

Terrier Times

From the Superintendent's Desk

Shauna Bilyeu, Interim Executive Director, Superintendent

Dear Terrier Families and Friends,

Welcome to March! It hardly seems possible that we are almost two thirds of the way through the school year. There are lots of exciting things going on all over campus!

We continue to make progress and stay on track with the new **Divine Academic Building and Hunter Gym**. They are set to be completed in time for the new school year. School will start one week later than usual to give staff time to unpack: September 3rd is the first day of school. The full 2024-2025 school year calendar is posted on our website and on our Parent Square website. Pictures of the new buildings are in this newsletter—take a peek!

In addition to the New Divine and Hunter Gym, we are in the process of designing an updated Northrop Elementary School. As you may recall, Northrop is designated as a Historic Building and so will never be demolished, however the interior is quite outdated and inefficient. We are working with Bassetti Architects to develop a state-of-the-art Parent Welcome Center and Birth-to 5 service centers. Northrop will continue to house preschool, our PT/OT room, audiology and the WSDAA Museum. We received legislative funding for design work and will submit a request for construction work this fall. Parents will be given the opportunity to view the floor plan and hear from the design team at the March 26th PSO meeting. If approved, work will begin July 2025.

WSD's Website
www.wsd.wa.gov

Students and staff celebrated WSD's 138th birthday on February 1st by seeing the plans for the new playground. Construction for Despo's Playground (named in honor of one of the longest working teachers in WSD History—Despo Varkados) begins this March. A huge thank you to Deaf Education Advocates Foundation for fundraising and our PSO for input on the inclusive design. To say the students are excited is an understatement!

I am very proud of our Terriers—we have no less than three different teams heading on to various competitions throughout the state and region: Our Special Olympics basketball team is competing at the state level, our middle school math team is flying to Rochester, New York for Nationals, and our high school Academic Bowl team is going to Gallaudet for Nationals! None of this would have happened without the dedication and commitment of our staff and support from parents. You make our school special!

As we head into the final few months of school, there will be many special events—please make sure we have your most current contact information and if you haven't already, please make sure to bookmark the **WSD Parent Square website**. We are pushing out most school communications through that platform. Enjoy the spring!

Check Out
WSD's Facebook page



*Reminders
about
upcoming
date changes
below!*

*Early
Release
March 28
Last Day of
School
June 12*



Busy, Busy, Busy in our Elementary Program!

William (Bill) Newell, Elementary School Principal



We have been busy as **bees** in our Northrop building at the Washington School for the Deaf.

Our Enrollment

Currently, **we have 54 students enrolled** in our preschool through 6th grade. All classrooms are again open for new admissions. We accept students year-round to our program. If you know any families who want to know more about WSD and may be considering enrolling their deaf or hard-of-hearing student with us, please have them contact Dawn Smith at Dawn.Smith@cdhl.wa.gov. We will be happy to have families visit our campus to get to know what we offer.

Holiday Field Trip

Our 2nd - 6th grade elementary students participated in a field trip on Dec 13th to the Northwest Children's Theatre in Portland to view the performance of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer. This trip was made possible by a generous donation from our charitable foundation, Deaf Education Advocates Foundation (D.E.A.F.). We thank them for their generous support. Our students enjoyed this play with the lights, music, singing, dancing and the excellent interpreting provided by NWCT. Students from the Oregon School for the Deaf as well as a few other local private elementary schools also attendance this performance. WSD students represented our school well.

Family Activity Night

By the time you receive this issue of Terrier Times I hope you did indeed participate in our Family Activity night which was held on Feb. 22 with a Valentines Party theme. FAN is an opportunity to visit our campus and engage with our staff and with other families in fun and educational activities. It is a way to connect and get support from other families with deaf and hard-of-hearing children.

Hot Chocolate to Kick Off the Third Quarter of School

On January 29th our Parent Staff Organization (PSO) surprised our students with a morning Hot Chocolate Bar. They set up in our lobby and as students entered the building in the morning they were greeted with a piping hot cup of Hot Chocolate with all the toppings. I want to share with you a cute anecdote that was shared with by our PSO President, Ashley Wilkins. One student asked the PSO server, "Why are you giving us hot chocolate?" "Well, replied the PSO representative, "the PSO heard how hard many of you are working in class, we want you to keep up the hard work!" Then one student went off to search for his teacher to ask for MORE homework. 🍷🍷🍷

Attendance

WSD is engaged in a strategic objective to improve attendance. As you may know schools around the country are focused on improving attendance after the stay-at-home orders required by the COVID epidemic disrupted normal school attendance for many families and students. Attendance to school is critically important to your child's success. Please make every effort to have your child ready for school and the school bus so your child may attend full days. Of course, if your child is too sick to attend school you should keep them home to avoid spreading illnesses. Please plan medical appointments, vacations and other family business so that your child does not have to miss school.

