

Dialog

WINTER 2020

VOLUME 40.2

A University Place
School District
Quarterly Publication



Making a Difference

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SEE HOW THE COMMUNITY
TRANSITION PROGRAM PREPARES
STUDENTS FOR THEIR FUTURES

Ensuring All Students Have the Education Opportunities to Succeed



A Message from School Board President Mary Lu Dickinson

The mission of the University Place School District, in partnership with our community, is to ensure that ALL UPSD students are competent, contributing citizens. Ensuring all students have the education opportunities needed to succeed is a charge our school board takes seriously.

We have set high standards for academic knowledge and skills, as well as expectations for students to demonstrate individual character qualities, emotional strength, and social skills needed to succeed throughout their lives. We monitor all our policies each year to ensure progress is being made and policies are being followed.

It is our board's desire to serve all students in the University Place School District to the greatest extent possible. Our contact information can be found on the back cover of this issue of *Dialog* and on the school district's website www.upsd83.org.

Please feel free to contact board members if there is a way we can make your experience in the UPSD more positive for you or your students. If you have questions, comments, or concerns, we can point you in the right direction.

The trust you have placed in us to educate the youth in our community is much appreciated. Thank you for your support.



Rick Maloney

District Welcomes Back Former Longtime Board Member

The UPSD is extremely fortunate to welcome back Rick Maloney to the school board for another term. Maloney originally served on the board from 1995-2015.

Maloney has a long and distinguished career in the military, education, and community service. After graduating from West Point in 1973, he served 20 years in the US Army before retiring as a lieutenant colonel. While serving his country, Maloney earned master's degrees in human resource management from Pepperdine, and behavioral science from Catholic University of America. In 1996, he earned his doctorate in educational leadership from the University of Southern California. His experience in education includes teaching math and physics, administration and university lecturing.

"I am honored to be able to represent the UPSD community once again," states Maloney, who brings a wealth of experience to the board. His 20 years of board service and eight years as board president, coupled with his nine years representing all local districts on the Washington State School Directors Association, give him keen insights into the needs of the district, the tasks ahead for the board, and current trends in education.

Maloney also has additional experience and insight as a UPSD parent. All three of his children—Katherine, Nate and Molly—graduated from CHS. He often refers to the decision he and his wife, Patsy, made in 1991 to settle in University Place because of the excellent reputation of UPSD schools, and hopes to continue the successful school-community partnership.

Schools Thrive When We All Work Together



A Message from Superintendent Jeff Chamberlin

Public schools thrive when three groups of people work closely together in their local community: 1) citizens and community members who believe in the right of every child to get a good education and who are willing to contribute resources and time to make this happen; 2) skilled and devoted staff members who believe in the potential of all students and who work hard to see students reach this potential; and 3) engaged parents who are partners in their students' education inside and outside of school. With these three elements in place -- working in concert -- schools flourish. University Place School District is lucky to have all three key elements.

The district's Community Transition Program (featured on pages 5 and 6) is successful because of these partnerships. This program, like all programs in our schools, relies on the parents and community members who support it and the incredible teachers, support staff and administrators who run the program so competently every day.

Our Community Transition Program students spend time at Curtis High School and at a variety of job sites around our community to develop important workplace skills that prepare them to enter the workforce and become contributing citizens. These students overcome the challenges presented by disabilities because of their personal attributes and determination. A loving, education-focused community of staff, parents and citizens creates an environment where this can happen.

The University Place Children's Fund (featured on page 7) is another example of citizens, staff and parents working together to support students. This fund (actually two "sister" funds) consists of charitable donations from staff and citizens to support kids who need help that parents and schools can't provide. The fund provides school supplies, medical help, clothing and other needs for our students.

If you are reading this *Dialog*, you are a contributing member of this great, University Place School District team. Please know that your interest and contributions to our public schools make a lasting difference for children. It is an honor to be part of your team.

Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership. If you have any concerns, questions or suggestions for UPSD, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at jchamberlin@upsd83.org or call (253) 566-5600.



