

Over 5,200 Students Back in School for In-Person Learning

SAFETY IS OUR #1 PRIORITY

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Celebrating the Sustained, Dedicated Efforts of Our School Community

A Message from School Board President Rick Maloney



As we begin our third month of the 2021-22 school year, we want to pause and celebrate the sustained, dedicated efforts of all members of our school community—students, families, and staff—and the ongoing support of our University Place community as we continue to pursue excellence in education under trying circumstances.

The board has heard from many of you describing the effect of the past 18 months on students, families, and staff. We can only imagine the full impact on everyone's lives, not only from last year, but the still-challenging aspects of the current “not yet back to normal” year.

We recognize that not every decision that had to be made has been met with universal agreement. But we are confident those decisions have been made with the best intentions, motivated by balancing the ideals of a fully safe learning environment, fully effective learning methods, and a full slate of options for every student and family.

We are grateful for the many messages of support for the often-heroic efforts that have been made at our schools and in the classroom. Rest assured that our goal remains to return to normal in as many ways and as soon as is reasonably possible. As you can see, the district has made several strides in that direction, and in the case of intermediate sports and music, even more. We hope we will have more to come.

Honoring UPSD Employees Who Are Veterans

Through a variety of activities, staff and students throughout the district honored the service and sacrifice of men and women in the armed forces on this year's Veterans Day. We can never fully repay our debt of gratitude to the more than 660,000 American service members who died in battle or the 1.5 million who were wounded. We can, however, recognize and thank the nineteen million veterans still living today. It's our privilege to say “thank you” to all of America's veterans, to let them know that we appreciate them for their service and honor them for their sacrifices. We are especially grateful to all the UPSD veterans who are working or teaching in the district as well as our board member veterans:



Staff

- Cathy Alfiche
- Patricia Anderson
- Kevin Bedell
- Wendy Bemis
- Dennis Caillier
- Michael Chavez
- George Close
- Torey Heidelberg
- Gervona Johnson
- Stewart Linde
- Cameo Lovell
- Michael Kindred
- Jim McDougal
- Gary McHaney
- Mark Miller
- Tim Phillips
- Therese Pierce
- Michael Przekwas
- Jerry Richards
- Javier Rico
- Erica Rollososon
- Bill Smith
- Dawnett Wright

Board of Directors

- Rick Maloney
- Marisa Peloquin

Students are at School, Safe & Thriving

A Message from Superintendent Jeff Chamberlin



Things are almost back to normal in University Place School District! More than 5,210 students are back for full-time, in-person learning with another 155 students learning remotely at home. All eight schools are operating on regular schedules and following familiar school routines, with a few exceptions, to keep everyone safe. Thanks to the incredible efforts of our teachers, administrators and support staff, our students are at school, safe and thriving. It is truly wonderful to have them back all day, every day.

Parents and community members continue to play a key role in making all of this possible. When the community comes together to make safety a priority everywhere -- our kids are safer at school. This is true for all safety efforts, but it is especially true for communicable diseases. We can't keep viruses out of schools unless the community works together to protect friends, family and neighbors. As more and more citizens get vaccinated, wear masks, stay home when they are sick, and encourage others to do the same, we reduce the spread of illness among our kids. Thank you for doing your part to keep our kids safe inside and outside of school.

Student growth and learning is also a team effort. This was very apparent last year with so many kids learning at home. We appreciate the incredible efforts and sacrifices made by parents, grandparents and community partners to help students learn remotely. Now that kids are back at school, we hope to continue this close collaboration to support our students. We take pride in making sure that resources are available for students who need extra help to learn and to stay healthy -- both physically and emotionally. Community support through partnerships with organizations and local levy funding helps us provide this additional support.

Thank you for taking time to read this issue of the *Dialog* and learn more about what is happening in the school district. You can find more information about UPSD on our website at www.upsd83.org. I also appreciate hearing from community members who can reach me directly at jchamberlin@upsd83.org or (253) 566-5600 x3316.



