



FERNDALE SCHOOLS

Ferndale, Lummi Island, Custer, Lummi Nation and North Bellingham

Winter 2017-2018



Season's Greetings!

Building on Traditions of Pride

A message from Superintendent Dr. Linda Quinn

Dear Community,

During this season for giving thanks, I want to thank you on behalf of the Ferndale School District for all the ways you support our students and staff. I also want to invite you to join us in celebrating some of their remarkable accomplishments.

Examples of FERNDALE EXCELLENCE have been plentiful this fall. For instance:

- The state has officially verified our 2017 graduation rate at 80.4%, which means we have achieved the highest level in recorded FSD history and met one of our biggest goals!
- Two of our Ferndale schools—Central and Windward—have been named 2017 Schools of Distinction (two of only eleven among all 35 school districts in the northwest corner of the state).
- Our school board has been named by the Washington State School Board Association as a 2017 Board of Distinction.
- The Ferndale High School Golden Eagle football team has won the league championship with an undefeated record.
- The Ferndale High Golden Eagle Band and Color Guard placed second at the state competition.
- The Golden Eagle volleyball team has also won the league championship this year.
- FHS swimmer, Kyrie Fairbairn, earned a berth in state competition in the 200 freestyle.
- Ferndale High FFA students earned the honor of participating in

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Left: Ferndale High School Veterinary Science Team received a GOLD ranking and placed 9th overall in the nation at FFA Nationals—(l to r) Lindsey Quackenbush, Jamie Mason, Shelby Robinson and Kailey Robertson; Inset: Ferndale High FFA Member Addi Ericksen placed BRONZE at National FFA in Creed Speaking



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Ensuring success for all students

Six global overarching goals to guide improvement efforts



Our District Improvement Plan consists of six global, overarching goals. Its purpose is to provide guidance to the improvement plans and efforts in each of our schools and programs. The order in which the six goals is arranged is not intended to indicate priority. Rather, the first three goals reflect our ABCs of school improvement (Atten-

dance, Behavior, and Coursework/Academic Achievement); the fourth goal (Reading) is a critical foundation for the third goal (Academic Achievement); and the fifth and sixth goals (Early Learning and Graduation) represent the alpha and omega of our work, the beginning and the ultimate result.

Our Goals

Goal 1—Attendance: a. At every grade level in every school, **Average Daily Attendance** will be 95% or higher every month of the 2017-2018 school year. b. Across the district, the percentage of **Chronically Absent** students (defined by the state as missing 10% or more of class time) will be 15% or less during the 2017-2018 school year.

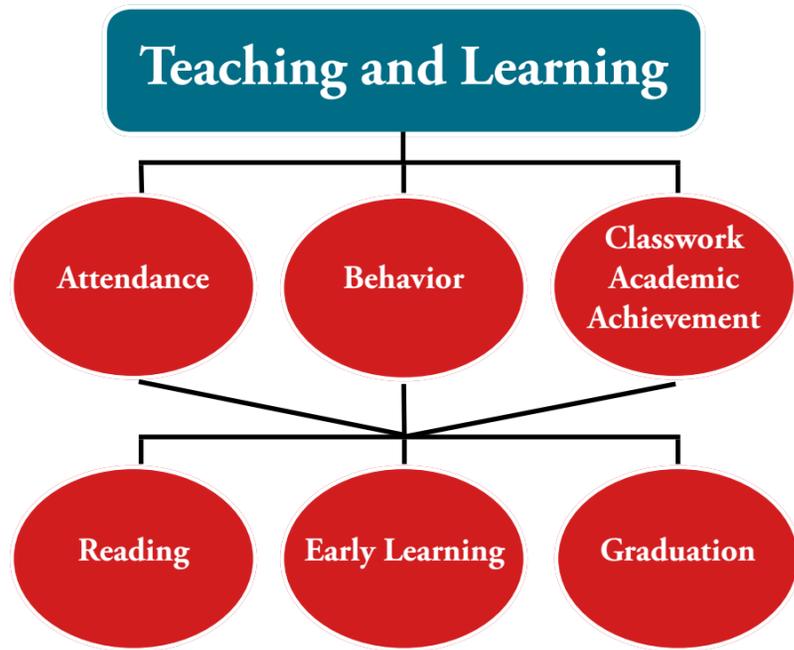
Goal 2—Behavior: a. In every school, the total number of students assigned **Exclusionary Discipline** will decrease by 50% or more when compared to the number who were excluded during the 2016-2017 school year. b. Across the district, the **Exclusionary Discipline Gap** (i.e. the disparity in the number of exclusions applied to various subgroups of students) will shrink by 50% or more of the gap that occurred during the 2016-2017 school year.

