

Dialog

FALL 2022

VOLUME 43.1

A University Place
School District
Quarterly Publication



Promoting & Prioritizing Student Safety

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FIND OUT WHAT WE ARE DOING

UPSD Board President Greeting

A Message from School Board President Rick Maloney



We are well into a more normal 2022-23 academic year, having enjoyed a smooth start thanks to staff preparations over the summer, student efforts from day one, and family support all around. For this issue I'd like to share information about the strategic work of the board:

WE SERVE. Everything we do for the UPSD community is done with a single purpose in mind, serving our community by ensuring all students become competent, contributing citizens.

WE PLAN. The UPSD Board of Directors takes its work seriously and conducts this work throughout the year. Each Board meeting highlights at least one (and usually several) strategic goals or policies. Time is routinely allocated for board development and connecting with the community, monitoring organizational performance for both desired results and policy compliance, and policy review to ensure all procedures remain current and relevant.

WE MONITOR. Annually, we perform an in-depth review of our strategic goals. "Academic competence" outcomes are reviewed several times each academic year with

attention given to all students and to specific student sub-groups. "Contributing citizens" looks at desired character traits and social/emotional skills that help students become responsible citizens. "Health and fitness" focus on graduating students who are healthy, physically fit, and lead a healthy/fit lifestyle in their adult lives. In addition to monitoring the district we also self-monitor for effective board performance.

WE REPORT. Being transparent about our work is important to us. You can find (1) each of our major goals and policies (left column); (2) the most recent monitoring report for each (center column); and (3) the board's evaluation of performance (right column) at this address: www.upsd83.org/school_board/board_policy_governance.

WE LISTEN. The beginning of each regular school board meeting is intentionally set aside to hear from members of the public. Several meetings each year focus on connecting with community members to learn your values and priorities. If you would like information about our board schedule or wish to address the board on any topic, we encourage you to contact the superintendent's office at (253) 566-5600. School calendars also provide personal contact information for each board member.

Thank you for your strong support in the past. We hope to always merit your trust.



Focusing on Three Essentials

A Message from Superintendent Jeff Chamberlin



Thank you for opening another issue of the Dialog. I hope you read on to learn more about *your* local public school system. We remain grateful for the incredible community support we receive. Most importantly, we know that students succeed because of the strong partnership between UP schools and this supportive community. This year we continue to focus on three essentials:

1. STUDENT HEALTH & SAFETY

Safety is always our first priority and greatest responsibility. Over the last three years, we've focused heavily on protecting students and staff against the spread of Covid-19. However, our safety efforts, training and planning consider many other potential risks. We maintain a comprehensive safety plan that includes prevention and response strategies related to fire, earthquake, bullying, threats, violent intruders, suicide, pedestrian safety and other hazards. We also work to promote student health through physical education and wellness programs. Read more about our safety focus on pages 5-6.

2. STUDENT LEARNING

While safety is our first priority, student learning is our first, and most essential purpose. We are fully committed to providing students with an organized, coherent, high-quality curriculum taught by teachers who know and use the best instructional practices for learning. We also believe that progress toward these important learning goals is measurable. Quality assessments give us valuable information about how students are learning and allow us to refine our practices. Most importantly, these results help us ensure that all students thrive in UPSD. The article on page 9 explains how we've used federal funding to bolster learning and promote learning recovery.

3. STUDENT CITIZENSHIP

We want our kids to be great citizens. Our public schools bring *everyone* together for learning. Before kids can learn academically, they must first learn to get along, respect one another and commit to the "common good." Our diverse schools are places where students of many backgrounds, views and experiences practice living and learning together.

We are proud of our progress in each of these essentials. We also know that we can always get better. Thank you for your ongoing support of these critical outcomes and thank you for learning more about UPSD in this issue of the Dialog.



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UNIVERSITY
PLACE
School District

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District Website:
www.upsd83.org



@UPSD83

What's New in 2022

Welcome to Our New Principals

With several years of experience as Assistant Principals in well-respected school districts throughout Washington State, we are thrilled to welcome three new Principals to the University Place School District. Please join us in congratulating **Kari Ferguson**, *Drum Intermediate*; **Christina Oliver**, *University Place Primary*; and **Dusty Broome**, *Evergreen Primary*.