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District Website:
www.upsd83.org



@UPSD83

Up Spotlights



Alumni Spotlight: Chuck Arnold

Seattle Seahawks President Chuck Arnold, a 1990 CHS graduate, grew up in University Place as a huge fan of the Seahawks. "I'm a proud Curtis High School graduate and look back fondly on my time growing up in University Place," he says. "My experience at Curtis Junior High and high school played an important role in preparing me for where I am today. It's truly a special place. Go Viks!"

After graduating from Curtis, Arnold went to WSU and applied for an internship with the Seahawks his senior year. He has worked for his favorite team since the day he graduated from college. As the Seahawks took flight, so did Arnold's career after becoming the team's Chief Operating Officer in 2013. Named president in 2018, Arnold is responsible for all financial and business operations, sales and marketing, and administration for the Seahawks. Under Arnold's leadership, not only have the Seahawks continued to be one of the NFL's most competitive teams, but the overall brand is one of the strongest in the league as well. The team has set franchise records for new season tickets sold, overall season ticket base, average attendance and group sales, including 146+ consecutive home game sellouts. The team has had a season ticket renewal rate of more than 97 percent on average over the past 8+ years.

The Hawks consistently rank in the NFL's top ten in numerous categories, including local and national fanbase, fan experience, retail, and digital engagement. In 2020, nine Seahawks games were in the top one hundred most-watched TV programs nationally, and the team ranked sixth in the NFL in local TV ratings. Arnold says he'll always work for what's important for his team and the fans because the kid from University Place will always be one of them.



Chuck Arnold
Seattle Seahawks
President

Staff Spotlight: Javier Rico, US Army Veteran



Javier Rico
US Army Veteran

Right out of high school, Javier Rico enlisted in the Army. After intense training, he moved to Upstate New York's Ft. Drum. Three years later, he transferred to Ft. Lewis (now Joint Base Lewis-McChord) and became a sergeant. He separated from the Army in 2000 after serving for six years. Growing up, Javier had always wanted to be a chef or a PE teacher. As Kitchen Manager at Evergreen Primary School, "I guess I got a little bit of both," he says. Javier prepares and serves breakfast and lunch. His responsibilities include maintaining a clean and safe environment as well as complying with all Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department regulations.

Javier has been with the district since 2014 when he started at Curtis High as a food service worker. Last year, because of COVID-19 and the school closures, he worked at two or three locations and drove a district van to ensure food was available for students via curbside pickup. But preparing and serving meals to the students is not what Javier enjoys most about his job. He likes the interaction with them. "It's making positive memories for my students," he says.

Student Spotlight: *Shae Dolan*



Shae Dolan

ASB Vice President Shae Dolan's list of accomplishments is extraordinary. A senior with a 3.95 GPA, she is Secretary of the Environmental Club and participates in Viking Crew. One of her greatest accomplishments is her work as Chair of the Washington Legislative Youth Advisory Council, the official student advisory body to the Washington State Legislature.

Because of the high numbers of teens in the state with attempted suicide, eating disorders, and drug and alcohol abuse, the student group drafted legislation and advocated for the successful passage of Substitute House Bill 1373 in the 2021 legislative session. The bill promotes student access to information about behavioral health resources.

Shae not only works on various political campaigns, but organizes with Washington Youth for Climate Justice, a student-led movement fighting the climate crisis, and is a member of the Mayor of Tacoma's Youth Commission. As a member of the Pierce Teen Council, she teaches peer-led sexual education in area high schools and colleges. She has earned numerous community service awards at Curtis and in the community.

Shae enjoys the small school sizes within UP Schools. "The small school sizes create a tight-knit, nurturing community where students are supported by teachers and their peers," she says. "My time within the UPSD has fostered my abilities as a leader and an advocate and allowed me to explore my interests," she adds. "I also appreciate the rigor of my coursework and feel prepared for a college-level workload."

Community Partner Spotlight: *Treehouse*

Throughout the U.S., less than fifty percent of foster care youth graduate from high school. One organization district staff work with to help keep students in school is Treehouse (www.treehouseforkids.org). Treehouse provides foster care support services to 9-12th grade students and their families. Treehouse's Graduation Success program offers mentoring, tutoring, summer camp, and support groups. It can help fund ASB cards, school supplies, sports, prom, driver's education, graduation needs, and more. Foster parents don't always know about the resources – financial and otherwise – that can help their foster child. Foster parents should let their foster child's school counselors know about their foster family so the counselors can explain the available resources and make the required referral to Treehouse.



