

# Terrier Times

## From the Superintendent's Desk

Shauna Bilyeu, Interim Executive Director, Superintendent

Terrier families,

We are off and running for the school year 2024-2025! It is hard to believe that we are nearing the end of the first quarter of the school year already. Staff and students are settling in quite nicely in the new Divine Academic Building and Hunter Gym. The ribbon cutting ceremony in September was a huge success! There are of course, the usual hiccups, such as doors that seem to lock one day and then not the next, and the one pole for the swing on the new playground that everyone loves that just seems to want to sway, but we are working through them day by day. Even though the buildings are complete, the campus still has several projects underway, including the new soccer field on the corner of Evergreen and Grand. We are re-vamping the picnic shelter to include all-weather flooring, adjustable basketball hoops, and 4 square games. It should be open by the time you read this. We also are continuing to add cameras, lights, and perimeter fencing to ensure campus safety. All projects have a targeted completion date of March 2025.

We put in a legislative request for additional funding for remodeling the Northrop Primary School in September. We will find out if this is approved sometime between March and June of 2025. If approved, construction would begin in July 2025.

We are told that the Washington State economic forecast is not positive. We have been asked to consider ways to save money without impacting current operations. One cost-savings measure is to hold the current superintendent vacancy. Since my office is in Vancouver, and I can keep tabs on both outreach and campus operations, I feel that this is doable. My highest priority will always be to preserve direct student services. When we have more budget information, I will share that.

The school has been very busy with all things fall: pumpkin patch field trips, football, volleyball, Deaf Awareness Week, Unity Day, homecoming, spirit week, college recruiters and more. Enjoy the pictures throughout this newsletter! Please make sure you are signed up to receive our school communications through ParentSquare and that we have your most current contact information. Contact Rima Nandakumar at [rima.nandakumar@cdhy.wa.gov](mailto:rima.nandakumar@cdhy.wa.gov) to update your information if needed. We are looking forward to a great year! Please stay in touch!



New Divine Academic Building  
& Hunter Gym



*"Even though the buildings are complete, the campus still has several projects underway, including the new soccer field on the corner of Evergreen and Grand."*



Governor Inslee attending WSD's  
new Divine Academic Building  
& Hunter Gym  
Ribbon Cutting Ceremony!



## School Improvement Plan for 2024-25

Shannon Graham, Ph.D. Principal

We are excited to share our goals for improving student success at our school. These goals focus on key areas such as attendance, social-emotional learning, and building competence in ASL and writing. Here's a look at what we're working toward by June 2025:

### 1. Better Attendance for All Students

We know regular attendance is key to learning! We aim to have 90% of students attending school 90-100%, compared to 80% last year. To meet this goal, we're working on:

- Supporting students through a tiered system (MTSS) that gives extra help where needed.
- Increasing communication with parents using Parent Square (be sure to let us know if your contact information has changed so you're included in all parent communications).
- Professional development for staff to improve attendance strategies.

### 2. Supporting Social-Emotional Growth (SEL)

We're committed to helping all students grow emotionally and socially. Using our SEL assessment (eDECA/DESSA) for PK-12, we aim to improve results for students who need more support, mainly focusing on neurodiverse students. Our plan includes:

- Using assessment data to monitor our tier supports for all students.
- Implementing small group interventions for both elementary and secondary students.
- Developing a K-12 counseling plan to guide social-emotional learning.

### 3. Improving ASL and Writing Skills

Effective communication is central to student success, whether through American Sign Language (ASL) or writing. Our goal is for at least 60% of students to improve their ASL and writing by an average of 3 steps on a 3 x 6-point scale. We'll work toward this by:

- Collaborating on instructional plans that embed language development in all content areas.
- Regularly reviewing ASL and writing progress in staff meetings.
- Providing ongoing support to teachers as they focus on implementing the interactive writing approach, including the use of bilingual strategies, across all content areas after last year's school-wide training.

If you have any questions, please get in touch with us. With your support and involvement, we can help all students succeed!

## Pumpkin Patch field trip!







## Something Magical is in the Air!

Dana Miles, Curriculum & Assessment Coordinator

### September

#### Student of the Month!

#### Kindness Kudos

Hailey Devan

#### Momentous Motivation

LaJuan Malone

Dimas Zepeda

#### Super Supportive

Jazmina Zepeda

#### Positively Prepared

Jazmina Zepeda

Peyton TiaTia

#### Honorable Mention

Jorge Barojas-Hernandez

#### Terrier World Volunteers

Savannah Cruz

Jocelynn Briones

Nathan "NJ" Yerkes

Valentin Medina

Just before the summer began, something truly captivating caught my eye- an Instagram post from a teacher at Maryland School for the Deaf raving about the new program called **MagicSchool AI**. This innovative artificial intelligence program, used by over 3.5 million educators worldwide, is a game-changer. It's not just about creating lesson plans or developing assessments. It's about sparking the imagination of our students, like setting up an online activity where they can 'talk' to historical figures. It's a world of possibilities that's almost too good to be true!