Construction

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will be reading about the progress on the construction for our new Academic building. Our elementary students see the progress being made on this new building. Teachers are taking advantage of this construction project to engage in conversations with students about construction of the building, building materials and machinery they are seeing. One very cool experience students had was to take "an on-campus field trip" over to the construction site to sign one of the wooden beams that was being installed in the new school building. They got to see the construction up close, through the fence, saw the construction workers in their work clothes and gear and each student signed the beam. This beam will be visible from inside the school and the students who signed it may be able to view their names on the beam for years to come. Thank you for entrusting your child to our school and for being a part of our WSD community.

Secondary Department

Shannon Graham, Ph.D., Director of Instruction and Special Education

Time is flying, and we're already halfway through the school year! Reflecting on the first part of this academic journey, we are thrilled to share some achievements and updates from our secondary department.

The secondary department is filled with pride as we celebrate the outstanding achievements of our middle school Math and high school Academic Bowl teams. The Math team, consisting of Ruby, James, Etienne, and Kade, led by their coach, Aaron, competed in the Western Regional Middle School Math competition in Irvine, California. They secured a spot in the top 4 out of 12 participating schools, earning the opportunity to compete in the nationals at the Rochester Institute of Technology in March! Additionally, our Academic Bowl team (Celeste, Kasey, Evan, and Ashley) and their coaches, Craig and CJ, demonstrated their prowess at the western region competition hosted by New Mexico School for the Deaf. Ranking 3rd place among 16 teams, they will head to Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, in April for the national competition. We wish both teams the best of luck!

Highlighting our commitment to diverse learning experiences, our biology students recently visited the Water Resource Center in Vancouver. They engaged in hands-on activities during their four-hour excursion, explored their nearby riparian community, and learned about water treatment processes, gaining insights into environmental conservation. Also, our high school students and staff are gearing up for the annual Deaf2Deaf/Finance Park event in Auburn, WA, scheduled for March. This event provides a unique opportunity for students to connect with their deaf peers and acquire valuable information on life beyond high school.

In our ongoing efforts to improve communication, we've introduced a new ParentSquare platform, which includes announcements, events, and daily attendance reports. If you haven't received updates from this platform, please contact our secondary administrative assistant, Rima, at rima.nandakumar@cdhl.wa.gov. Also, stay connected with the exciting happenings at WSD by following us on Instagram. Our marketing class, led by one of our Bilingual Language Arts teachers, Sara, and her students, has been sharing fun videos showcasing our school community's vibrancy.

As always, we appreciate your continued support in fostering a nurturing learning environment for our students. Here's to a successful second half of the school year!



Despo's Playground (named in honor of one of the longest working teachers in WSD History—Despo Varkados) Construction begins this March.

Hello & Happy March!



For those of you who have not gotten the chance to meet me, my name is Brooke Mason.

I am one of the speech-language pathologists at WSD.

This is my third year here.

My role at WSD is to provide a variety of communication services for elementary students. I provide services in both ASL & spoken English based on what students need. It is always my goal to help students become more effective and confident communicators in order to be the BEST (bilingual empowered successful today & tomorrow) by working closely with our ASL specialist and classroom teachers. I strive to create a safe space for students to be themselves and feel validated by following their interests and communication preferences whether it be through ASL, spoken English, or augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). If you ever have questions about your child's communication skills feel free to contact me at brooke.mason@cdhy.wa.gov.

Sports

Ron Spratlen, Athletic Director/After School Program

Congratulations to our Student Athletes for receiving **Columbia Valley League All-League Awards!** We are proud of our girls and boys players for their commitment and dedication to the 2023/24 basketball season, Go Terriers!!