Goal 3—Classwork/Academic Achievement: In every school, by the end of the 2017-2018 school year, 70% or more of all students will achieve **Academic Proficiency** for his or her grade level as defined by a variety of pre-determined measures (state assessments, local assessments, standards-based assessments, individual classroom assessments, and course grades).

Goal 4—Reading: The number of elementary students **reading at or above grade level** will increase by at least 10% during the 2017-2018 school year. Conversely, the number of elementary students requiring **Remedial Reading Intervention** will decrease by at least 10% during the 2017-2018 school year.

Goal 5—Early Learning: The percentage of incoming kindergarten students meeting all **six readiness Indicators** on the state's early learning assessment will increase to at least 36% by fall of 2018.

Goal 6—Graduation: The percentage of students in the Class of 2018 who achieve **on-time graduation will be at least 80%**, as calculated by the state's four-year high school graduation rate formula.



For a copy of our complete improvement plan, visit our website at ferndalesd.org or call our Teaching & Learning Office at 360.383.9210

Attendance Matters!

Much of the success we see in high school begins in preschool and early elementary years. Recent research suggests that the more students are absent in preschool and kindergarten, the more they struggle with reading at the second grade. Chronically absent students in the eighth grade are 70% more likely to be off track as ninth grade high school students. We know students who miss more school than their peers, no matter what the reason, generally perform at lower levels on assessments and other school measures, a result that holds true at every age and in every demographic group. Disparities in school attendance rates, starting as early as preschool and kindergarten, can contribute to achievement gaps and high school dropout rates.

One of our ABCs—ATTENDANCE—is a very specific goal that addresses both chronic absenteeism and our measure of average daily attendance.

Attendance Goal 1: At every grade level in every school, Average Daily Attendance will be 95% or higher every month of the 2017-2018 school year.

Attendance Goal 2: Across the district, the percentage of Chronically Absent students (defined by the state as missing 10% or more of class time) will be 15% or less during the 2017-2018 school year.

As a district, we have been working on improving attendance for



well over a year, not only is it part of our district improvement plan, but also part of each of our schools' improvement plans. School staffs have developed strategies unique to their buildings to encourage more students to attend more regularly.

The good news is that we are making a difference. We began the 2016-2017 school year with a district chronic absenteeism rate of 22.3%. After a year of work, we enter the 2017-2018 school year reporting a 19.0% chronic absenteeism rate. All of our teams track their monthly average daily attendance and even look at factors like which day of the week is the best attended. Strategies are then developed to target specific attendance challenges.

Thank you to our families and community members for their focus on making sure students attend school each and every day.

For specific attendance data, contact the school your child attends or the district's Teaching & Learning Department at 360.383.9210.

Above: Horizon Middle School Tree of Presence—Like a tree that is nourished by every leaf, students are needed to nourish our school's body. Every day we grow. Everyday matters. Be here. Be present. Bring your presence in mind and body. Attendance Matters. YOU MATTER!