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www.upsd83.org



Up Spotlights

Alumni Spotlight: Rachel Chow

Rachel Chow has the distinction of graduating from two of UPSD's outstanding programs. First, she graduated from Curtis in 2014. In 2017, she graduated again from the Community Transition Program. Shortly thereafter, Rachel entered the workforce prepared to succeed independently at work and in the community.

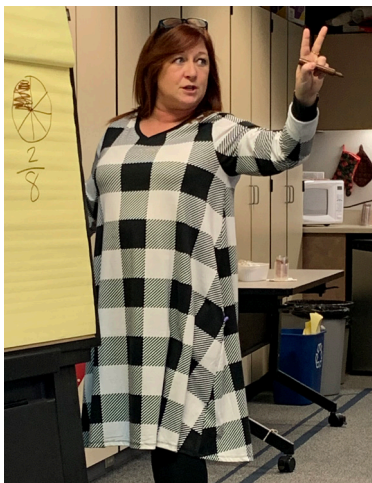
Rachel believes her membership in the district's special education community was advantageous in her successfully navigating her educational years—from elementary through high school. This affirming community became the cornerstone of both her classroom learning and her personal growth through positive socialization.

Through the Community Transition Program, Rachel received structure, support, and valuable work experience that prepared her for her first independent employment. Through the district program, she received hands-on learning by volunteering at Narrows Glen Retirement Home, Allenmore Hospital, and the Morgan Family YMCA.

Since her graduation from the Community Transition Program in June 2017 at age 21, Rachel has worked at Joint Base Lewis McChord as a successful dining room attendant. Her joyful spirit and positive work ethic have helped her succeed both as a valued employee and caring friend.



Rachel Chow



Karen Vaver

Faculty Spotlight: Karen Vaver

Karen Vaver, a fourth-grade teacher at University Place Primary since 1998, has the distinction of working with two very different groups throughout the year: her classroom full of eager students, and her peers who teach 4th graders throughout the district.

Not only has Vaver taught her 4th graders with passion and dedication, but she's also taught teachers through her work developing and sharing curriculum. She's trained new teachers, trained teachers on specific math topics, and leads the 4th Grade Professional Learning Community.

She helps fourth-grade teachers unify their instruction so students receive the same information in a similar manner regardless of who teaches them. "I love the math curriculum we use in the UPSD because each year we build upon the knowledge and successful strategies from previous years," she says.

A four-time Teacher of the Year nominee, Karen is "caring, persistent, and deeply devoted to meeting the needs of each student," says UP Primary Principal William Keith. "She is equally invested in the learning and growth of her colleagues within and outside of University Place Primary."



Kekoa Dilay

Student Spotlight: Kekoa Dilay

Curtis High Principal Tom Adams doesn't hesitate when he describes sophomore Kekoa Dilay as personable, bright and positive. "He is truly remarkable," Adams says when talking about the honor student widely known for his outstanding work in the arts.

Not only is Kekoa a gifted performer in choir and the theater, but he's been a positive leader in both programs. "Kekoa represents the top echelon of students," says his theater teacher Briony Schroeder. "His natural talent, as well as his ability to lead his peers, inspires me every day." Kekoa likes the universal appeal of music and drama. "It can impact everyone – from kids in preschool to the elderly." And his work in theater has done just that. At summer camps, he's taught elementary school students

about all aspects of theater. On stage at CHS and Tacoma Musical Playhouse, he has entertained both his peers and community members.

Through both his curricular and co-curricular work at Curtis, Kekoa has learned the value of supporting others. "You don't know what other people are going through, so supporting people any way you can and bringing people up is essential," he says.

"Each person who interacts with Kekoa leaves the better for it," says Principal Adams. "He exemplifies the fantastic people and students at Curtis High School."

Community Partner Spotlight: Narrows Rotary

UPSD is fortunate to partner with Tacoma Narrows Rotary. The local club focuses on the principles of service to others, integrity, world understanding, goodwill and peace through fellowship with business and community leaders.

