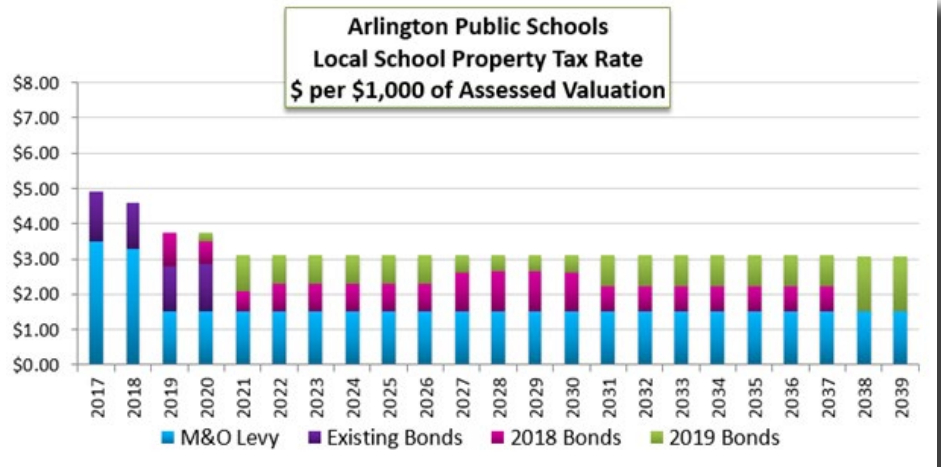


Arlington Public Schools takes steps to prepare for the future

On Oct. 3, the district's Facilities Advisory Committee presented a recommendation to the Board of Directors to make improvements to or construct replacement buildings for schools across Arlington.

Recommended projects include:

- Build a new Post Middle School to replace the existing building.
- Improve security at all schools by building secured entryway systems, replacing all classroom door locks to allow lockdown from inside the classroom, and install networked surveillance cameras (currently only three buildings have limited surveillance camera systems).
- Install fire sprinklers at Eagle Creek Elementary. Eagle Creek is the only school building in the district without a fire suppression system.
- Add classroom voice amplification systems to all elementary schools.
- Improve access and bus/vehicle traffic safety to the Post/Eagle Creek Elementary/Stillaguamish Valley Learning Center campuses and Kent Prairie Elementary School campus.
- Add an eight classroom wing and Science/Technology/Engineering/Art/Math (STEAM) workshop to Arlington High School.
- Install a covered waiting area at the student bus loop at Arlington High School.
- Replace Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning equipment at Eagle Creek and Kent Prairie Elementary Schools and Weston High School.
- Improve playfields at elementary schools.
- Build a bus wash and repave yard at the district Bus Garage.



Local School Property Tax Would Decline

Because the current voter-approved bond will be paid off in 2020, replacement with a new bond would not cause a property tax increase. In fact, local school property taxes as a result of a replacement bond would be less than 2017 and would decrease even more starting in 2021. The graph above shows estimated tax rates from 2017-2039 if the district issues voter-approved bonds to pay for proposed building improvements and replacement.

Board Deliberations Continue

The board will continue to analyze and review the Facilities Advisory Committee's recommendation in future meetings. Public input is always welcome. If you have questions about the Facilities Advisory Committee recommendation, check the district website at www.asd.wednet.edu/bond for more information or call Brian Lewis, Executive Director of Operations, at 360-618-6238.

Arlington School Board named Board of Distinction

The Arlington Public Schools Board of Directors has been named a Board of Distinction by the Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA). This is the first time the Arlington School Board has earned this distinction and will be recognized during the WSSDA Annual Conference this month. The Arlington School Board is also in contention to win School Board of the Year.

Of the 295 school district boards in the state of Washington, Arlington was one of 22 boards to earn this honor for 2017. This award recognizes boards that show evidence of applying the Washington School Board Standards. The standards encourage boards to focus on student achievement as their primary responsibility.