District Goal 1

continued from page one—Superintendent's Message

- national competition in Indianapolis, where our veterinary science team placed ninth in the nation and Addi Ericksen won a bronze medal in Creed Speaking.
- SOAR teacher, Shannon Iwasaki, has been recognized as a 2017 Education Hero by Futures Northwest for her efforts toward "empowering college dreams."
- Math teacher, Beth Andres, is one of four teachers from Washington who has been selected as state-level finalists for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST).
- Lummi language teacher, Matt Warbus (Smak i' ya'), along with some of his students, are featured in a permanent exhibit at the Whatcom Museum.
- Our community supported Jog-a-thon fundraisers at four elementary schools this fall (Cascadia, Central, Custer, and Eagleridge) with donations totaling more than \$100,000. (Skyline will hold its Jog-a-thon in the spring.)
- Over 40 volunteers turned out for the first meeting of the Bond Task

Force on October 24, ready and willing to assist the District in developing a bond package that reflects our community's values.

And the list could go on. Thanks in advance for taking time to look through the pages of this newsletter. We hope it will give you a further glimpse into the kinds of things your support makes possible.

Gratefully,
Linda Quinn
Superintendent of Schools



Superintendent Linda Quinn

Below: Right, Lummi Language Teacher, Smak i' ya' (Matt Warbus), left, representatives of Whatcom Museum, and members of the Ferndale High School Lummi Language Class who provided voice recordings for the Whatcom Museum's Project "People of the Sea and Cedar: A Journey through the Tribal Cultures and History of the Northwest Coast"



Supports District Goal 3



Supports District Goal 3

Windward and Central are Schools of Distinction

Central Elementary School and Windward High School are celebrating a School of Distinction (SOD) Award received on November 6. Central was recognized for sustained improvement in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math over a five-year period. Windward was recognized for sustained improvement in graduation rate over a five-year period. They are two of 98 schools in the state so honored by the Center for Educational Effectiveness (CEE) and their partner organizations for continuous and substantive improvement.

There are many reasons for the success of students. One of the most important factors is staff members who check in regularly to find out what each student is learning so that no one falls through the cracks. In successful schools, kids are accountable for learning and all of them know their principals, teachers and support staff care enough to make sure that they are doing the learning work. No student is invisible.

Central's improvement amounted to 10.6% per year. This is the second time that Central has received a Schools of Distinction Award. They won in 2015. Windward has improved in ELA and Math by 8.4% per year.

Central School serves approximately 340 students in grades K-5. Windward High, a small choice high school, serves approximately 75 students in grades 9-12. Celebrations for each school will be held at a later date.

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Supports District Goals 3 & 6

Our Hero—Teacher Shannon Iwasaki

SOAR teacher, Shannon Iwasaki, has been recognized as a 2017 Education Hero by Futures Northwest. Shannon was recognized for her efforts toward meeting the mission of Futures Northwest, which is “empowering college dreams.”

As teacher for the Golden Eagle Academy: SOAR Program, Shannon helps students identify barriers to their success, and find solutions so that students can obtain their Ferndale High School diploma. The flexibility of the program allows the district to accommodate students who have outside commitments such as employment, medical needs, family responsibilities and more. Other benefits of the program include:

- one-on-one instruction with customized academic plans
- a flexible schedule to meet student's needs
- access to high school academics and support systems
- participation in work-study programs or project-based learning
- online education through Apex Learning
- study lab and tutorial support
- post-secondary planning

Shannon, a Bellingham native, knew she wanted to be a teacher from a young age. She was hired by the district in 2013. She received her Bachelor's in English from Western Washington University, a Secondary Teaching Certificate from Central Washington University, and her Master's in Higher Education from Walden University. Aside from being passionate, Shannon is described as empathetic, loyal and honest. Shannon's colleague, Dianne Laundry, states, “her [teaching] style is creative, sprinkled with some fun and laughter.”

Congratulations, Shannon! Thank you for all that you do for our students to ensure they are successful!



Above: SOAR Teacher, Shannon Iwasaki, is a Futures-NW Education Hero (pictured here with some of our students); Right: Shannon Iwasaki



Supports District Goals 3 & 6

Ferndale High Math Teacher Beth Andres is finalist for Presidential Award

Beth Andres, Ferndale High School math teacher, is one of four state finalists for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST), an award sponsored by the National Science Foundation and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. Washington State finalists in math and science were selected this summer by a statewide committee comprised of content area experts and award winning teachers.