Late Start Wednesdays

Collaboration and learning are not only important for our students, but for our talented team of teachers too. This year, instead of two-hour early release days throughout the year, school begins one hour late each Wednesday (with a small number of exceptions). All staff are on site during late start Wednesdays, working together on instruction and curricula so they can then successfully support our students. Please note, the only early release days scheduled this year are December 16 (day before Winter Break) and June 16 (last day of school).



Bus Passes for Students

Thanks to *Move Ahead Washington*, a fully funded state-wide transportation program, Pierce County Transit is excited to unveil their Free Youth Transit Pass, giving students ages 18 and under, the opportunity to ride transit for free. Although student ID cards serve as transit passes, traditional transit passes are also available at all eight UPSD schools.

Language Access Plan & Liaison

Did you know there are more than fifty languages spoken by UPSD families? Giving parents and guardians access to valuable information about their child's education in their own language is a top priority. This year, a designated *UPSD Language Access Liaison*, **Maile Lau Carr**, will be rolling out our Language Access Plan, to ensure that there are language interpreters and translation services available to support non-English speaking families at each school. Language access plans with designated staff are now required by Washington State Law.

New HVAC System at Evergreen

Good air quality is very important for overall health and a safe learning environment. Thanks to the generous support of our taxpayers, UPSD was able to use voter-approved capital project funding to replace the aging HVAC system at Evergreen Primary School. Because our HVAC systems are well maintained, they regularly outlive their expected lifespans. Last year, we installed a new system at Narrows View Intermediate School and will continue to replace systems, as necessary.

(Continued)

What's New in 2022 (continued)

New Financial Literacy Class at CHS

Graduating Curtis High School seniors, parents and community members expressed interest in a class about personal finance. In addition, Washington's Basic Education Act asks school districts to provide opportunities for every student to understand the importance of work and finance, including how performance, effort, and decision making directly influence future career and educational opportunities.

Meeting both criteria, a new Personal Finance class is now being offered to seniors at CHS. The course is an in-depth look at how to develop an overall personal financial plan. CHS teacher Darin Ringenbach shares, "Our students have been very engaged in learning the curriculum. They are all very eager to learn as much as they can about the financial world, and they are looking forward to implementing these ideas and concepts into their own lives throughout their futures."



Drum Intermediate Named 2022 National Blue Ribbon School

Drum Joins UPP as second UPSD School to Win Prestigious Award in Recent Years

This fall, Drum Intermediate was the only school in the State of Washington recognized as a 2022 National Blue Ribbon School. The National Blue Ribbon School award acknowledges the diligent work of students, educators, and parents in attaining excellent student achievement. National Blue Ribbon Schools serve as models of effective school practices for educators and schools throughout the nation.

On September 16, U.S. Secretary of Education, Miguel Cardona, bestowed this esteemed honor to 297 schools across the United States. With over 130,000 schools in the country, Drum is proud to have earned this recognition in the category of Exemplary High Performing Schools. Former Drum Principal, Maile Lau Carr, shared her reflections on this



"Being named a National Blue Ribbon School is a celebration of the hardworking teachers at Drum and all our students. The collective commitment of our experienced educators to student learning is a true testament of intentional instruction and having a focused passion for creating quality learning opportunities. This award is not only a reflection on our staff and students as exemplary high performers, but on the UPSD community as well."

Congratulations again to Drum Intermediate School on this amazing accomplishment!

Safety First: What UPSD is Doing to Keep Students Safe

Prioritizing School Safety

As families throughout the district wound down their summer vacations, UPSD administrators, teachers and staff members were carefully planning for a safe return to our schools. Through detailed planning and training, UPSD educators reviewed school safety plans, procedures and systems. Preparing for both physical and emotional safety is the first and most important step in welcoming students back to their primary, intermediate, junior high and high school campuses this fall.

But what does this commitment to safety look like in the day-to-day operations of school environments? As Narrows View Intermediate School Principal, Jennifer Wong shared:

"We promote positive student behavior through creating a safe and orderly school environment where all students can learn and grow at high levels. From modeling positive behaviors through administrator video recordings to reminders posted throughout our building, we strive to celebrate individuals and classes who are contributing to our positive school culture and making a difference."