Tacoma Narrows Rotary has impacted thousands of UPSD students through its decades of service. "Rotary's influence on our students begins in the preschool years with over \$10,000 in scholarships to families in need for this tuition-based program," says UPSD Superintendent Jeff Chamberlin. "This generosity continues throughout the primary years with the "One School/One Book" program, as well as support for after school reading programs."



Juliet Edmondson, Sophia Boeder, Dawson Keith, Kristopher Chinn, and Principal Jayne Hofstrand of Curtis Jr. High

As district students enter CHS, Rotary provides opportunities for them through its International Youth Exchange Program that sends students abroad or welcomes international students into the district through its host program. The club also supports Curtis High graduates through a generous college scholarship program. Students, parents, teachers and administrators owe the Tacoma Narrows Rotary a debt of gratitude for its generosity and dedication for so many years to the students of the UPSD. This partnership is essential for both our schools and the community.

Community Transition Program Helps Graduates Become Independent and Employed

Allenmore Hospital Volunteer Services Coordinator Theresa Lerma is pleased with the hospital's ongoing partnership with the UPSD's Community Transition Program and appreciates the student volunteers and the work they do there. "The students benefit by having real work

experiences that help them gain skills and habits that will assist in potential future job placements for them," she says. As Allenmore's volunteer coordinator, she enjoys watching the students learn new tasks and gain self-confidence as well as give back to the community.

Transitioning Into Independent Adulthood and Employment

The Community Transition Program is designed for students ages 18-21 with individual education plans. They have completed traditional high school and are ready to gain the skills needed to transition into independent

adulthood and the workforce. The program's primary goal is to prepare and train students for job and life skills to empower them to become confident, contributing, and productive adult members of their community.



Setting Students Up for Success

The district's goal is to improve post-school outcomes for all students. "Research shows that providing students with disabilities more opportunities to learn and practice skills prior to graduation or leaving the district will benefit them," says Kelly McClure, the district's Executive Director of Special Services. "It will increase the likelihood that they'll be more involved in post-school education or employment in our community and improve their quality of life."

A Student Perspective

When asked what he likes best about the program, student Jerome Narvaez (pictured) said, "I like everything. I like working at the YMCA. I get to interact with people. I like talking to people and helping people."

Worked-Based Learning: Volunteering to Employment

The Community Transition Program gives students experiences of adult life while having the support of the school system. Throughout the week, they volunteer at local businesses while learning job skills and gaining work experience. At work and school, a team of job coaches coach the students in developing independence at their worksites. Student volunteer work examples include organizing and filing, greeting patrons, answering telephone calls, taking supply inventory, and cleaning tables and chairs. During the students' last year in the

program, some are eligible to participate in Pierce County's School to Work Program designed to help them become gainfully employed prior to exiting the district's transition program. "This is a fantastic partnership," says Community Transition Program Teacher Monique Patel. "And some students – such as Jerome Narvaez who was recently hired at the Morgan YMCA – are employed by where they volunteered while participating in our program. Others find jobs elsewhere in the community," she adds.

Developing Independent Living Skills

Work skills training is only one of the major components of the Community Transition Program. Teachers and coaches teach the students self-advocacy, vocational and employment skills, as well as independent living skills such as cooking, cleaning, social etiquette, problem-solving, and money management. They also teach students how to access local transportation and community resources. In addition, students may have opportunities to participate in small-group excursions to develop independent living skills. Examples include grocery shopping; accessing career services at community agencies; meetings with service providers, potential employers, and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; and attending fitness and art classes at area recreation centers.

Preparing Students for Life

Even though the time spent in the Community Transition Program is limited, “We must prepare our students for all aspects of life,” says McClure. “Our job is to make sure students have the skills and outside agency services in place prior to graduating from high school. Ms. Patel advocates for our students and makes it a priority to collaborate with our community partners, families, and the adult students so there is a seamless transition into adulthood.”

Looking for Community Partners

The district is always looking for Community Transition Program community partners who would like to teach students with disabilities work-related skills as well as provide volunteer experiences during the school year. To learn more, contact Executive Director of Special Services Kelly McClure at kmccclure@upsd83.org (253) 566-5645, or Monique Patel, mpatel@upsd83.org, (253) 566-5710, ext. 2475.