Boys Recipients

Julian Robinson - Senior - Second Team All-League

Kwabena White Star - Senior - All-League Honorable Mention

Nathan Yerkes - Freshman - All-League Honorable Mention

Girls

Jadalene Malone - Junior - Second Team All-League

Ashley Andersen - Senior - All-League Honorable Mention

Briyana Moore - Senior - All-League Honorable Mention

Irazema Paez - Junior - All-League Honorable Mention

Savannah Andersen - Sophomore - All-League Honorable Mention



Calendar

March 5-7 Biztown
 March 13 CDHY Family Night
 (Wenatchee)
 March 17 St Patrick's Day
 March 28 Early Release
 March 31 Easter
 April 1-5 Spring Break
 All Star Day - TBA
 April 18 Flying Hands
 May 3-5 Family Camp

The **WSD Parent-Staff Organization (PSO)** invites you to our **March 26th meeting!** During

this meeting, we will have a special presentation by our Superintendent/Interim Executive Director, Shauna Bilyeu, and members of Bassetti Architects. They will be asking for input on the upcoming renovations to the Northrop elementary building. We will also be discussing upcoming events, fundraising opportunities, and other exciting things happening at WSD and in the deaf community. This meeting will be hosted on Zoom with ASL/English interpreters present for non-native signers. Meeting starts at 5:15pm with the first 15 minutes open for socializing and introductions. Official meeting will run from 5:30pm to 7pm. We hope to see you there!

Our **HS Varsity Basketball** season has come to an end. Both our girls and boys basketball teams had another great season with both teams advancing to the playoffs. Our teams attended a 4 team tournament at Oklahoma School for the Deaf in December with both teams winning two games and losing one. The participating schools were Oklahoma, Tennessee, Arkansas and WSD Schools for the Deaf, it was the first time for our WSD basketball teams going to Oklahoma. The annual WSBC basketball tournament was held at ASDB this year. The boys team finished with a 4-1 record, getting second place in a double overtime championship game vs PSDS! Our girls team went 4-0 and won the championship 34-16 vs OSD!! I want to recognize and thank our graduating seniors for their dedication and commitment to the basketball teams; Briyana Moore, Ashley Andersen, Kwabena White Star, Evan Stromberg, Julian Robinson and Lorenzo Fortunato. **Thank you to everyone for supporting our Terrier teams, we appreciate you!** -Ron Spratlen, Athletic Director



Congratulations WSD!

WSD Special Olympics basketball team was victorious and won first place in our regional tournament—they go to State next month. Way to go!

WSD middle school Math team placed third in Regionals and are moving on to Nationals in Rochester, NY!

WSD Academic Bowl team finished third place for our region and are heading to Nationals at Gallaudet!



October Student of the Month

Persistent Perseverance
Graham Macklin
Momentous Motivation
Jazmina Zepeda
Super Supportive
Ruby Miles
Dalton "DJ" Wilkins
Stupendous Spirit
Trinity Cook
Positively Prepared
Trinity Cook
Honorable Mention
Violetta Blumenstein,
Angel "AJ" Castro
Kadyn Carver

November

Student of the Month

Persistent Perseverance
Kiana Kawai
Violetta Blumenstein
Angel Castro
Liam Gregory
Momentous Motivation
Valentin Medina
Etienne Williams
Ashley Andersen,
Lorenzo Fortunato,
Briyana Moore,
Connor Pancoast
Inspiring Improvement
Celeste Lane-Cummings
Hailey Devan
Wesley Hopkinson
Super Supportive
Michael McCullough
Astounding Attending
Trinity Cook
Kasey Lewandowski
Trey Hopkinson
Stupendous Spirit
Bricia Paez
Jasmyn Chavez
Hailey Devan
Positively Prepared
James Olson

December and January Student of the Month

Persistent Perseverance
Jorge Hernandez
Sun Flaget
Kade Mathisen
Momentous Motivation
Liam Gregory
Kaylee Gobroski
Inspiring Improvement
Ruby Miles
Dalton DJ Wilkins
Astounding Attending
Hector Lopez
Positively Prepared
Celeste Lane-Cummings
Honorable Mention
Kadyn Carver,
Kasey Lewandowski,
Angel "AJ" Castro,
Ariana Siquiedo



**Dr.
Rebecca
(Becky)
Larsen**



Audiology Services

Welcome Dr. Rebecca (Becky) Larsen. She will be operating the audiology clinic on campus full-time, so your child will have access to audiological services while enrolled at WSD. Becky is working to improve audiological services available on campus, but for now audiological evaluations, earmolds and limited care of personal hearing devices can be provided through WSD.

Also, Becky is working to update student files with current audiological information, so she may be reaching out to parents for a current release of information with their medical provider. Becky loves working with the students and staff at WSD, and her favorite part of the job here is interacting with the students and staff and using ASL to communicate with the WSD community. **Feel free to contact Becky through email: Rebecca.larsen@cdhy.wa.gov, office phone: 360-418-4350 or VP 360-334-5452 if you have questions related to audiological services.** In Becky's spare time, she enjoys spending time with her dogs and family and newly discovered hobbies - sourdough baking and a 1961 Nash Metropolitan, with her husband Christian.

WSD's new academic building - take a peek!