Keeping students safe involves many different strategies and considerations focused in the following general areas:

ENCOURAGING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR: Creating a supportive, positive school climate is the first step in school safety. This work begins with teaching our students about school expectations and values. It is also important to teach students about the consequences of poor behavior while also celebrating good behavior choices. Through programs like Nighthawk Superstar Tickets, students earn tickets for demonstrating and exceeding positive behavior expectations, which they can exchange at the student store for prizes donated by parents and community members. For those who may need additional guidance for behavioral support, there are adult mentor programs like "Check & Connect," designed to help students focus on targeted behaviors they can improve.

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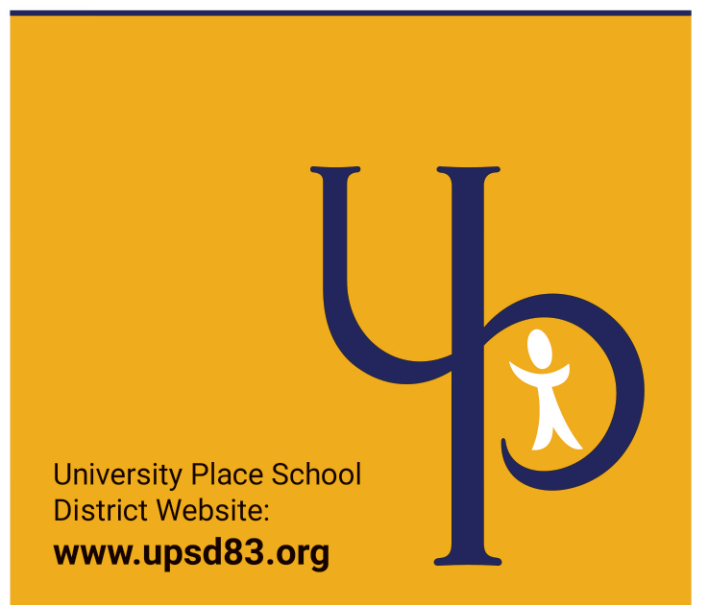
BULLYING PREVENTION: Creating a positive and supportive school environment where students feel welcome, valued and safe is a top priority throughout UPSD schools. Our counselors and administrators deliver bullying prevention lessons aimed at empowering students and bystanders to help stop bullying while also encouraging positive actions such as kindness and inclusion. When students have positive relationships with both their peers and adults, they are less likely to engage in any type of bullying behavior. Every UPSD staff member understands the importance of their role in routinely and consistently supervising students and always promoting a safe environment.

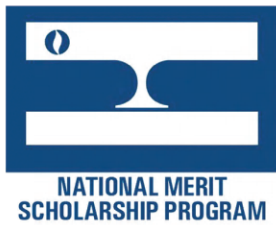
EMERGENCY PLANNING: Knowing what actions to take before, during and after emergency events at school is essential for student, teacher and community safety. UPSD staff is trained to implement various emergency response protocols for fire, earthquake, evacuation, intruders and other hazards. By practicing how to respond to emergencies at school, we increase our level of understanding and preparedness for our students and families.

VIOLENCE PREVENTION: Violence in schools is rare, but not rare enough. Planning for—and protecting against—school violence is a key component to our safety practices. UPSD regularly talks with staff, students and families about how critical it is to immediately report any safety concerns or threatening behavior to police and/or school administrators. Throughout the district, our “*see something-say something*” culture is the best and most effective tool for keeping one another safe. When threats are brought to our attention, we take immediate action to keep everyone safe. These actions include lockdowns, threat assessments and collaboration with law enforcement. Access control systems, emergency notification technology, security cameras, training and drills all help to prevent violence in schools.

STUDENT HEALTH & MENTAL HEALTH: From teaching our students proper hand washing techniques to the simple, yet impactful act of staying home when they are sick, students in UPSD are taught to respect others by making safe personal choices. Layered prevention strategies help prevent the spread of communicable disease in schools. Also, our team of school counselors are dedicated to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our entire student body. The district also follows a detailed suicide prevention plan to protect students in emotional crisis and can make direct referrals for students who need additional counseling services.

ONLINE SAFETY: Because students are spending more time online than ever before, we know the importance of instructing and promoting online safety practices. Whether at school or on home computers, we teach students about safe technology practices. Within the district, we also focus on cyber-security by implementing multi-factor authentication, regular software updates, encouraging the use of strong passwords and staff/student training.