Community Partner Worksites

- Allenmore Hospital
- Bellarmine Preparatory School Nursery & Greenhouse
- City of University Place City Hall
- City of University Place Public Works Department
- Curtis Jr. and Senior High School Libraries
- Morgan Family YMCA
- Narrows Glen
- UPSD Copy Center



Children's Fund Supports UP Students' Critical Needs

University Place citizens got together in 1997 and planned a dinner and auction to raise funds to ensure that a Curtis Jr. High teenager's medical needs were met. His family couldn't pay for his leukemia treatments. This community support blossomed into a non-profit organization called the University Place Children's Fund (UPCF). UPCF continues to support University Place families' critical needs today. It's governed by a Board of Directors of University Place community and business leaders.

UPCF Donates Money to District Trust Fund

In 2005, the UPCF donated \$2,000 of seed money to a University Place School District trust fund (also named UPCF) so the district could start a similar fund for UPSD students who needed support to help them succeed in school. Faculty and staff jumped at the opportunity to do something extra for students in need. Since that time, school district staff have donated thousands of dollars to provide their students with things they need to succeed in school.



Reducing Barriers and Crisis Assistance

To begin the application process, families contact school counselors or administrators. "We try to remove any barriers for kids and families to participate in school," says CJH Counselor Angela Tolan. "We've even helped families in crisis by buying groceries when they had no food."

Appreciation for All Who Contribute

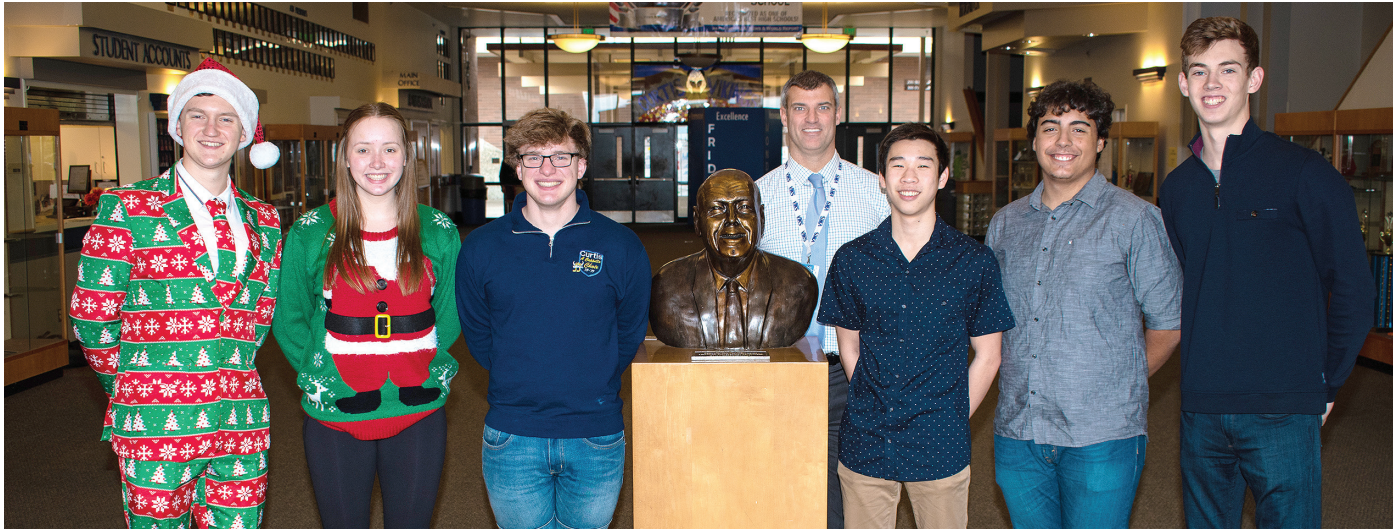
"We so appreciate the program and everyone who contributes to it — staff and community members," says CJH Counselor Kelley Artiaga. "We couldn't imagine what it would be like if we didn't have (the fund). It truly is a vital resource that enables us to better meet the needs of our students and families."