Our staff has recently completed a series of professional development training on the new MagicSchool AI program, and the results are already inspiring. For instance, Raye, a K-2nd grade teacher, used MagicSchool AI to teach her students how to communicate in English while playing "Guess Who" with MagicSchool to figure out which spiders the AI chose using adjectives while asking questions. The interaction was educational and incredibly fun. It's just the beginning of what we can achieve with MagicSchool!

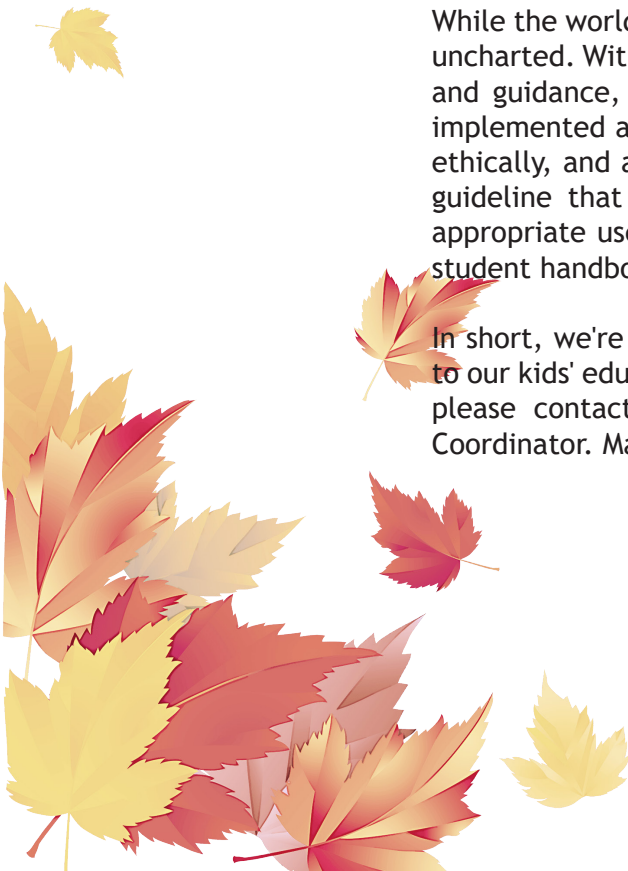
Here's another story that I must share. In her own words, our secondary speech-language pathologist (SLP), Jenna, said, "I LOVE LOVE LOVE Magic School. It's so helpful. I was struggling to come up with an icebreaker for two middle school gals. It gave me two suggestions. I was sure at least one would work. They both worked, and there was SO MUCH GIGGLING. It was fantastic. Just one of the many ways I have used it."

These experiences truly feel like magic unfolding in our school!

While the world of AI is undoubtedly exciting, we understand that it's also new and uncharted. With the Office of Superintendent of Instruction (OSPI) recommendation and guidance, all schools in Washington state, including our school, our school implemented a school-wide policy in AI. This policy ensures that AI is used safely, ethically, and authentically across all our classrooms. We also developed a visual guideline that our teachers use to communicate with our students about the appropriate use of AI. More information can be found on pages 27 and 28 of our student handbook.

In short, we're thrilled to find an AI platform that we can use to add some magic to our kids' education. If you're curious about MagicSchool and want to learn more, please contact me at [dana.miles@cdhl.wa.gov](mailto:dana.miles@cdhl.wa.gov), the Curriculum & Assessment Coordinator. May your day be magical!

2024 Homecoming  
Terrier Royalty  
King Orlando &  
Queen Irazema



## Sports

Ron Spratlen, Athletic Director/After School Program

Hello Terrier Families!

We are wrapping up our Fall sports season of Volleyball, Football, Cross Country and Soccer. Two of our Cross Country runners, Senior Deborah Dennis and Junior Hector Lopez, have both qualified for the District Meet with a chance to advance to the State Meet! Thank you for your continued support of our sports teams and student athletes, we appreciate you. Please check out our WSD website for more information and upcoming winter sports season.



## Student Life Department

Rick Whitney, Director of Residential Services

I find it incredible that it is almost November! This has already been an unique year with our new Devine school up and running. The campus looks beautiful and it so great to see all the new students as well as our returning students!

Parents/guardians of our cottage students please refer to your parent letters on the best ways to contact your child's Student Life Counselors (SLCs) and please direct any questions regarding transportation needs to our Administrative Assistant Residential/Transportation, Sharon Caton, for the Student Life Department.

If you have any questions about our sports program or after-school activities please do contact our Athletic Director/After School Coordinator, Ron Spratlen, and he will be happy to help.

