FOCUS ON ISSAQUAH SCHOOLS

What happens during the first few years of a child’s life can start them on a path toward success in school and beyond. That’s why the Issaquah School District is committed to providing and expanding excellent preschool and kindergarten programs for our youngest learners, regardless of their families’ race, background, or income level.

Our early childhood programs do more than just teach letters, numbers, and shapes. We focus on providing what children need at each stage of their development. Preschool and kindergarten is the time to develop motor skills and critical thinking, and to learn to collaborate with others.

Our teachers work together to ensure that kids are ready at the end of the school year to make a smooth transition from preschool to kindergarten and to each grade that follows.

The Issaquah School District provides several preschool programs to meet families’ needs:

• The Preschool Academy is a tuition-based preschool at two sites - Skyline High School and the District’s new Early Learning Center. Tuition is competitively priced with private preschools in the region.

The Issaquah School District’s Capital Projects team has been busy since the April 2016 school bond election! In the past 42 months, the ISD has completed major rebuilds of Pine Lake Middle School and Clark Elementary School, as well as expansions at Cougar Ridge, Discovery, Endeavour, and Sunset Elementary schools.

The District also undertook and completed an extensive process to search for and purchase school property for two new elementary schools, a new middle school, and a high school. Upcoming construction projects include Elementary #16 near Klahanie in Sammamish. The District, working with its partners at the City of Sammamish, recently made a decision to delay the construction of the school for 9-12 months to allow plenty of time for traffic mitigation to be thoughtfully planned out. Stay tuned for updates.

It’s full steam ahead with the construction of the ISD’s sixth middle school, which will be located near the entrance to the Talus community in central Issaquah. The project is scheduled to be complete in September 2021. The 130,000 square foot facility will house 900 students and is designed to help alleviate overcrowding at Maywood Middle School and Issaquah Middle School.

Simultaneously, Maple Hills Elementary and Beaver Lake Middle School are the next school projects, with Beaver Lake estimated to be completed by September of 2020, and Maple Hills by summer of 2021.

Thank you to the citizens of our wonderful school district for taking pride in your community schools! We appreciate your support.

Stay up to date with all the latest information on our Construction Projects website by scanning the QR code.

DISCOVERY ELEMENTARY REMODEL RIBBON CUTTING

ISD School Board President, Harlan Gullinger, accompanied by his daughter, cut the ribbon at a special ceremony to celebrate the remodel of Discovery Elementary. Thanks to community support for the 2016 school bond that funded the project, Discovery now has six new classrooms, new special education classrooms, and a much expanded cafeteria and play area, as well as upgraded classroom technology and safety features.

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS TAILORED TO HELP STUDENTS START STRONG

The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) is a state-funded preschool program for children from families with low income, or who face other challenges. In addition to the preschool curriculum, kids in ECEAP receive nutritious meals at school.

We also believe in partnering with community preschools. We offer free training to staff from private preschools to promote high-quality teaching and to help them prepare their students to make a smooth transition into kindergarten.

“Our teachers work together to ensure that kids are ready at the end of the school year to make a smooth transition from preschool to kindergarten and to each grade that follows.”

Excellent early education is one of the most important gifts we can give children, and it will benefit them for the rest of their lives. With the support of families and our community, we will continue to improve and expand our early learning opportunities, so that all of our kids can start strong and go far.
The funding for these programs is felt district wide, in every school and by every student. Here are a few of the programs that fall under our umbrella of support:

- Afterschool Homework Help
- Robotic Clubs & STEM Support
- Food & Nutrition Aid
- Academic Enrichment
- Cultural Bridges Family Resource
- Artistic Support
- Basic Needs
- Teacher Grants

At the Issaquah Schools Foundation, we know that student success goes beyond academics. It also involves the emotional and social aspect of schooling. That’s why the Foundation funds programs that address the unique needs of students from Kindergarten through 12th grade — we support and fund programs that aren’t paid for by state or local taxes.

Students throughout the district depend on us. The need is even greater this year as demand is rising for programs that help struggling students, those who excel, and those in between. You can make a difference, help us to cover beyond the basics allowing students to grow and thrive!

Please join with our community in supporting students during the Foundation’s 2019-2020 Step Up for Kids Fall fundraising campaign. Step Up for Kids provides critical resources needed in our community for years to come.

Together we can assure that your child and every child succeeds and thrives. Thank you.

Cornell Atwater
Executive Director

Voice for 15 years, adult volunteers have connected one-on-one with students as mentors through the VOICE program. During the 2018-19 school year, more than 300 mentors supported 466 students, helping with academic work, emotional and social skills, and providing a caring adult presence.