UPSD's Foster Care Liaison Becky Owens emphasizes that the district wants to identify 8th graders in the foster care system so they can begin to use Treehouse's summer support services after 8th grade. "We want to surround foster youth with support programs to help ensure they will graduate from high school," she says. Once families are in the foster care system, they can also access Treehouse's college support services.

Treehouse's Bradley Loetzke says foster families are often reluctant to share they are in the foster care system. "We want to assure people that we work behind the scenes if necessary to protect the youth and families' dignity at all times," he says. For more information, contact Becky Owens at bowens@upsd83.org or (253) 566-5600- ext. 3332, or Bradley Loetzke at bradley.loetzke@treehouseforkids.org or (206) 767-7000.

Music to Your Ears: In-Person Music Back in Schools

Narrows View Orchestra Director Chris Burns talks about the advantages of in-person music education this year. “The joy students experience playing an instrument or singing in a group together now that they are back in school is palpable and powerful,” he says.

The University Place School District recognizes that the arts are an integral part of every student’s educational experience. The district provides a framework for effective K–12 arts and music education by setting out a coherent structure for building students’ knowledge, understanding, and skills, while also encouraging them to explore and express their own creativity. Last year, music classes were held remotely with a number of challenges. Below are summaries of the music programs at the various grade levels this year now that the students and teachers are back in the classrooms.

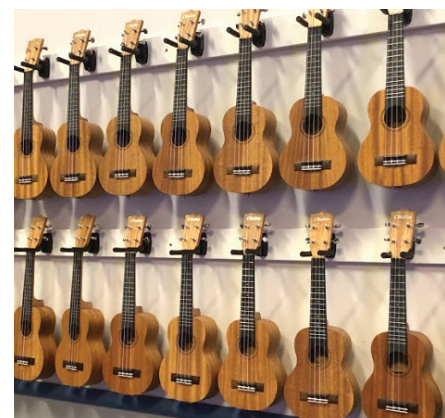
Primary: Foundation for Intermediate Programs

“Students who attend UP primary schools receive strong music instruction that provides the foundation for our programs at Drum and Narrows View Intermediate,” says Narrows View choir teacher and music curriculum planner Carolyn Flynn. “In the primary music program, students explore and create music using their voices, movement, and a wide variety of classroom instruments,” she adds. In the past, students have also learned to read the notes of the treble clef staff using recorders. “This year, due to COVID-19 restrictions, recorders will not be used, but the primary music teachers are still providing an exciting and varied musical experience.” New ukuleles were purchased for the primary school students to use, expanding the music lesson options.

Intermediate: Sets Itself Apart from Other Area Programs

When students reach 5th grade, the UPSD music education tradition sets itself apart from virtually every other program around. “The intermediate music program differs significantly from other districts because ALL our students have daily music,” says Flynn. “In most school districts, it is one to two times a week at the elementary level, and by 6th and 7th grades, it becomes an elective,” she says. “Here in UPSD, ALL students in 5th, 6th and 7th have daily music instruction.”

Intermediate students choose between choir, band or string orchestra. They typically stay with that discipline for all three years at Drum or Narrows View. Students



have multiple performance opportunities throughout their three years in intermediate school and, although those opportunities will look different due to COVID-19 protocol, the district hopes to provide students with some performance experiences, even if those remain virtual.

“Our focus has always been to build a strong, consistent background in music literacy and performance to prepare all students to continue throughout their junior high and high school years,” says Flynn. By the time our students reach 8th grade, if they choose to pursue music further, they have a solid foundation and have several options for them to do so.

(Continued)

Music to Your Ears (continued)



Junior High: More Than 50% Participate

More than half of the junior high students are part of the school's performing arts program as members of the band, orchestra or choir. These programs are year-long classes – each class with its own focus and requirements. Both the junior high and high school also offer musical theater.