How Employee Contributions Help Students

Today, University Place School District employees donate about \$10,000 annually to the district trust fund. Individuals and community groups also donate. In 2018-19, the trust fund brought in over \$18,000 and distributed \$19,500 to students in need. "Having this fund allows us to help students who may not be able to access things like sports, clubs, and summer school," says Artiaga. "Many times, the kids need that extra support." Examples of what the funds have helped pay for include:

- Instrument rental fees, class and field trip fees
 - Clothing, shoes, and basic necessities
 - Summer school
 - Yearbooks
 - Sports physicals so students can participate in sports
 - Before and after school enrichment programs
 - Student medical needs or supplies
 - ASB and athletic participation fees
-

Eight Seniors Qualify as National Merit Commended Scholars



CHS Commended Scholars: Sterling Hudspeth, Audrey Shry, Kiefer Paulson, CSH Principal Tom Adams, Ryan Ling, Ethan Simental, and Brandon Long. Not pictured: Shawn Kim, Brian Nguyen

Congratulations to the eight Curtis High seniors who qualified as Commended Scholars in the National Merit Scholarship Program. The academic competition gives students in grades 9-12 an opportunity to get recognition and qualify for scholarships based on their scores for the Preliminary SAT (PSAT)/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMQT). Over 1.5 million juniors in the U.S. entered the competition last spring and about 50,000 students with the highest test scores qualified as either Semifinalists or Commended Scholars. About two-thirds of the high scorers qualified as Commended Scholars for their outstanding academic promise. Kudos to UPSD's eight Commended Scholars (pictured above).

Although Commended Scholars do not continue in the competition for National Merit Scholarships, some become candidates for special scholarships sponsored by corporations and businesses.

Job Opportunities in UP Schools

Spring hiring season in UPSD is just around the corner and we hope you will consider joining our team. We employ more than 625 of the finest educators and support staff anywhere. Our team includes teachers, bus drivers, nurses, custodial and maintenance staff, food service workers, coaches, paraeducators (classroom support staff), occupational and physical therapists, psychologists, administrators, office support staff, computer technicians and counselors.

You are free to apply online at any time using the "Employment" menu on our website (www.upsd83.org). We offer competitive salaries and excellent benefits in a great working environment. Most importantly, we do the critical work of keeping kids safe and helping them learn at very high levels. Please call us with questions at 253-566-5600 or visit us online.

State Awards \$116,000 Energy Grant to Support Drum and Narrows View



UPSD Receives Energy Efficiency Grant for Energy Upgrades

A UPSD energy efficiency project at Drum and Narrows View Intermediate schools was one of 39 proposed projects awarded to local governments, schools and state agencies throughout the state by the Washington State Department of Commerce. The district will use the \$116,000 grant to increase energy efficiency and reduce operation and maintenance costs at the two schools.



One of 14 School Districts to Receive the Grant

The state awards these grants through a competitive process and UPSD is one of only 14 school districts statewide to receive the award this year. "We are very excited that our project was chosen and look forward to bringing better energy efficiency and enhanced lighting to Drum and Narrows View," says Alphonso Melton, Executive Director of Business Services for UPSD.



Project Goals Include Reducing Energy Use & Operating Costs

Goals for the project include improving the facilities' environments and reducing utility and operational costs. The project will reduce energy use and operating costs while providing an improved learning environment for teachers and students. Increasing energy efficiency also helps the environment by conserving our natural resources.



New Boilers at Drum Intermediate

The project will replace boilers at Drum that cost the district considerably in electrical consumption and demand charges to heat the building. The new boilers represent a long-term investment by the district in both its infrastructure and its commitment to energy efficiency.



New Interior Lighting at Drum and Narrows View

The interior fluorescent lighting at the two schools will be replaced with new and efficient LED lighting. The new lighting will provide improved light levels to help the learning environment inside the buildings and reduce energy costs.



