



## Thank you LINKS Supporters!

*LINKS enthusiastically thanks the following organizations who have supported our program through the Lake Washington Schools Foundation:*

- AXA Advisors
- Katherine Victorino, Edward Jones Sammamish
- King County Community Organizing Agency
- City of Redmond

*Funding also provided by the Lake Washington School District PTSA Council*

# LINKS

## Looking Into the Needs of Kids and Schools

*Lake Washington School District*

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### A Message from Superintendent Chip Kimball

As Superintendent of the Lake Washington School District, I believe that every student who walks through our doors should find a place where they belong and can be successful. The LINKS program brings caring community volunteers into our schools as mentors, classroom helpers and tutors. These volunteers help students feel that an adult in school values them and provide educational assistance so that students succeed. It is a credit to our community that our volunteers have a wide range of backgrounds and skills and include businesspeople, college students, retirees living in our neighborhoods and parents with children in our district. I would like to thank personally all the LINKS volunteers who give their time each week to help ensure that our students feel engaged, supported and challenged in their education.



— Dr. Chip Kimball, Superintendent

### SAVE THE DATE!

#### Volunteer Orientation/Training March 2

Are you interested in becoming a LINKS Volunteer? Are you a current volunteer or mentor and want to learn how to make your time in the school more meaningful?

LINKS will offer a Volunteer Orientation and Training on Tuesday, March 2, at the L.E. Scarr Resource Center, located at 16520 N.E. 74th Street, Redmond. New volunteers can arrive at 6:30 p.m. to fill out district paperwork. We will discuss the different opportunities available and answer all questions! Please bring your driver license or other valid identification.

At 7:00 p.m., all volunteers are welcome to an educational training. You will hear about different learning styles of students, and how to make your time together more productive. A round table discussion will follow. Please join us and share your best practices.

*LINKS is a Volunteer and Mentoring Program of the Lake Washington School District with funding provided by the Lake Washington Schools Foundation*

## Counselor's Corner

**M**y name is Candida Crane and I am the School Counselor/Lunch Buddy Coordinator at Einstein Elementary in Redmond. Lunch Buddy Program is a wonderful mentorship program that connects caring adults with children in the schools.

Being a Lunch Buddy is about building a relationship with an adult a child can trust. An essential part of building this relationship is listening to the child and empathizing with them.

Mentors can use these three communication skills:

- Listening carefully to what the child is saying.
- Formulating in the mind what the child is expressing.
- Repeating back to him/her in your own words the feeling they have just expressed to you.



When a mentor uses this technique, the student will really know the mentor understands—which in turn builds the trust in their relationship. (J. Deary, Ed.D., Institute for Urban Family Health, NYC).

## Volunteer Needs

- Redmond Elementary - One-on-one academic mentors
- Redmond Junior High
  - After-School Study Lab 2:30-3:30 p.m. daily except Wednesdays from 1:00-3:30 p.m.
  - After School Math Lab Study Tuesday & Thursday 2:30-3:30 p.m.
- Alcott Elementary
  - Lunch Buddies 12:00-1:20 p.m.
  - Homework Buddy 3:00-3:30 p.m.
  - One-on-one mentoring
- Rosa Parks
  - One-on-one academic mentors
  - One-on-one assistance with special needs student
- Lakeview Elementary—Lunch recess Art and Math Game Help
- Einstein Elementary—Lunch Buddies
- Finn Hill Junior High—Math Tutors 2:45-4:00 p.m.
- Redmond High School—Spanish Speaking Mentors

## Did You Know?

*Students with mentors:*

- See an increase in grades
- Have better attendance
- Have a better chance of going on to higher education
- Have better attitudes towards school
- Have more positive social attitudes and relationships.

*Source: Child Trends and Mentor.org*



## Volunteer Spotlight—Our Amazing Volunteers!

### *Dave Naro — Pilchuck Contractors Give the Gift of Time*

David Naro, project manager for Pilchuck Contractors in Kirkland, wanted to give back to the community by being a lunch buddy at Rose Hill Elementary. David's buddy is in third grade. They meet weekly to have lunch and do a variety of other activities. David said, "We started out on the playground each week. I played soccer or basketball with him and his friends. After I spoke with his teacher and learned he was very behind in his reading and math skills, we have started to read or play games before lunch. I try and pick games that make him think and communicate." As the holidays neared in December, David helped his new friend make a Christmas card for his mom and write a letter for Santa. David shared, "When I asked what he wanted (for Christmas) he said 'you'..it was pretty touching." Pilchuck Contractors has four employees who volunteer as lunch buddies at Rose Hill Elementary.



### *Thayne Orgill — Academic Mentors Make a Difference!*

Thayne Orgill began as a LINKS volunteer last Fall. Thayne's background in elementary education, along with her passion for kids, made her a perfect match for volunteering in a school. Thayne helps at Rockwell Elementary two days a week for two hours each day and acts as an academic tutor and classroom assistant. Thayne shares an example of the impact that volunteering can make: Recently the fifth grader that I have been tutoring in math made a major breakthrough in understanding the concept of borrowing when subtracting. It was very exciting for both of us to discover that he finally "got it"!

When asked if Thayne found being a volunteer rewarding, she replied, "I LOVE this opportunity to be of service in some small way and give a little bit back to the community. It is very rewarding to feel like you are making a difference in the life of a child."

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## Spanish Speaking Mentors Needed



**Do you speak Spanish and have one hour per week to contribute to our school community? LINKS has many requests for Spanish-speaking volunteers to work with bilingual students as mentors and as tutors in math and reading. Contact Program Coordinator Nanci Wehr at [links@lwsd.org](mailto:links@lwsd.org) to learn more .**



## LWSD District Calendar Please Note 'No School Days'

February 16-18, 2009

March 6, 2009

March 30-31, 2009

April 1-3, 2009

May 22, 2009

May 25, 2009

June 19, 2009 – Last day of school

*Subject to change if there are additional snow days to make up*



### Attention LINKS Volunteers!!

*It is very important that you sign into the  
**GREEN LINKS BINDER** each time you visit a school.*

*We are required by our grantors to track the number of volunteer  
hours and we want every one of your hours to count!*

### January is National Mentoring Month!

*“When you serve as a mentor, you enrich your own  
life as much as you do the life of the child.*

*Mentoring leads to new experiences, new connec-  
tions, new insights, and new satisfactions. Don't  
delay—become a Mentor today! “*

*—www.nationalmentoringmonth.org*

### LINKS

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