Students progress in their performance and music literacy skills as they continue in the music program at the junior high. Each year there are typically opportunities for students to learn and perform in and outside of school at assemblies, festivals, competitions and other events.



High School: Award-Winning Performing Arts

Curtis High School is proud of its award-winning performing arts program. The high school offers opportunities with highly qualified instruction in instrumental and vocal music through band, orchestra, and choir. In addition, before and after school clubs at all levels offer a variety of fine and performing arts opportunities.

"Having the students back in person this year is so much better," says Band Director Randy Qualls. "They are able to work on teamwork and contributing to something bigger than themselves. I think it's as good for them as people as well as being musicians."

"We know that students learn best in person," adds long-time Choir Director Dave Dickerson. "Although singing with masks on has provided its challenges," says Dickerson, "the district provides KN95 masks that allow more space in the masks, to students who want them."

Over the years, hundreds of Curtis musicians have consistently demonstrated excellence as they have traveled to local and regional competitions, festivals and performance opportunities, says Dickerson. "These experiences have encouraged many students to continue their music in college and beyond."



Intermediate Sports Back at Drum & Narrows View

Competitive and intramural sports are back at Drum and Narrows View for sixth and seventh graders. Up until this fall, there had been no competitive athletic opportunities in the district for intermediate grade students since 2008 when district budgets were cut due to a loss in funding from the state because of the recession. Over time, districts have restarted middle level/intermediate athletics using local funds from the Educational Programs and Operations levy. This funding source is supported by UPSD taxpayers and also supports high school and junior high sports.

In the fall intermediate school season, 6th and 7th grade boys and girls participated in track and field in the West Sound Middle School League. Winter 1 season will feature girls' soccer and winter 2 season will feature co-ed wrestling. In the spring season, 6th and 7th grade boys and girls will be able to participate in intermediate cross country and 7th grade boys can try out for junior high football. Each sport has a varsity and JV team. The district chose to offer non-cut sports to maximize athletic opportunities for intermediate students. Fifth graders can participate in intramural sports.

One hundred and eighty-two students participated in track and field this year. Drum and NVI students traveled to Curtis Junior High each day to practice and compete together as one UP team. "This is a great opportunity

for our kids to engage in athletics before they get into junior high," says District Athletic Director Suzanne Vick. "With the absence of a city parks and recreation program, intermediate grade students have not had competitive opportunities unless they have participated in paid club sports," she says. "We also know that these opportunities help kids succeed in school and in life," adds Vick. "Students who participate in athletics are better students, community members and citizens."

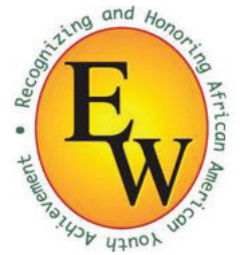
Drum Intermediate Principal Maile Carr is excited to see this from both a principal and a parent perspective. "Not only are our students given a chance to participate in sports they may have yet to encounter," she says, "they are given a chance to socially interact with students and staff outside of the academic school day. I think this helps build a strong community for our students and a wider support system for everyone."

Narrows View Track and Field Coach Casey Kuehl says the return of intermediate students getting access to sports is huge. "Getting the chance to try a sport can spark a new lifelong passion in our students," he says. "It can also instill discipline and an array of other life lessons from being involved in competitive sports."

The district plans to continue athletics at the intermediate schools into the future.



2021 Elizabeth Wesley Youth Merit Incentive Award Recipients



Fourteen Students Honored with Youth Merit Incentive Award

Pictured below are this year's winners of the Elizabeth Wesley Youth Merit Incentive Award. The award is given annually to 9th, 10th and 11th grade African American students in Pierce County who have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement, community service and good citizenship. Congratulations to this outstanding group of student leaders.

Elizabeth Wesley, the award's namesake, moved to Tacoma in 1945 where she and her husband joined Bethlehem Baptist Church. In 1953, they helped organize Shiloh Baptist Church. This program honors Mrs. Wesley's legacy and her commitment to children. For more information about the awards, visit www.ewesleyaward.org.

Curtis Junior and Senior High students are selected as award winners every year. These students model leadership and academic success for their peers.



