

LONGVIEW SCHOOLS Review

Common Core in the Classroom

Students learn to solve real-world problems with higher level thinking



Monticello Middle School students arrive in Misty Velke's classroom to see a warm up exercise on the board: an image of lightening striking a lone tree. Students are asked to draw conclusions and develop a one sentence summary statement about what they see. After the exercise, Velke's students are ready to begin class thinking with a real world, problem-solving approach. This is just one example of how teachers are implementing the new state standards for teaching and learning.

The new Common Core State

Standards were released three years ago with expected implementation by 2014-15 school year. The standards were developed to unite the otherwise disparate academic standards that previously existed across states

and to ensure American students we ready to compete in a global economy. Longview teachers began making the shift immediately by unwrapping standards one at a time
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Superintendent Search Finalists Announced

The Longview School Board continues its process to select a new superintendent to assume leadership July 1, 2014. In January, a nationally recognized search firm was hired to begin recruiting applicants. The

firm collaborated with the board to develop a search process that involved staff, students, and the community to further define the skills, abilities, and attributes sought for a new leader.

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Budget Review

UNDERSTANDING THE ANNUAL PROCESS

PARAMETERS FOR THE BUDGET

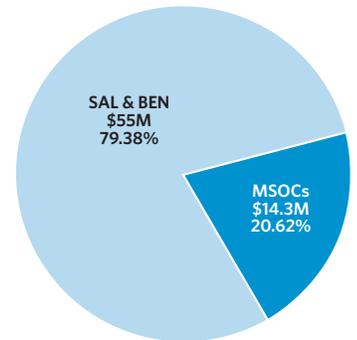
- 1. Improve student achievement:**
 - » Staff training
 - » Curriculum/assessment
 - » Learning environment/school safety
- 2. Continue emphasis on technology to prepare students for future careers and maintenance program.**
- 3. Continue a proactive maintenance program.**
- 4. Maintain a sound financial position.**

The District-wide budget development for the 2014-2015 school year is underway involving the Longview School Board and school district staff members. The budget reflects the labor, materials, and resources required to fulfill the goals and objectives outlined by the board. It serves as an operational plan, stated in financial terms, for carrying out the goals of the district.

In early spring, budget meetings were held at all schools and work sites and focused on the board-established parameters of improving student achievement, continuing technology emphasis, continuing proactive maintenance and maintaining a sound financial position. Employees were invited to make suggestions as to what they believe is important to consider for the budget planning process.

The district will continue to develop the spending plan guided by the budget parameters, the expected enrollment, state and local tax support, and the specific programs needed to meet student needs.

The district's goal is to be as transparent as possible by providing accessible, understandable, meaningful, and useful information to staff members and the community. Budget development will continue through the spring, with a draft document available this summer and budget adoption on August 25, 2014. More information can be found on the Longview Public Schools website.



- » **Salaries & benefits make up 80% of the budget.**
- » **20% remains for materials, supplies and operating costs.**

History Comes Alive During US History Project at R.A. Long



Teacher JD Ott and Librarian Joan Enders facilitate students as they do the work of historians and research original source documents.

Letters, photographs, telegraphs, diplomas, and draft notices tell the story of an individual with ties to R.A. Long. The person they identified perished in World War I during the

Meuse-Argonne campaign, and gave real meaning to the past for students.

Examining primary sources gives students a powerful sense of history and the complexity of the past. Helping students analyze primary sources can also guide them toward higher-order thinking and better critical thinking and analysis.

COMMON CORE IN THE CLASSROOM

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and developing new learning exercises and lesson plans to align with the standards.

With the new standards, students will begin to think like mathematicians rather than just doing math and will begin to think like writers rather than just building sentences. Students will be asked to use complex cognitive skills to analyze the very complex problems they face as citizens in the 21st century, ensuring their college and career readiness.

"The Common Core curriculum itself will not look radically different from the lessons



teachers have been presenting all along," explains Velke. "The deep change takes place in how teachers teach that curriculum, what they do in the classroom to foster the higher-

order cognitive skills that Common Core calls for. When students begin learning together and you watch their development unfold, it's an amazing thing to see," she added.

