



Issaquah School District community newsletter | November 2010 | Vol. 16 No. 1 | Learning locally, competing globally | www.issaquah.wednet.edu



Focus on the Annual Community Report

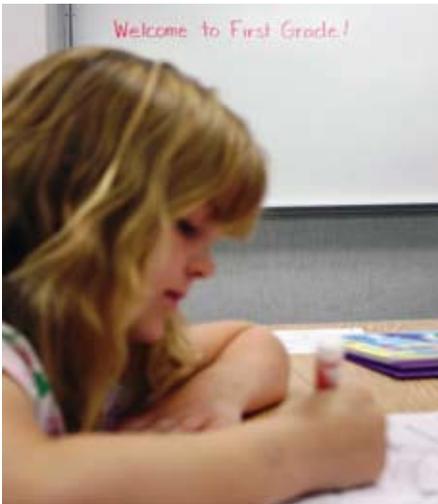
Take a peek inside the Issaquah District—without leaving home!

By clicking “Learn more about us” at www.issaquah.wednet.edu, you will access the *Annual Community Report*, which provides a high-level overview of the state of academics, finances, and programs and services. Here are a few of the facts and figures you can access in the *Community Report*:

Basics

- Mission: All students will be prepared for and eager to accept the academic, occupational, personal, and practical challenges of life in a dynamic global environment.
- Enrollment: 17,304 headcount
- Percent free or reduced lunch: 9
- Number of schools: 24, plus an educational program at Echo Glen Children’s Center
- Boundary area: 110 square miles
- Number of certificated staff (teachers): 994 headcount
- Teachers with at least a master’s degree: 70%
- Number of total staff: 1,898 headcount

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First-week-of-school pictures (top to bottom): Tiger Mountain Community High School, Liberty High, Discovery Elementary. Next page (top to bottom): Discovery Elementary, Apollo Elementary.



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Academics

- On-time graduation rate: 96%
- Stanford achievement test—rank of average ninth-grade math scores: 89th percentile
- Stanford achievement test—rank of average ninth-grade reading scores: 82nd percentile
- Meeting standard on High School Proficiency Exam:
 - Reading 92% (79%—state)
 - Math 71% (42%—state)
 - Writing 95% (86%—state)
 - Science 70% (45%—state)
- Mean composite SAT score: 1712 (1564—state; 1509—nation)
- Mean composite ACT score: 25.4 (23—state; 21.1—national)
- Average district graduate's GPA at University of Washington: 3.24 (3.17—all student average)
- Number of Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate classes offered: 102

Programs and Services

- Special-education student demographic: 9%
- Transitional-bilingual (ELL) student demographic: 4%
- Services for struggling students: summer school, mentoring, extra staff support, remedial reading, student learning plans, before- and after-school tutoring, night academy, transition program, and more.
- Services for excelling students: MERLIN, SAGE, exceptional placement, Honor Society, Advance Placement, college in the classroom, International Baccalaureate, and more.

Finances

- Projected 2010-2011 operations revenue: \$153,948,830
 - 62% from the state
 - 21% from local levy
 - 12% from tuition and fees
 - 5% from the federal government
- Projected 2010-2011 operations expenditures: \$157,046,461
 - 61% for the classroom
 - 13% for student support
 - 11% for special education
 - 7% for other grants/programs
 - 4% for transportation
 - 4% for food service and Echo Glen (fully funded by state)
- Rank of spending on administration among King County school districts: Lowest
- State-level revenue reductions in past two years: \$10.4 million
- Cost to run the district per school day: \$872,480
- Cost to run the district per minute during the school year: \$1,818

Want more? Click on “Learn more about us” on the District’s homepage, www.issaquah.wednet.edu. For individual school reports including progress toward annual goals and qualifications of staff, select “Our Schools” from the homepage, choose your school, and access the report card from the right-hand column.

Putting research into practice

Powerful teaching initiative kicks off throughout the District

For the past six decades, schools have progressively focused on the *who* and *what* of public education as they affirmed equal access for all children; moved from accountability for student attendance to demonstrable learning; and centralized curriculum around a common set of learning standards.

Now it's time for the next step: the *how*. When research continually shows that an effective teacher is the most important school factor in a child's learning, educators must come together to create a shared set of powerful instructional practices.

In Issaquah, this effort is being spearheaded by the administrative leadership team in partnership with the Baker Evaluation Research Consulting (BERC) Group. Based on over 15,000 classroom observations across the country spanning more than a decade, BERC leaders have identified the basic elements of instructional practices that lead to deep student learning. Their specific protocol helps teachers observe, reflect on, and incorporate these practices into their own classrooms.

"Teachers are master craftspeople," said Superintendent Steve Rasmussen. "When they are at their best, watching them is like watching Chihuly or Yo-Yo Ma in action. So I need to create the opportunity for our teachers to see and learn from each other, to validate their skills and grow in research-based best practices."

Last year, principals and teacher leaders at each school trained in the protocol. The initiative kicked off for every teacher during a professional development workshop this August. In the coming months, BERC leaders will guide learning walks, during which teachers visit classrooms to observe other practitioners in order to dialogue and reflect on their own instructional methods.

Eventually, the process should move teachers from personal reflection to membership in a professional learning community to leadership in further development of their own common language and concepts around powerful instruction.



Issaquah Education Association President Phyllis Runyon (left) and a BERC trainer observe an elementary classroom.

As evidence of alignment around best teaching practices, fifth-grade teacher Jessica Daley said she is excited to see the close similarities between the BERC process and National Board Certification, which she earned in 2004.