Ms. Andres has taught math at Ferndale High since 1980. She currently teaches algebra and advanced placement calculus. Over the years, she has taught every math class offered at Ferndale High.

Beth reflects on her teaching career, “When I started teaching math, I knew I would like it, but I didn't realize how much I would love it. I didn't realize how being part of children's lives would make such a difference in my life. I didn't realize that I would become connected to families in Ferndale and feel so much a part of the community. Every year I find something new and interesting about math to share with the kids. Sharing that joy of math is so cool. Math is so fun. My goal is that every one of my students leaves math having learned something and appreciated it.”

The Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) are the nation's highest honors for teachers of mathematics and

science (including computer science). Awardees serve as models for their colleagues, inspiration to their communities, and leaders in the improvement of mathematics and science education.”

Ferndale School District Superintendent Dr. Linda Quinn said, “We know how important mathematics is for our children. All of them. We're committed to high quality math instruction for all of the kids in Ferndale. We feel very fortunate to have teachers like Beth Andres leading that charge. We want them [students] to, not only learn math in the classroom, but also to see the applications of mathematical thinking in their world, and this is one of the areas in which Beth excels.”

Ferndale High senior, Elsa Ericksen said, “I've just loved having Ms. Andres [as a teacher] because she really brings the math to life and she's so passionate about it that you can't help but get excited about the math when she's teaching.”

Ms Andres said, “Really, truly, it's a testament to the Ferndale Math Department, to Ferndale High School, really to the Ferndale School District, that we're doing the right things with kids.”

The winners of the PAEMST \$10,000 award will be announced in spring 2018.

From the entire school district, thank you and congratulations, Ms. Andres!



Left: Math Teacher, Beth Andres, helps a student during calculus class

VIDEO SPOTLIGHT

Hear from Ms. Andres and math students at <https://vimeo.com/236665076>



Bond Task Force

Community members step up to help the district develop a bond package aimed at upgrading aging facilities

Bond Task Force Meetings

- December 5, at Meridian High School for a tour of their renovated facility
- Tuesday, January 9
- Wednesday, January 31
- Monday, February 26

All regular Bond Task Force meetings will take place from 7:00 pm until 9:00 pm. Locations for the January and February meetings have not yet been determined. All Task Force meetings are open to the public.

The purpose of the Task Force is to seek input about what the School Board should include in the bond package they put before voters in November 2018. The Board has stipulated that Ferndale High School should be a major part of the package, but other projects are under consideration.

The Task Force needs to complete its work and make a recommendation to the School Board by the end of February 2018.

On Tuesday, October 24, more than 40 enthusiastic volunteers came together in the Ferndale High School Library to begin a discussion about the November 2018 bond measure. This group has agreed to serve as the Bond Task Force.

As part of our bond development plan, we are seeking input from the community about which projects they think the school board should include in the bond package. The Task Force is weighted toward community members, since they have been an historically underrepresented voice. All meetings are open to the public, and anyone can attend.

In addition to the Task Force, we will be providing multiple opportunities for citizens and staff members to stay informed, ask questions, and make suggestions. One such communication tool will be a bond website, which we intend to launch before the end of the calendar year. The website will contain schedules, photos, pertinent documents, notes from task force meetings, and general updates to help everyone stay abreast of the bond work as it progresses. Once the website is complete, a link to it will be available from our district webpage—ferndalesd.org.

For more information about the proposed bond and the Bond Task Force—
Superintendent Linda Quinn, 360.383.9207, linda.quinn@ferndalesd.org
Assistant Superintendent Mark Deebach, 360.383.9203, mark.deebach@ferndalesd.org

Investing in Ferndale students and providing safe, efficient well-maintained school buildings for our children is important for our community and our children's future.

Below: Aerial view of Ferndale High; some structures were built in 1936



GET SOCIAL
#FerndalePride

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twitter.com/FSD_Supt_Quinn
- VIMEO
vimeo.com/FerndaleSchools
- LINKEDIN
linkedin.com/FerndaleSchools
- WEBSITE
www.ferndalesd.org



Information for families



Sign up for free and reduced meals

The district's Food Service Program provides healthy, nutritious kid-friendly breakfast and lunch options for students.