2014 Classified School Employee of the Year



Congratulations to Misty Woodrum, Secretary for Robert Gray Elementary School who has been selected as the Classified School Employee of the Year! "Whether she is problem-solving with a first grader or developing a sophisticated spreadsheet for tracking assessment data, Misty has just the right combination of relational and technical skills to excel in all that she does," said Robert Gray Principal Bruce Holway.

Superintendent Search Finalists Announced

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The consultants spent several weeks screening applicants that met the requirements set by the board.

A Superintendent Search Advisory Panel made up of 23 stakeholders was selected to observe the semi-finalist interviews April 21 and 23. Panelists were asked to provide feedback to the board on the perceived strengths of candidates to help the board determine who would be invited to return for final interviews.

The finalists chosen are: XXXX, XXX of XXXX; XXX, XXX of XXXX; XXX, XXX of XXXX.

"This is an important process for our district," says Jennifer Leach, Board President. "We have narrowed it down to three, very strong candidates and are looking forward to the final interviews and hearing the feedback from staff and community members."

Finalists will be in the district on May 5, 6, and 7, for district tours, question and answer sessions with staff, and final interviews with the board. All community members, parents, students, and staff are invited to meet the finalists and participate in a community forum on XXXX at XXXX from X-X. For more information and a detailed timeline, please visit www.longview.k12.wa.us.



2715 Lilac Street
Longview, WA 98632
360.575.7000
www.longview.k12.wa.us

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Message from the Superintendent

Dear Longview Patrons,

My tenure as Longview Public Schools Superintendent comes to a close in just a few short weeks. But the incredible memories made, relationships built, challenges experienced and opportunities seized are infinite. When I reflect on my life's work in education, indeed my Longview experience is among the very best. I've served alongside wonderful administrators, school staff, parents, and civic and business leaders. This is a supportive and vibrant community and together we've made great strides in helping all children become successful and productive citizens.

Our teachers are seeing academic and social growth in our youngest learners, thanks to implementation of full-day kindergarten this year. We've also made investments in professional development so teachers and support staff have the cutting edge strategies they need to improve outcomes for students. That focused training is coupled

with investments in new technology, textbooks and curriculum tools that are important for 21st Century learning.

"I want to thank you for the opportunity to have served as your Superintendent."

I'm especially proud of the educational resources we've brought to Longview, including a \$1.5 million School Improvement Grant for Monticello Middle School to provide opportunities for students who struggle academically. Weyerhaeuser Foundation funds provided seed money to implement STEM classes in biomedicine and engineering. Another grant supported the implementation of a Mandarin Chinese Language program at all school levels.

In addition to our strengths, an area of focus the past seven years has been

increasing our graduation rates. Through various efforts, including the creation of the On-Track Academy, serving students who are a risk of dropping out of school. Our on-time high school graduation rates have increased from __ to __ in six years!

On the finance side, the recession was very difficult as we experienced significant budget cuts across the district. Even in light of tough economic times, we were able to reduce the budget deficit and eventually brought the unreserved, undesignated ending fund balance to 5%.

I know you will do everything possible to support your new district leader. My successor will appreciate this dynamic team and their passion for education. I want to thank you for the opportunity to have served as your Superintendent. It truly has been a joy to lead our District and support our students who will someday be the leaders in this community.

Sincerely,
Suzanne Cusick, superintendent

The Longview School District is an Equal Opportunity district in education programs, activities, services, and employment. Longview School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, gender, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, age, families with children honorably discharged veteran or military status, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal. We provide equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. We also comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 402 of the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Act of 1974, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Older Worker Protection Act, and all other state, federal, and local equal opportunity laws. If you have a physical or mental disability that causes you to need assistance to access school facilities, programs, or services, please notify the school principal. The District endeavors to maintain an atmosphere free from discrimination and harassment. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against should contact the school principal or one of the following district designees—Rod McHattie, Director of Special Services, (360) 575-7008 (ADA/Students Title VII, 504 and IDEA); or Chris Fritsch, Assistant Superintendent, (360) 575-7003 (ADA/Employees, Affirmative Action, Title IX, Athletic Equity). For individuals with disabilities, alternate forms of communication with the district or accommodations at school functions may be arranged by calling 575-7009.