"Teachers use the [BERC-developed] protocol to observe colleagues, document what components they are seeing in classrooms, and reflect on ways these components are implemented in their own classrooms," Daley said. "The National Board process builds on this analysis and reflection. National Board candidates must demonstrate specific standards of effective teaching in their own classroom. Both processes equip teachers to look for and demonstrate standards while reflecting on ways they can make those standards more explicit in their own classroom in order to increase learning for all students."

For more information about the BERC Group and protocol, visit:

www.powerfulteachingandlearning.com.



Liberty IDSC reps Jordan Thompson and Lauren Bay update the school board.

Intra-District Student Council: Four high schools, one student voice

Many things can go awry when planning school spirit events: a terrible DJ, a homecoming-royalty election turned into a joke, a chaotic assembly activity...

Luckily, the Intra-District Student Council (IDSC) brings together leaders from each high school—Issaquah, Liberty, Skyline, and Tiger Mountain—to trade tips and tricks to be successful. Over snacks each month, the students talk about important events and issues at their schools and get to know each other.

This is also a forum to promote cross-school unity and allow students and administrators to share perspectives. For instance, IDSC students last year requested a presentation from the director of food services to better understand what goes into the lunch program, and administrators sought feedback from the students when adopting new high-school curriculum.

Perhaps most importantly, IDSC representatives provide the student voice at each school board meeting. Sitting alongside board members, they have standing agenda time for updates and are invited to weigh in at any point with questions and input.

"I think for the board, it is helpful to get a view of what high school is actually like for students," said Joshua Borin, Issaquah High senior and IDSC rep. "Students should have representation at the board level because the board exists ... to educate the students. The board may not always know how things are actually working for the students or if the students actually like the decisions they make."

Annual legal notification: Nondiscrimination

The Issaquah School District provides equal opportunity in its programs, activities, and employment and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin/language, creed/religion, sex, sexual orientation-including gender expression or identity, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability, age, marital status, honorably discharged veteran or military status and HIV/Hepatitis C status. The employees below have been designated to handle questions and complaints of any such alleged discrimination:

Parent/Volunteer and Employee/Applicant-Related Issues:

Kathy Miyauchi
Executive Director of Personnel Services
565 NW Holly Street
Issaquah, WA 98027
425-837-7060
miyauchik@issaquah.wednet.edu

Student-Related Issues:

Dennis Wright
Director of Career and Counseling Services
565 NW Holly Street
Issaquah, WA 98027
425-837-7046
wrightd2@issaquah.wednet.edu

Biz-savvy IHS grad

Marc Barros (IHS '99)
has a worldwide winner
with his new hands-free,
action camera



While Marc Barros' revolutionary video camera is likely to be catching action on the Swiss Alps these days, the foundations of his entrepreneurial success trace back to the local Issaquah Alps. As a proud graduate of Issaquah High School in 1999, he said his strong academic and extra-curricular career here set him up to eventually innovate and lead one of the state's fastest growing companies.

"I always had great teachers along the way in Issaquah schools," said Barros, including his years spent at Sunny Hills Elementary and Pine Lake Middle School. "To have such great teachers to learn from really helps when you get to college where classes get harder. And I had great friends. I think the most important thing is that by the time I graduated, I felt prepared for a lot of the basics in life."

Barros has defied a slow economy as co-founder and CEO of Seattle's Contour. After just five years, the company's ContourHD hands-free video camera has gone global with

its innovative social software that is changing the way skiers, bikers, and other outdoor fanatics (like himself) record and share their experiences with friends and family.

Contour got its start when Barros and a group of fellow business students entered an annual University of Washington entrepreneurship competition with their idea for a helmet-mounted, hands-free camera. Their entry was good enough to take third place—and \$20,000 in prize money, which they used to start their company.

"Five years down the road, we've got 40-plus employees," Barros said. "We're selling our ContourHD hands-free cameras in hundreds of outdoor-sports retailers globally. We expect to sell about 50,000 units this year. The business is tripling annually."

Barros explained that the original vision for the camera was to create a rear-view device for motorcycle safety.

"But as avid skiers, we quickly realized people wanted to record their adventures—and share them with friends. What was really needed was a simple, high-quality tool to record and post video online. That's the vision today: A great camera and integrated software."

Many Issaquah alumni are making their mark

Issaquah School District graduates are changing their community, nation, and world. Not only are they entrepreneurs like Barros, they are reforming education in Africa, advancing in vitro fertilization methods, winning Pulitzer prizes, defending their country, and much, much more. To collect and share these remarkable feats, the District has created an interactive Alumni Feats, Stories, and Updates forum at <http://connect.issaquah.wednet.edu> (search for "alumni"). Please visit often to post and read about great grads.

Points of Pride A few of the reasons you have to be proud of your schools

Smiles across the world



Students at Echo Glen Children's Center recently sent hand-decorated yellow T-shirts and messages of friendship to children in Romania living in poverty. Representatives from International Smile Power delivered the coveted gifts while providing much-needed dental care for the Romanian families.

Tom Haff is Physics Teacher of the Year

In October, the state chapter of the American Association of Physics Teachers honored Issaquah High's Tom Haff as its first-ever Washington Teacher of the Year. Furthermore, the association named the

award after him; henceforth, top physics teachers will win the Tom Haff Award! Mr. Haff was recognized not only for his classroom instruction but also for his leadership, support, and guidance of his colleagues across the state and nation.

Sunny Hills bonds future Eagles, Spartans

Some Sunny Hills Elementary students are future Issaquah High Eagles and some are future Skyline Spartans. Rather than viewing this as a dividing point, however, the school is embracing unification. In September, Skyline football players Jake Monroe and Mason Gregory spoke to students about the benefits of having bonds at neighboring high schools. As Sunny Hills alumni themselves, the football players said it doesn't matter that some of their elementary buddies now wear different colors and cheer for different teams: it's the friendships that count.

Complete stories at: www.issaquah.wednet.edu/news/