Angel Allain-Pendergrass



Bryce Bouyer



Sydney Bruce



Hamed Diakite



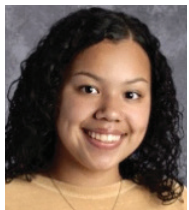
Asya Doty



Aulla Elhassan



Heaven Ellison



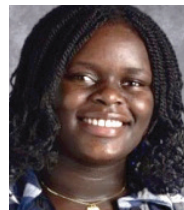
Monique Evans



Sara Feltamo



D'Andre Jones



Abibatu Koroma



Nia McCoy



Alicia Whitten



Cameron Williamson

Five CHS Seniors Named National Merit® Scholarship Program Commended Students

Five Curtis High seniors have been named Commended Students in the 2022 National Merit Scholarship Program. They have been recognized for their exceptional academic promise demonstrated by their outstanding performance on the qualifying test used for program entry. About 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation were recognized. Congratulations to these outstanding seniors:



Katherine Allen



Trina Dao



Karl Falskow



Tanner Harding



Yewon Jang



Important Parent and Community Notifications

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/>. State NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Programs) data can be found at <https://www.k12.wa.us/assessment-ospi-0>.

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>. 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 at (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 Officer/HIB Compliance Officer, 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, kmcclure@upsd83.org. Both can be contacted at (253)566-5600, 3717 Grandview Drive West, University Place, WA 98466.

(Continued)

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 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.

Three UP Schools Named Best in Pierce County



We are proud to announce that *Niche.com* has named three UPSD schools as the #1 public school in their respective categories in Pierce County for 2022: Curtis High (best high school), Narrows View Intermediate (best middle school), and University Place Primary (best elementary school). UPSD was ranked as the #8 district out of more than 290 in the state. Narrows View (#1) and Drum (#2) were named as the two best middle schools in Pierce county.

The Niche rankings are based on rigorous analysis of key statistics and reviews from students and parents using data from the U.S. Department of Education. Ranking factors include state test scores, student-teacher ratio, student diversity, teacher quality, and the overall quality of the school district. Congratulations to each of the top-ranked schools.

NVI Opens with New HVAC System

Narrows View Intermediate School (NVI) opened the year with a brand new heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system thanks to community levy support of our capital projects fund. NVI was built in 1994 and the original system has been in use since. Replacement of the system has been on the district's "to-do list" for several years and the timing couldn't be better. HVAC systems are always important to student learning and health. We have also learned that good ventilation helps prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other viruses.

HVAC replacements at NVI involved removing and replacing all thirty-nine heat pumps, recirculating heating/cooling loop pumps, fifteen exhaust fans, and the control wiring that makes these components work. With the addition of a new control system, we are able to maximize energy efficiency, increase/adjust airflow, and monitor CO2 levels. The work was completed by ATS Automation, Inc. at a cost of \$1.8M. School districts in Washington do not have dedicated sources of funding for large projects like this so local support through capital improvement levies is critical.

HVAC improvements at NVI will contribute to student learning and health for many years to come.





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UP Dialog

The Dialog is published periodically by the University Place School District for University Place residents and businesses.

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 work place 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.

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Ethelda Burke
Vice President
(253) 565-0813



Mary Lu Dickinson
(253) 564-6270



T'wina Nobles
(253) 882-7810



Marisa Peloquin
(253) 381-6006

Upcoming Events

- November 24-26** Thanksgiving Break, No School
- November 25** Thanksgiving
- December 17** Half-day, Winter Vacation Begins
- January 2** Winter Vacation Ends
- January 14** Temperance and Good Citizenship Day
- January 17** Martin Luther King Jr. Day, No School

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

Upcoming Board Meetings

- December 8** @ Virtually and In-person Location TBD
- January 12** @ Virtually and In-person Location TBD

BOARD MEETINGS PUBLIC & VIRTUAL:
All Board Meetings will be held in-person and virtually. The location of the in-person meetings are posted to www.upsd83.org/school_board/meeting_schedule. The link to access the virtual meetings is posted on the district website.



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www.upsd83.org