Arlington's Open Doors program providing students with a path to success

Arlington Public Schools' Open Doors program just started this school year but it's already helping students achieve their dream of a high school diploma or General Education Diploma (GED). By partnering with Workforce Snohomish, the program also offers career preparation which connects students with internships and jobs. The Open Doors Youth Reengagement Program is a statewide program that provides education and services to older youth, ages 16-21, who have dropped out of school or are not expected to graduate from high school by the age of 21. Arlington's program is housed at Weston High School.

"Open Doors can be a good fit for students who have dropped out of school or who are considering dropping out due to life changes, work or other circumstances," said Renee McArt, Open Doors Case Manager/



Instructor. "The program provides later hours than a typical school to accommodate students who may work during the day."

Sixteen-year-old Nazarelli Macias started with Open Doors in September. She has a young child and Open Doors allows her a flexible schedule to complete a lot of her courses online at home. She said the program provides a lot of help including online tutoring. She visits Weston twice a month to sit down with McArt and review her progress.

"My goal is to receive my high school diploma," said Macias. "Having a diploma allows me to have more career options."

Open Doors currently has 17 students enrolled in the program and is expanding. If you know of someone who would benefit from the Open Doors program, they can call McArt at 360-618-6336.

Arlington's truancy board removes barriers to student success

Arlington Public Schools' community truancy board was formed last spring and is providing educational options to keep students in school. Eleventh-grader Keinen LaRose attended Arlington High School (AHS) for ninth- and 10-grades. He felt like he was overwhelmed at AHS and started falling behind in his studies. He never felt like he could catch up and stopped going to school despite interventions from AHS. He missed more than 110 days of school over that two-year period. Under Washington state's truancy law, the school held conferences with LaRose and his family and the school eventually had to file a petition with the juvenile court.

"Since I missed so much school, I had to go to truancy court and I felt like a convict," said LaRose. "After the hearing, I decided I didn't want to drag my parents through that experience again."

Last spring, LaRose attended Arlington's newly formed community truancy board. This board is comprised of educators, administrators, mental health professionals and community members. The student and their family – with the support of the board members – come up with solutions to remove barriers to student attendance.

Spotlight on Schools

Community members participated in Arlington High School's lib dub video on Oct. 5 during homecoming week.



I felt like I was offered a new start.

- Keinen LaRose

"I felt like they weren't trying to punish me and actually wanted me to succeed in school. They actually listened to me. They talked about educational options and gave me tools so I could be successful. I felt like I was offered a new start."

LaRose now attends Weston High School and has completely turned his life around. He feels the school is much more hands-on due to the smaller environment and he is working on making up his credits for graduation. LaRose would like to become a heavy machinery operator once he graduates.

His father also drives him to school every day which helps his attendance. In October, he received an award for perfect attendance. He said it was the first award he received since elementary school.

"I'm so proud of him right now and he's proud of himself," said his mother Cheyenna Costello. "The truancy board was a very positive experience for us."





Dozens sign up to volunteer to make an impact on Pioneer students' lives

Dozens of fathers, grandfathers, step-fathers, uncles, and other father figures signed up on Oct. 18 to become WATCH D.O.G.S. at Pioneer Elementary School during a "Doughnuts with Dad" event. Dads and others, along with their students, enjoyed doughnuts while learning more about the program. WATCH D.O.G.S. stands for Dads of Great Students but the program is for all males who want to help out at the school.

"This is a great opportunity for dads and others to see what students do during the day," said Kim Caldwell, Pioneer's Assistant Principal who oversees the program. "The volunteers help by greeting students in the hallways, reading with students, having lunch with them and playing with them on the playground. Our students thrive off this interaction with adults!"

All volunteers go through a background check and Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying presentation. Kevin McGrath, who has two children at Pioneer, is starting his third year as a WATCH D.O.G.S. volunteer.

"It's really fun to be involved with my kids' school and see what they and their friends are doing," said McGrath. "I'm able to help out a few times every quarter and it provides a nice window into their school life."

Volunteers don't have to have a child attending school in the district. Community members are also welcome to help at any of the district's schools. Please contact your local school if you would like to volunteer.