CHS Seniors Named National Merit® Scholarship Program Commended Scholars

Nationwide, only 50,000 Commended Scholars are recognized through the National Merit® Scholarship Program for their exceptional academic promise as demonstrated through their outstanding PSAT results. This year, Curtis High School is pleased to announce seven Commended Scholars who, now seniors, are part of this elite academic class. These hard-working students will be honored in front of the entire school at the CHS Fall Recognition assembly as well as at graduation.



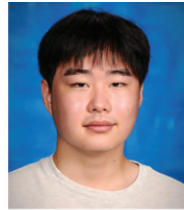
Dominique Ching



Calvin Kan



Paul Kim



Joshua Lee



Patrick McClain



Aria Wood



Ethan Yamada

UPSD Honors the Most Elizabeth Wesley Youth Merit Incentive Award Recipients in Pierce County

Celebrating and motivating academic progress, community service and good citizenship over the past 27 years, the Elizabeth Wesley Youth Merit Incentive Award honors 9th, 10th and 11th grade African American students in Pierce County. To read more about the namesake and background of this distinguished award, please visit ewesleyaward.org. This year, UPSD had twenty-five recipients, the most of any other school in the county. At this year's annual ceremony, CHS students, LeRoy Horton and KQuincey Tate, performed live. Two CHS graduates, Derrick Murrel (Class of 1999) and Kiara Fitzpatrick (Class of 2008) were presenters; and CHS senior Ezekiel Kinyanjui was rewarded with the Tacoma Urban League's scholarship. Elizabeth Wesley Youth Merit Initiative Award Recipients:



Front Row: Heaven Ellison, Hana McCoy, Raina Stephens, Sara Feltamo, LeRoy Horton, Omari Oliver, Ezekiel Kinyanjui, **Back Row:** Job Sendagala, Kquincey Tate, Devin Whitten, Ava Simms, Airiana Tindall, Beyla Kisembo, Jase Thomas, Hamed Diakite, Zoom Diallo, Simon Overlease

Not Pictured: Aulla Elhassan, Mercer Estes, Jayda Foutain, Cameela Henderson, Abibatu Koroma, Jasmine Lee, Cinque Maxwell, Keisha Ngaywa, Aniya Palmer, Jaden Riggins, Vanessa Stevens, and Cameron Williamson

“Veteran” Drivers Make a Difference for Kids

We have a great team of “veteran” bus drivers with lots of experience behind the wheel. These drivers make sure our students get to and from school safely each day. Several of these drivers are also veterans of the US Armed Services and continue to serve their country and community as part of our transportation team. Torey Heidelberg, Director of Transportation and Safety, could not be prouder of his hard-working staff, stating, “The characteristics it takes to be successful in the military are remarkably similar to what it takes to be a bus driver. Like the military, we function as a team, as a family, and look out for one another in a sometimes stressful, yet always critical daily environment.”

Four current UPSD bus drivers’ careers include decades of bus driving and 46 years of military service! Bill Smith served for 30 years as a Maintenance Officer in the US Army. Dennis Caillier served 4 years as a Security Officer in the US Air Force. Cathy Alfiche was a Veterinary Food Inspection Specialist in the Army for almost 6 years and Patty Anderson served in the US Navy for 6 years as an Electronics Technician. All of these drivers share a love for the students they care for each day.



Other UPSD staff members are also veterans. Last month, UPSD honored these and other veterans through school-wide assemblies, music programs and a recognition breakfast. We are thankful for the following staff and board members who are military veterans.

Staff Veterans

Cathy Alfiche	Gary McHaney
Patricia Anderson	Tim Phillips
Wendy Bemis	Javier Rico
Dennis Caillier	Jerry Richards
Torey Heidelberg	Erica Rollosso
Gervona Johnson	Bill Smith
Stewart Linde	Bradley (BJ) Herman
Cameo Lovell	Todd Schapler
Michael Kindred	

Board of Directors

Rick Maloney	Marisa Peloquin
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Bill Smith

Years as UPSD Bus Driver: 4

What do you like the most about being a UPSD bus driver?

Interacting with the students.

Hobbies outside of work: Riding his bicycle

Military Background: Bill served in the Army as a Maintenance Officer for 30 years.