Through the USDA program, our district offers free and reduced meals. If you haven't done so already, consider signing up for this program. It only takes a few minutes. To see if your family qualifies, pick up your Free and Reduced Meal Application at:

- Online at mymealtime.com
- District Office, 6041 Vista Drive
- Your local school office
- Food Service Office at Ferndale High School, 5830 Golden Eagle Drive

For assistance in completing your application or for more information about the program, call:

Director of Food Services,
Michael Freer at 360.383.9341

Snow day childcare for our elementary students

Last winter, during the eleven days of snow closures, we heard from many of our elementary parents about how much disruption our closing caused for working families with young children.

This year, the forecast from the National Weather Service is very similar to last year. While we hope for different results, we are going to prepare for another rough winter. As part of our preparation, we are working on a plan that could provide childcare during weather-related closures. Here is what we are considering:

- We would choose a centrally located district facility at which to operate a childcare program on the school closure days at no cost or minimal cost to parents.
- Students would be grouped by grade to participate in a variety of activities throughout the day supervised by district staff.
- Breakfast and lunch would be provided.
- Hours of operation would be 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM.
- Transportation would be the responsibility of parents.
- Childcare requirements outside of our program hours would also be the responsibility of parents.
- In order to appropriately staff the program, we would require a sign-up/registration process prior to attendance.

More information and the final plan details will be on the district website at ferndalesd.org/communications/snow-day-childcare

Join us for our holiday events

Beach Elementary Santa Ship, December 8, 7:00PM
 Cascadia Elementary Sing-Along, December 19, 9:30AM
 Central Strings Concert, December 18, 6:30PM (at Vista Middle)
 Central Elementary Sing-Along, December 19, 9:15AM
 Custer Elementary Grades 2 & 3 Winter Program, December 12, 2:35PM and 6:30PM
 Custer Elementary Sing-Along, December 19, 10:00AM
 Eagleridge Elementary Grades 4 & 5 Winter Program, December 14, 2:30PM and 6:30PM
 Eagleridge Elementary Sing-Along, December 19, 9:45AM
 Skyline Strings Concert, December 18, 6:30PM (at Vista Middle)
 Horizon Middle Music Assembly, December 19, 9:00AM
 Vista Middle Winter Assembly, December 19, 1:15PM
 Ferndale High—
 Choirs' Community Holiday Sing-Along, December 11, 6:30PM
 Band Seasonal Concert, December 12, 7:00PM
 Orchestra Seasonal Concert, December 13, 7:00PM
 Choir Seasonal Concert, December 14, 7:00PM
All Community Sing-Along, December 20, 7:00PM at Ferndale High



Superintendent
Dr. Linda Quinn

Board of Directors
 Dr. Kevin Erickson, President • Lee Anne Riddle
 Candice Wilson • Andrew McLaurin
 Hugh Foulke • Mason Waller • Ellie Baader

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Ferndale School District is an equal opportunity employer. The district is committed to providing equal opportunity for all persons without regard to gender, age, race, religion, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, the presence of any physical, sensory, and/or mental disability, or the use of a trained guide dog or service animal by a person with a disability, honorably-discharged veteran or military status or any other basis prohibited by law.

*****ECRWSS****
POSTAL CUSTOMER

Celebrate the season with us—

Community Event
Wednesday, December 20
5:30-7:30PM

Shop Local While We Take Care of the Kids
Ferndale High School Cafeteria

- Drop off your elementary-age kids. They will enjoy games in the gym and cookie decorating.
- Shop at our local merchants and then bring your gifts back where you will receive free wrapping services.

Community Sing-Along 7:00-7:30PM

Ferndale High School Gymnasium

- All School Families and Community Members are welcome
- Enjoy the singing of holiday music

Events are free.

Ferndale High School is located at
5830 Golden Eagle Drive.

