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LINKS

Winter 2011 Newsletter

Looking Into the Needs of Kids and Schools

A Message from Superintendent Chip Kimball

Our staff and community often hear me talk about college readiness, global competitiveness, achievement and performance. The work we do to prepare students for the future is extremely important and is complex, as you know. We can only accomplish this difficult work when it is done within the context of the human development of our students. This requires compassion, understanding, and support for our students who bring different backgrounds and experiences, and need the touch of the adults in the system. As volunteers you provide the much needed support for the students we serve.

Each child in our district has a story to tell and a perspective that is unique and compelling. For some, it's a story about their passion for reading, math or art and for others it's about pure survival and the sometimes overwhelming challenge to get by. In all cases, it's about lives that can be shaped on any given day by one person, and the compassion that our volunteers share by taking the time to ask a question and help them 'get it'.

The work our staff and LINKS volunteers do is about the development of children into young adults. This development requires us to look within ourselves and think about what we have to offer that can help a student reach a higher level of achievement. It requires talented and energetic professionals who know when to encourage with vigor, and when to be extraordinary patience because that is what they need at the time. It requires wisdom and tenacity as well as compassion.

Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to share your time and make a difference in a student's academic success. Your time and talent is a valued resource and I appreciate the work you do.

Kind Regards, Chip

LINKS Volunteer Training

February 3, 7:00 p.m.

Lake Washington School District Resource Center, Board Room

Guest Speaker: Ken Wong
Topic: Mentoring Secondary Students

Ken Wong has 20+ years experience mentoring youth. Kids today deal with social pressures, including bullying and stereotyping, that can affect their ability to concentrate on school work. Learn how to make your time together interactive, supportive and productive. Ken will share techniques and "tools" to help you work with students and make the most of the time you spend tutoring or mentoring.

This training session is open to volunteers working with students of all ages.

Volunteer Makes Learning Fun!

Debbie Tott is one of many wonderfully dedicated volunteers. This is her second year sharing her time at A.G. Bell. I remember checking in with Debbie a few weeks after her first few visits and she enthusiastically said, "I love it! Volunteering in Barbara Butler's class is one of the highlights of my week. Kindergarten is a magical age."

Barbara Butler has a busy kindergarten class and welcomes the extra help. Last year Debbie assisted during reading time, guiding students along when they had questions. This year she has been working one-on-one with a student who speaks very little English. When I asked Barbara how this was going she responded, "Debbie works with him so that he can understand and complete his assignment. He is *thrilled* when he gets his work done and Debbie has played a big part in his feelings of success at school."

When asked about having Debbie as a volunteer, Barbara responded, "She works well with all of my students and brings an element of fun into the classroom. It is so wonderful to have someone walk into my room with energy and a cheerful face, ready to help students succeed."



Schools With LINKS Volunteers

Elementary Schools

Alcott
Bell
Einstein
Frost
Juanita
Keller
Kirk
Lakeview
Mann
Mead

Elementary Schools cont.

Redmond
Rockwell
Rose Hill
Smith

Junior High

Finn Hill
Inglewood
Redmond
Rose Hill

Senior High

Eastlake
Juanita
Lake Washington
Redmond

Jay Henwood

Lunch Buddy at Kirk Elementary



Jay became a Lunch Buddy last year because he felt that direct, one-on-one involvement produces the best results when working with kids. He and his buddy enjoyed their time together last year so much, they continued the mentorship this year. Jay shared, "Spending lunchtime and recess with a second grade child is really fun and helps to put my day into perspective. You tend to forget about your own stresses when you're playing with kids at a school. I've gotten to know his friends at recess, so hopefully I can have some influence on them as well."

Sometimes during their time together, Jay will read a book to his buddy while they eat lunch. Jay said, "He's always proud to show me his reading charts." This is a great example of how lunch buddies can incorporate academics into their time together. Other activities these buddies do together are playing chess, building things with legos or sometimes Jay just listens to the latest tales of Transformers and Inspector Gadget. When the student was asked what he likes about Jay he said, "He plays with me and helps me!"

Jay is a great advocate for the Lunch Buddy Program. When asked about his experience he said, "I would recommend being a Lunch Buddy to anyone. I think that community organizations are a great source for people who want to get involved and I think a lot of people just have a hard time taking that first step. If everyone spent one hour per week with a child, one-on-one, just imagine how much better this world would be!"



DATES TO REMEMBER

'No School Days'

February 17-18 & 21

March 18

March 28—April 1

LINKS EVENT

Volunteer Training Opportunities

Mentoring / Tutoring
Junior and High School
Students

February 3rd, 7:00 P.M.

Volunteer Appreciation
June 1, 2011, 1:00 P.M.

LINKS

Program Coordinator:
Nanci Wehr
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January is Washington State Mentoring Month

As a tutor or mentor you are investing your time, energy, and passion to work with students in our schools. You show commitment by sharing your time each week to help students “get” the math problem, understand how to conjugate a verb, or discuss cell regeneration. Sometimes you might be a listening ear when someone is having a tough day. Regardless of the task at hand, you’re an advocate and a tremendous support to the teachers and students in our schools.



What makes you a gold star volunteer? You...

- Enable students to feel capable and confident
- Convert the sense of being overwhelmed to feeling accomplished
- Lead by example
- Teach unconditional acceptance and respect
- Challenge students to go beyond the limits they sometimes set
- Inspire students to take control of their own destiny

Help Make Every Hour Count!



*LINKS volunteers serve hundreds of students in
Lake Washington School District.*

*It is **very** important that you sign into the **LINKS binder** in addition to
the schools Volunteer sign-in log each time you visit a school.*

*Tracking volunteer time helps us report to current funders and show
your work to potential funders.*

Your volunteer time is priceless.