Haller students Skype with NASA engineer to learn about Orion space mission

Haller Middle School students Skyped with NASA engineer, Nujoud Merancy, on Oct. 5 to learn more about the Orion spacecraft and its mission. Merancy is the planning and analysis lead engineer for Orion and she talked about her position with NASA and about Orion. The Orion spacecraft is intended to facilitate human exploration of asteroids and of Mars and to retrieve crew or supplies from the International Space Station if needed.

Students also asked Merancy questions about her position and the Orion program. Questions ranged from those about habitable net volume and the spacecraft's shield to what an average day at NASA looks like for Merancy.

"The students were so engaged with Ms. Merancy because

they could relate to her," said Haller teacher Rachel Harrington. "She is a UW graduate and a fellow Seahawks fan who also is incredibly inspiring and working on discoveries and feats that one

can only dream about. Whether students plan to work in aerospace engineering or not, they look at her and feel like the world is open to them as long as they work hard and dream big."

"From the perspective of a teacher, everything about this Skype session aligns with what education is truly about: inspiring young minds with real world experiences and accomplishments," said Haller teacher Colleen Turk. "This wasn't just about space science or engineering. This assembly was

about inspiring our students to be critical thinkers and problem solvers. I think we accomplished that goal thanks to Ms. Merancy and NASA."



Postal Customer ECRWSS

Students share what makes it a “home game” for them at school

Fall is well underway and our students are working hard to do their best. We believe students learn best in a positive learning environment. This year we are giving extra focus to “Making it a Home Game for Every Student, Every Day!” This means providing students with a safe, caring and welcoming learning environment.

Each month, I am meeting with students at a different school for a “Student Voices” lunch. In September, I visited with Haller Middle School students and in October with Post Middle School students. One school board director and a couple members of the superintendent’s cabinet also participate in each lunch. As a group, we enjoy lunch together in a relaxed environment and listen to student ideas and suggestions.

During the “Student Voices” lunch, students are asked about what makes it a “home game” for them at school. They are also asked to share what supports their learning and what can we do better to help them learn, as well as what barriers they believe exist.

At Post Middle School, one student who runs cross country shared that she feels more supported at home meets versus away meets with more parents there cheering on the team. A second student who moved from California to Arlington shared how welcoming the students were when he arrived. Nice teachers, the ability to go outside at lunchtime, and lots of different sports and activities were among the things the students felt make it a home game for them at Post.

At Haller Middle School, one student said when he moved up from the elementary school, the older students at Haller welcomed him. Another student stated he really likes group work and having the opportunity to choose partners for group work. When students were asked what improvements could be made, one student said he would like more time to finish homework at school. One student said he would like the track to be replaced and another said she would like more clubs for students to join.



One area that all the middle school students have agreed on is how supportive the teachers and staff are at their schools. Students shared stories of how some teachers are firm but know how to joke. Other teachers are active and energetic and make learning fun. Students said their teachers are supportive and want the students to succeed.

The “Student Voices” lunches will continue throughout the year. We are getting great honest and thoughtful feedback from the students!

In Arlington Public Schools, we work hard to hire the best teachers and staff. These students have re-affirmed the quality teachers and staff we have in Arlington. I’m proud to work in a district where engaging each student in high quality learning and making it a “home game” is a priority.

Dr. Chrys Sweeting
Superintendent

Arlington Public Schools provides equal educational opportunity and treatment for all students in all aspects of the academic and activities program without discrimination based on race, religion, creed, color, national origin, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, marital status, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. The District will provide equal access to school facilities to the Boy Scouts of America and all other designated youth groups listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society. District programs will be free from sexual harassment. Auxiliary aids and services will be provided upon request to individuals with hearing, vision, or speech disabilities.

The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination:

TITLE IX OFFICER AND COMPLIANCE COORDINATOR

Mr. Eric DeJong
Executive Director, Human Resources
315 N French Ave.
Arlington, WA 98223
360.618.6212
edejong@asd.wednet.edu

SECTION 504 COORDINATOR

Mr. Dave McKeller
Director of Special Education
315 N French Ave.
Arlington, WA 98223
360.618.6209
dmckellar@asd.wednet.edu