Dennis Caillier

Years as UPSD Bus Driver: 15

What do you like the most about being a UPSD bus driver?

Watching students grow up over the years.

Hobbies outside of work: Playing on the computer

Military Background: Dennis served in the United States Air Force for 4 years in the Security Police department.

Cathy Alfiche

Years as UPSD Bus Driver: 6

What do you like the most about being a UPSD bus driver?

The students are great, and many describe me as an awesome bus driver.

Hobbies outside of work: Singing, Dancing, Cooking

Military Background: Cathy served in the Army for almost 6 years as a Veterinary Food Inspection Specialist.

Patty Anderson

Years as UPSD Bus Driver: 7

What do you like the most about being a UPSD bus driver?

I love the interaction I have with my student passengers and seeing their beautiful faces every morning.

Hobbies outside of work: Gardening, Camping and Playing with my grandkids.

Military Background: Patty served in the US Navy for 6 years as an Electronics Technician. Her father, also a Navy veteran, was awarded a Purple Heart for service in WWII and Korean War.

Federal Funding Helps Student Academic Recovery

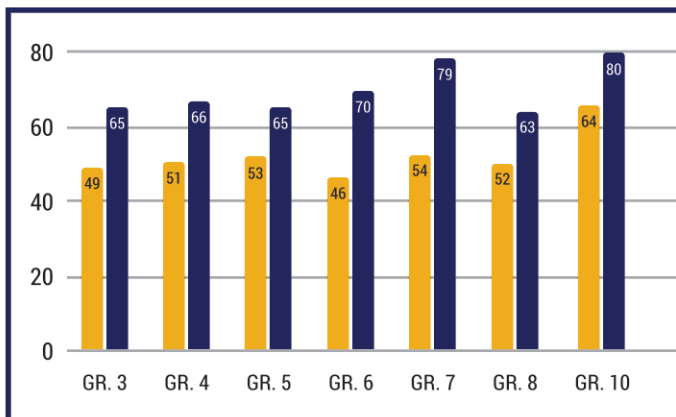
One-time federal stimulus funding provided through the American Rescue Plan Act is playing a key role in helping to support student academic recovery, mental health and safety in UPSD. During the pandemic, this special federal funding was used to purchase supplies and materials to prevent the spread of Covid. More recently, the district hired additional counselors for mental health support and more than a dozen new teachers to help teach struggling learners.

The pandemic, and the remote/hybrid learning models that it required, were challenging for educators and learners. Student test scores, here and across the nation, declined because of these large and unexpected disruptions.

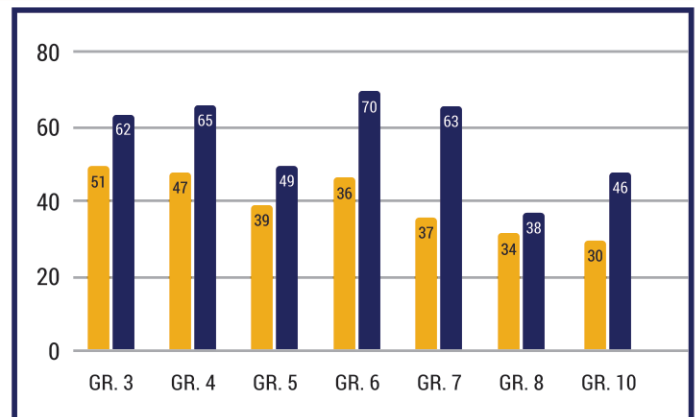
Aggregate scores for literacy (ELA) and math decreased by 11.4% and 23.4% respectively between spring of 2019 and the fall 2021 administration. However, after only one year of full time, in-person learning, achievement levels rebounded on average over all grade levels by 5.4% in literacy and 9.5% in math.

While scores are not as high as they were before the pandemic, the charts below demonstrate that students in UPSD remain well ahead of their peers around the state in both literacy and math at all grade levels.

SBA.22 ELA - UPSD vs. STATE (% proficient)



SBA.22 MATH - UPSD vs. STATE (% proficient)



■ WA State ■ UPSD

Thanks to the combination of federal funding, the ongoing commitment and flexibility of our staff, the determination of our student body and the support of our amazing parents, student achievement levels in UPSD are gradually returning to pre-pandemic levels and school routines have successfully transitioned back to normal.



