FROM JEFF NELSON - ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF TLI

Recent construction progress now finds SLMS with the gyms and commons area structurally up, the kitchen and music rooms - including the stage area - almost up, and the classroom building being put in place. Steel work continues and even featured a welder dressed as Batman on Halloween!

We were invited to take a tour around the site by our architect. It was really something to be able to get ‘into’ the building and start to see what the layout looks like in person, rather than on paper! Our contractor, Cornerstone, also hosted a Topping Out ceremony, where the last piece of steel was put into place. This was a wonderful event! The whole student body at SLMS was excused to go watch, a SLMS banner was signed by all the kids and staff and attached to the beam. You could hear them cheering as the beam went soaring into the air!

FALL OF 2021 OPENING PLANNED FOR NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

It is full blast ahead on elementary school planning with the scheduled opening for fall of 2021. While that may seem like eons away, one thing we have learned in the construction world is that’s about 20 minutes from now.

Working with our architect, the updated version of the new elementary school is slightly smaller and consequently will accommodate a slightly smaller number of students - 825 to be exact. The primary reason for this is the cost of building on the site. There is a considerable amount of soil work and water retention necessary to support a new school, just like when Columbia Junior High was built.

We continue to work with our staff and architect on the overall project. In fact, we recently toured Northwood Elementary School in the Puyallup School district. It was fun to see a brand new building and learn from its principal. Thank you to Mrs. Helle, Northwood Principal, for the great visit!

Updates continued on next page...
is gradually being replaced with the use of voice recognition

While some may believe the need to be proficient on the keyboard

keyboarding program for students in grades K-5 called

to support security cameras and demo cameras are to be

end of March depending on what is discovered upon removal of

of the campus, focusing on the condition and replacement of

continue around the exterior of the gym area to other buildings

Infrastructure/Safety/Security (ISS)

insights were invaluable and will be directly reflected in the

off the bat during the Educational Specifications process. Their

Speaking of students, we had three FHS students involved right

at FHS have awesome ideas about learning and students.

specifics about classroom and learning spaces. The teachers

will serve as one of several

recent years, the reality is it

improved dramatically in

technology has indeed

while speech recognition

input methods our students will be using rather than an

exclusive replacement for the keyboard. Previously, keyboarding instruction was happening in

pockets, but the Fife School District’s recent 1:1 initiative has made it possible for skill development opportunities to be provided for ALL K-5 students. According to Nicole Bayliss, 4th grade teacher at Endeavour, “Having this program in place helps ensure all students at Fife will become more proficient using the keyboard - and this is a life skill that will not only help them in school but later in their careers as well.” What’s more, this program can even be accessed from home! Contact your student’s teacher for more information.

The STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Math) Center of Innovation at FHS is also progressing

McGranahan architects are now meeting with Fife High School teachers! This project is heading into the design phase where we get more specifics about classroom and learning spaces. The teachers at FHS have awesome ideas about learning and students.

Construction updates... continued

New keyboarding program underway in grades K-5

This year, the First School District has implemented a new keyboarding program for students in grades K-5 called Keyboarding Without Tears.

While some may believe the need to be proficient on the keyboard is gradually being replaced with the use of voice recognition technology, contemporary research is showing students will continue to benefit from keyboarding proficiency throughout their lives. And while speech recognition technology has indeed improved dramatically in recent years, the reality is it will serve as one of several

infrastructure/Safety/Security (ISS)

EIFS work at Fife High School began in October and will continue around the exterior of the gym area to other buildings of the campus, focusing on the condition and replacement of exterior siding. This work is expected to be completed by the end of March depending on what is discovered upon removal of the current exterior siding.

Our ISS team has conducted a district-wide review of exterior lighting. Projects to address lighting are currently in design. Plans to upgrade cameras, camera locations and server support for video storage for each facility are in design. Servers to support security cameras and demo cameras are to be installed this winter, and after this installation, procedures for use and implementation will be developed. District-wide deployment of cameras will be ready for installation next fall upon the completion of all summer projects. Maps for upgraded security fencing have been completed for our schools, and that work will be going out to bid shortly. Fencing projects at Discovery, Hedden, and Columbia Junior High will occur in December 2019.

Hardened entry plans and designs have been completed for Discovery, Hedden, and Columbia Junior High. Those entry projects will go out to bid after the new year and work is slated to begin as early as the end of March 2020. Upgraded fencing and hardened entries are part of the plan for improving security and access during the school day. These projects will change traffic flow and may impact traditional paths to and from school.

Project documents for roof replacements at Discovery and FHS will be complete by the end of November. Bids for these projects are expected to go out in late February or March. Roof replacement will begin as soon as school is out in June and they are expected to be completed before school begins next September.

For the latest news on all of our projects, please check out our construction website, via fifeschools.com. If you are on Twitter, you can also get information using #buildingfortomorrow.

did you know?

The number of languages spoken in our district

37

% increase in fife’s graduation rate in the last 3 years

13

did you know?

La Chispa! ignites “the spark” in hispanic students

On November 1, Deborah Reese - ELL teacher, Karen Woodward - ELL paraeducator, and Vicky Norman - counseling intern, took 36 Hispanic students from Surprise Lake Middle School to a day-long leadership workshop designed to ignite a spark for success in middle-level Hispanic students. Students spent the day connecting with peers through interactive games, hearing success stories from Hispanic high school students, and reflecting on their own experiences in school and identifying factors which lead to academic success.

