Individual Achievement and a high school diploma. Students who fulfill the math requirement by earning math credits do not receive a certificate but do earn a diploma.

This delay for math and science gives the school system time to make any needed changes to the state's learning standards, provide better curriculum choices for schools, review the assessments and provide professional development for teachers. It is not a retreat from the skills and knowledge every student needs. [www.k12.wa.us/GraduationRequirements/default.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/GraduationRequirements/default.aspx)



## JEREMY SLACK, CLASS OF 2005

"Port Angeles is a one of a kind town," says Jeremy Slack, 2005 graduate from Port Angeles High School. "I love that I grew up in a smaller town because it really did affect who I am. The day I graduated was bittersweet....On one hand, I was ready for the next step, but on the other hand, I wanted to stay because of the good times I had."

"I was in the band program for all four years of high school," he says. "These were some of the best times of my life. I also played lacrosse for two years. I participated in VICA, now called Skills USA, during my senior year, and I helped the drama department with their tech needs. These activities kept me involved with the school, community and my friends."

Slack credits his teachers for inspiring him during high school. "Mr. Doug Gailey taught me to appreciate music. He taught me leadership, teamwork, and that if you are passionate about something, give yourself to it. Mrs. Kathy Greer taught me mathematics that I TRUTHFULLY use everyday. Mr. Mike Frick taught me a trade, my trade, and now machining is my way of life."

Slack graduated with an Associate of Applied Science Degree in CNC Machine Technology from Spokane Community College in June 2007. He plans to open his own machine shop in Spokane, and maybe return to work in Port Angeles one day.