VOICE began as a program in the Issaquah Schools District, but this year it became the Issaquah Community VOICE. We have 200 mentors who spend a week to spare during the coming school year? To become a VOICE mentor to find out what kind of difference you could make in the life of a child. Contact voice@issaquah.wednet.edu or 425-837-7216 with questions.

PCMS Students Give their School a Parting Gift
Anna Jensen and Aria Shaffer gave a parting gift to Pacific Cascade Middle School as they moved on to high school. They created this painting of education activist and Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai and presented it to PCMS Principal Jeff Mc Dowan at their eighth grade promotion event in June. Malala is known globally for her work in support of human rights, especially girls’ right to education. The painting will hang in the PCMS commons area, near a similar painting of Martin Luther King Jr.

2019 Kindergarten Bus Ride-Along
The first stop onto a school bus can feel like a giant leap when you’re five years old and it’s your first day of kindergarten. That’s why we have our annual Kindergarten Ride-Along, where new kindergartners can get familiar with the bus alongside their parents so they’ll be ready and excited to climb aboard when school starts. More than 100 students participated each day in the event this year, which took place August 6-8.

MaywoodRubik’s Cube Team Ranked 1st in the Nation for Grades 6-8

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Showcase
Career and Technical Education students from across the District were honored for their hard work at the annual CTE Showcase. Teachers selected 45 outstanding CTE students to showcase their work in a range of fields, including culinary arts, computer science, marketing, American Sign Language, criminology, graphic design, and many more.

ISS Choirs at Carnegie Hall
The choirs from Liberty High School performed at one of the world’s best-known and most-respected theaters: Carnegie Hall. The students were invited to perform by Geoffrey Boers, a nationally recognized conductor.

Levies are the only locally approved ballot measures that directly pay for classroom and educational needs in our schools that the state can’t meet.

This February 11, 2020, voters will have a chance to continue supporting the great programs and services funded by the previous levy, which is set to expire in 2020.

In 2018, Issaquah School District voters approved a two-year Educational Programs and Operations (EP&O) Levy. This levy funded new programs, including the District’s first dual language program and an expanded high school schedule! It also provided continued support for career and technical education, mental health counselors, professional development for teachers, safety, and security staff. With voter approval of the 2020 EP&O Levy, voters can ensure these programs continue benefitting our students for another two years.

The District is asking voters to authorize funding in the amount of $49.85 Million in 2021 and $54 Million in 2022. This is about 6.7 Million less than the District is legally authorized to collect. This amount of funding will allow the District to maintain its current programs while remaining fiscally responsible and sensitive to the overall tax rate. Because the District is retiring previous bond debt and has conservatively planned for replacement measures, the total local school tax rate is estimated go down from $3.46 to $3.25 per $1,000 of assessed property value in the first year and $3.30 in the second.

EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS: HOW WE PLAN AND PREPARE IN THE ISD

With the earthquakes we have recently experienced in the Pacific Northwest, you may be wondering how the ISD prepares and plans for seismic events. Safety is always our top priority and we approach emergency preparedness in a comprehensive way.

It starts with our buildings. The Issaquah School District meets or exceeds the current seismic design and building standards for the geographic conditions of the Pacific Northwest as required by code at the time of construction. We also equip our buildings with emergency supplies including water, food, and communication radios.

Next, we plan our emergency response at the district level and practice it with tabletop drills and walk-throughs. Our District’s Emergency Advisory Committee includes local fire and police officials who help us plan and coordinate for emergency situations.

At the school level, all students and staff are trained and perform practice drills for all types of emergencies, including fires, school lockdowns, and earthquakes. This year, all ISD schools will be participating in Washington State’s “Great Shake Out” drill in October and will practice “drop, cover, and hold on.”

It is also important for families to prepare at home. We encourage everybody to visit shakeout.org/washington for information on how to put together your own emergency supply kit and create a household emergency plan.

We know that talking about earthquakes can be scary, especially for children. Below are a few tips for talking to kids about earthquakes.

- Keep your tone calm, matter-of-fact and matter what.
- Letting kids add something to your household emergency plan.
- Keep your tone calm, matter-of-fact and look for teachable moments. If you’re stockpiling on batteries for example, you can say something like, “Remember that time when the lights went out?”
- If that ever happens again, these batteries will keep our flashlights working and we won’t be in the dark.
- Letting kids add something to your emergency kit can help them feel more in control – even if it’s as simple as choosing the kind of snacks you keep.