All of the students in the cottages have the opportunity to attend social nights during the week at Clarke Hall in the basement. The social room has a variety of pool tables, air hockey and other games for our students to use. We also have a snack bar located there where they may purchase drinks and snacks if they wish. We also do show movies on occasion for all students with a loud sound system that is always popular.

All juniors and seniors in the cottages are part of the Independent Living Skills program. They attend classes on Monday evenings that cover a range of subjects to help them beyond school. They will also be planning to a dinner meal once a month for their cottage families. ILS students also get to enjoy new movie nights on Wednesdays at the Clarke Hall basement. Day students are welcome to join the program and should contact our ILS/WaCAD Program Supervisor, Toni Stromberg, about enrolling.

We have two Student Life Deans that oversee the SLCs outside of school hours. Carey Price works in the afternoons and evening times. Roxane Smith-Divine takes over at midnight and is on campus until the students are back into school. **All of our contacts is on our web site, [www.wsd.wa.gov](http://www.wsd.wa.gov), under the staff directory.**



Check out WSD's Facebook page!





## WSD Library

Ginger Speranza, Librarian

### Halloween Highlights: A Spooktacular Celebration!

We hope everyone had a fang-tastic Halloween! Library Libby brought the magic, and our staff donned their fanciest costumes to join in the fun. *Why did the ghost go to the library? Because he wanted to "boo-k" it up!*

## CDHY Learn Hero Awards!

Every year, Clark County recognizes individuals that go above and beyond for their school organizations in the role of staff and volunteer. This year, we are proud to announce the CDHY winners: admin assistant Taylor Mendoza and PSO president Ashley Wilkins! *We appreciate you two and are proud to have you as people that contribute to our community!*



Taylor Mendoza



Ashley Wilkins



## Deaf Awareness Week

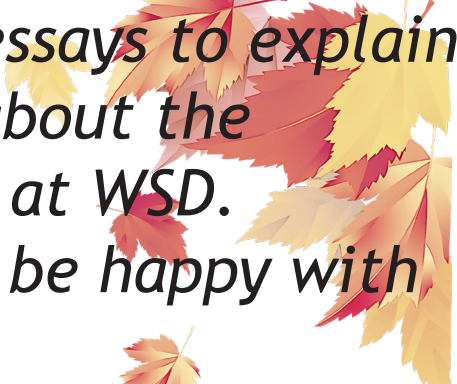
WSD had the honor to invite Magicians, Matthew and Liliana to WSD. They provided a magical performance for the community with amazing tricks. They did an amazing job keeping the audience in awe and entertained. The following day, WSD students had an opportunity to receive a workshop from them. They learned how to do tricks that they can share with their families and friends! It was a pleasure to have them as our special guests for our Deaf Awareness Week of 2024!

## Unity Day March

Unity Day is a day when we all wear Orange to promote Kindness, Inclusion and Acceptance which reduces Bullying. Kindness is deeper than being nice and requires authenticity. Kindness is the biggest antidote to bullying and aligns with this year's theme of Kindness.



*WSD students worked on narrative essays to explain their thoughts and feelings about the **New Cell Phone Policy** here at WSD. Overwhelmingly, students seem to be happy with this change.*



*Aidan*

*"I am very grateful to be a student at WSD and for their cell phone policy. Their decision was an awesome one, and I hope this decision will spread all around because it improves students' behavior, attitude, and overall learning environment."*

*AJ*

*"What caught my attention is that I noticed in group work they are working and communicating better. During lunch break, everybody is talking and laughing."*

*Kasey D*

*"I think WSD can only become better the more connected we all are to each other, so I believe this phone policy can benefit us greatly, and I encourage students to let this new policy help them and others."*

*Kasey L.*

*"This change has transformed our school environment in remarkable ways. Without cell phones during the school day, it has positively impacted deaf people's social skills and improved our learning, helping us chat more with each other in person."*

*LJ*

*"The cell phone ban at WSD has impacted my academic goals and mindset."*

*Savannah*

*"Being cell phone-free does impact our experience in school. My own experience with being phone-free at school is helpful because we hang out more without using a phone. We chat all the time and have more fun without phones. We focus better on school without a phone. We usually check our phones, sneak them into the bathroom, and show social media to friends, but now we are cell phone-free. It helps a lot for students, including me. Social media usually impacts our mental health and causes us to feel stressed."*

*Violetta*

*"On a personal level, the phone ban forced me to confront my own dependence on technology. I was surprised to find how often I reached for my pocket out of habit, even when I knew my phone wasn't there. This realization led me to examine my phone usage outside of school hours as well."*

*Bricia*

*"During lunch, I now see students engaging in conversation instead of staring at their screens, and now everyone is socializing and focused on school."*

*Celeste*

*"I think the more K-12 students are exposed to adults having technology on them 24/7, the more kids, especially teenagers, think they need to be on their phones all the time. Taking cell phones away from students was a good idea, as long as everyone understands that it is not a vital need for survival and grows to accept it."*