Program Performance Review Compliance

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

Information regarding student demographics, academic performance, the percentage of students tested by school and demographic group, comparisons with state performance in each area, expenditures per pupil, a concise budget report, and graduation and dropout statistics is available at <https://washingtonstatereportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/>. Information about NAEP and State NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Programs) data can be found at <https://www.k12.wa.us/assessment-ospi-0> and <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/>.

Parents' Right to Know

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS: At any time, you may ask whether your child's teacher met state qualifications and certification requirements for the grade level and subject he/she is teaching; whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which Washington qualifications or certifications have been waived; and what undergraduate or graduate degrees the teacher holds, including graduate certificates and additional degrees, and major(s) or area(s) of concentration. If you have questions about the professional qualifications of your child's teacher, please contact your child's principal.

CITIZEN COMPLAINT PROCEDURES: A citizen complaint is a written statement that alleges a violation of a federal rule, law or regulation or state regulation that applies to a federal program. To learn more about this process, you can find information on the OSPI website at <https://www.k12.wa.us/policy-funding/grants-grant-management/closing-educational-achievement-gaps-title-i-part/citizen-complaints-federal-programs>, (or scan the QR code). You can also request information about this process from the UPSD Educational Services Center.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

State and federal regulations require reporting key information about UPSD schools, federal and state programs, and the performance of our students to parents and community members. UPSD believes a strong partnership between our schools and community is necessary to ensure a quality education for all students. We invite parents/guardians to be active, to be involved, and to provide input. Please contact the principal of your child's school to learn about ways to become involved. If you have questions or comments, please call the Educational Services Center (253-566-5600).

The University Place School District complies with all federal and state laws, rules, and regulations and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin (including language), sex, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, creed, religion, age, veteran or military status, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability in student education programs, co-curricular activities, and employment practices. The district is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer encouraging application of qualified minorities, women, and disabled persons for employment and other opportunities.

University Place School District is committed to providing access to all district programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. For elevator access at school sites, contact the principal's office. The University Place School District is a drug-free/smoke-free workplace and educational setting. Direct inquiries regarding compliance, grievance, or appeal procedures, or concerns involving students, should be made to the District Affirmative Action Officer/Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator/ Title IX Coordinator/HIB Compliance Officer/Gender-Inclusive Schools Coordinator, Executive Director of Secondary Education, **Lainey Mathews**, lmathews@upsd83.org; or Section 504/FAPE/ADA concerns should be made to Executive Director of Special Services, **Kelly McClure**, kmclure@upsd83.org. Both can be contacted at (253)566-5600, 3717 Grandview Drive West, University Place, WA 98466.

SAFE SCHOOLS

Student success in learning requires a safe environment. UPSD is committed to safe schools where students can achieve at their highest potential and teachers can teach in a welcoming environment, free of intimidation and fear. Each of our schools fosters a spirit of acceptance and care for every child, and an educational environment where behavior expectations are clearly communicated, consistently enforced, and fairly applied.

FEDERAL AND STATE FUNDING

UPSD uses state and federal dollars to support students who have been identified as needing additional support in specific content areas. Students are identified based on multiple measures. Title I, Part A and/or LAP (Learning Assistance program) funds are used to provide additional English Language Arts support to students in grades K-7 and math support to students in grades 1-7. Title III (federal funds) and TBIP (Transitional Bilingual state funds) are used to provide assistance to English Language Learners who qualify for supplemental language support.



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(253) 564-6270



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(253) 882-7810



Marisa Peloquin
(253) 381-6006

Upcoming Events

- December 16** Half-day, Winter Vacation Begins
- January 3** Winter Vacation Ends
- January 13** Temperance and Good Citizenship Day
- January 16** Martin Luther King Jr. Day, No School
- January 27** Last day of First Semester
- January 30** Teacher Planning Day, No School for Students
- January 31** First Day of Second Semester
- February 17-20** Presidents' Day Weekend

For more information on events and the district calendar, please visit our website at www.upsd83.org

Upcoming Board Meetings

- December 14** @ Educational Service Center
- January 11** @ Educational Service Center
- February 8** @ Educational Service Center

All Board Meetings are open to members of the public. A full list of School Board meetings is posted to www.upsd83.org/school_board/meeting_schedule.



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