Tremendous Cost Savings

"We estimate the direct cost savings to be just under \$20,000 per year," says Melton. "The bulk of this savings comes from the increased efficiency of the LED upgrades as they use far less power than the fluorescent bulbs currently being used. In addition, because LEDs have a much greater life expectancy, we anticipate additional cost savings in future years through decreased maintenance and repair costs. Our estimated combined savings are more than \$30,000 per year and more than \$150,000 over five years. That is a tremendous savings for our district."



Making Public Dollars Go Further

Melton credits the district with being good stewards of its financial resources. "We actively look for grants and other funding sources to make our public dollars go further," he says.



Community Support Reinforces District's Energy Efficiency Goals

The tremendous support from the University Place community also helps reinforce the district's energy efficiency goals. Because of the passing of the 2018 levy for capital improvements, safety, and technology systems, for example, the district is making other capital improvements and energy upgrades to its schools. "Levy funds, along with the grant, allow us to keep our buildings well maintained and improve their energy efficiency through targeted upgrades," adds Melton.

UPSD Energy Efficiency Grant

- Grant award: \$116,000
- Grantor: Washington State Department of Commerce
- Grants awarded to state school districts: 14
- Schools affected: Drum and Narrows View Intermediate Schools
- Energy upgrades projects: Interior LED lighting and heating efficiencies with new boiler at Drum

ANNUAL COST SAVINGS

- Utility cost savings: \$19,291 (primarily from LED lighting efficiencies)
- Operations & maintenance cost savings: \$12,815
- Total annual cost savings: \$32,106
- Total savings over 5 years: \$160,530

ANNUAL ENERGY SAVINGS

- 275,096 guaranteed kWh/year
- 9,243 guaranteed Max gas/year usage

CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS WOULD EQUAL

- 46 acres of trees planted
- 370,453 lbs. CO₂/year

UPSD BUILDINGS & UTILITY COSTS

- Approx. square footage of UPSD buildings is 740,407 sq ft.
- UPSD Utility Expenditure \$1,435,149 (2018-19)



The project will replace Drum boilers and fluorescent lighting at Drum and Narrows View.

Tell Us What You Think.

We invite parents and community members to share their opinions about the district's current policy and procedures for student discipline by taking a short Student Discipline Policy Survey. This survey will only take about 15 minutes to complete and the questions can be answered by parents, students or community members. Use this link to complete the survey anytime between now and **March 20, 2020**:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CL93SJ8>.



Scan the QR Code with your smart phone to begin the survey now or type in the web address above.

Kindergarten Registration Opens March 10th

If your child will turn five on or before August 31, 2020, you can register online anytime after March 10. Early registration is encouraged. Visit www.upsd83.org; registration can be found under the "Family Resources" tab or click the "Student Registration" button in the banner. For best results, use a computer or tablet to register your child. Smartphones are not recommended. You will need to have the following items near-by: birth certificate, Certificate of Immunization Status, proof of residency (utility bill), and ID for the parent/guardian. If you do not have access to a computer, call the district office at (253) 566-5600.



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UpDialog

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

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Upcoming Events

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| February 27-29 | Danceblast |
| March 9 | Curtis High Spring Orchestra Concert, 7pm |
| March 10 | Kindergarten Registration Opens |
| March 10 | Curtis Jr. High Spring Orchestra Concert, 7pm |
| March 11 | Curtis High Spring Band Concert, 7pm |
| March 12 | Curtis High Spring Choir Concert, 7pm |
| March 17 | District Band Festival, 7pm |
| March 20 | Curtis Jr. High School Musical, 7pm |
| March 21 | Curtis Jr. High School Musical, 1pm & 7pm |
| April 2 | Curtis Jr. High Spring Band Concert, 7pm |
| April 4 | Daffodil Parade |
| April 6-10 | Spring Break |
| April 16-18 | Curtis High School Spring Play |
| April 21 | Curtis Jr. High Spring Choir Concert, 7pm |
| May 1 | District-Wide Multicultural Night |

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

Upcoming Board Meetings

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| March 11 | Education Service Center (ESC) |
| April 22 | Education Service Center (ESC) |

Members of the public are encouraged to attend meetings of the Board of Directors.



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