Following a keynote from Vincent Perez, founder of La Clima and La Chispa! workshops, students were led through an interactive activity where they identified their own personal goals and identified how they can serve others as well as their community while simultaneously achieving these goals.

La Chispa! ignites “the spark” in hispanic students

In celebration of Native American History Month during November, a series of activities were held at the Fife History Museum and DaCCa Barn on November 19-20. In celebration, every 7th grade student in the district had the opportunity to participate in an interactive field trip to the museum. Attending students toured the museum and its various exhibits and listened to Native American storytellers Roger Fernandes and Solano Booth.

At the DaCCa Barn, students had a chance to see the Burke “Living Traditions” mobile exhibit. This traveling exhibit features different Northwest Native American foods and showcased the various ways cedar was used by Northwest tribes. Also on display were a selection of Northwest tribal artifacts and art.

A craft-making activity, led by Martha Sherman, Native American Education Program Coordinator for Fife Public Schools, had students making an oho - a Southwest Hopi and Navajo spiritual object made from crossed wooden sticks and woven yarn in multiple colors - made to symbolize the Creator keeping a watchful eye on one’s family. A plants and medicines “make and take” workshop, led by Autumn McCloud, led participants through the making of a healing cedar lavendar mint rub.

Native American History Month

VETERANS DAY IS MUCH MORE THAN A DAY OF NO SCHOOL. EACH OF OUR SCHOOLS PAID RESPECT TO OUR VETERANS FOR THEIR SERVICE AND SACRIFICE.

At Discovery Primary, Endeavour Intermediate, and Hedden Elementary, assemblies were held featuring a variety of patriotic songs by student groups as well as the observance of Veterans Day traditions such as the Little White Table. Both Surprise Lake Middle School and Columbia Junior High assemblies featured music performed by their schools’ band and choir programs. At SLMS Leah Sandlian, PE teacher & US Navy veteran, was a featured speaker; while at C&JH, 8th and 9th grade Language Arts students were selected to read Veterans Day poems they wrote in front of the student body. Fife High School’s assembly featured musical performances, video tributes, and culminated with Captain Brenden Shallow, Fox Company Commander 81st Brigade (Cascade Rifles) & FHS social studies teacher - along with Leah Sandlian from SLMS - sharing their experiences and their “why” for serving their country. Reflecting on how the Fife School District honors veterans, Shallow stated, “What an amazing community that truly supports their soldiers. The respect and appreciation is very apparent from students, staff, parents, and community members. I cannot stress how much that means to someone serving.” Veteran parents and family members from each building were also invited to attend these assemblies as honored guests.
A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Fife, Milton and Edgewood Communities,

As Thanksgiving and the holiday season is upon us, I wanted to recognize and give thanks to our team of administrative leaders that help create the conditions for the great work that happens in the Fife School District everyday. The following individuals make up and serve on the Superintendent’s Cabinet and work hand-in-hand with the school board and myself to carry out the vision and work of the district as a whole.

Ben Ramirez is our Deputy Superintendent. In short, if my role as the superintendent is similar to that of a chief executive officer or CEO, Ben’s role is akin to that of the chief operations officer or COO. Ben’s office oversees all operations and logistics of the district and he assists me with carrying out the duties of the superintendent’s office. In addition, Ben oversees important aspects of our current bond program including all safety and security upgrades as well as infrastructure improvements.

Kari Harris is our Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, which is a similar role to that of a chief financial officer or CFO. Kari’s important role is responsible for the overall financial health of the district, and as we all know, our district is fortunate to be one of the only districts in our region that is in great financial shape. With Kari’s assistance, we have been able to navigate many recent legislative changes to public school funding and staffing allocations. In addition to managing our $50M plus annual budget, Kari tracks all bond program spending for the entire $176.3M bond budget for all projects.

Jeff Nelson is our Assistant Superintendent for Teaching, Learning and Innovation. As the “chief academic officer” of the district, Jeff and his team oversee all aspects of student learning, professional learning for our adults, and all technology needs. Because of Jeff’s robust experience in the district spanning nearly 35 years, Jeff also oversees all committees and progress of the new Surprise Lake Middle School project in Milton, the future and new elementary school in Fife and a 40,000 square foot addition at Fife High School known as the FHS STEAM Center of Innovation.

Nancy Fitta is our Executive Director of Student Services, which covers all aspects of special education including special services like speech language, occupational and physical therapy as well as all students with Individual Education Plans, also known as IEPs. This very technical aspect of our district serves some of our students with very specialized needs and services, and Nancy and her team oversee all aspects of these programs. Nancy and her role are vital in ensuring the Fife School District is equitably and inclusively servicing our special needs students and including their unique and specific needs in all conversations regarding student learning.

Josh Goodman is our Director of Human Resources, overseeing all aspects of recruiting, hiring, inducting, training and retaining a highly qualified workforce both inside and outside our classrooms. Josh and his team also work closely with our business office on budgeting, certification, employee benefits and many other staffing needs.

For the last 22 years, I have been thankful to work in the Fife School District. As superintendent, I am extremely thankful for this team of leaders who work hard to provide the necessary supports and resources to our staff and students! Happy Holidays to you and your family!

Kevin Alfano, Superintendent