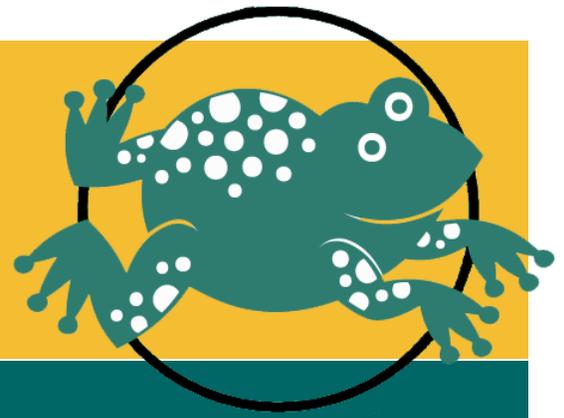


Penny Creek Frog News

PENNY CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



December 2019

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 4

From the Principal

Dear Penny Creek Families:

You have likely heard your student mention our iReady online Reading and Math curriculum. iReady is produced by Curriculum Associates, a company committed to helping all students meet or exceed standard on the Common Core State Standards.

However, iReady is not our main curriculum for reading and mathematics instruction. Its specific purpose is to help teachers diagnose any possible gaps students may have in their skills and to provide students targeted instruction and practice to help close those gaps.

What I appreciate most about iReady is that it provides teachers the ability to help students set specific goals for their learning needs, and provides differentiated instruction to help students close these gaps. Typically, students who show noticeable growth spend 30 to 45 minutes per week on reading and the same in math.

What is really exciting to share is that during the week of December 16th, Plory, one of the most loved iReady characters, will visit Penny Creek. Plory will explain a friendly contest that begins in January as a means to encourage students to complete one to two lessons each week. We do not encourage more than this because we want students to participate in a variety of learning and enrichment forms beyond what online learning offers. We also feel it is important to monitor the amount of screen time students experience each week.

If you have specific questions about iReady and your child's work with this curriculum, please reach out to your student's teacher. She can help you understand your child's learning focus and goals.

In closing, I hope you all enjoy the winter break and time off from school. I know it can get busy for families, and sometimes stressful. Know that we wish you a safe and happy holiday and look forward to supporting your children and working with you in the New Year.

Best,

Marti Shefeland

Marti Shefeland
Principal

Stefani Koetje
Assistant Principal

Penny Creek Elementary School
4117 132nd St. SE,
Everett, WA 98208
www.everettsd.org/pennycreek
425-385-7200

December 2

Fifth Grade Camp
Parent Meeting
Cafeteria 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

December 6

Learning Improvement Friday
2:15 p.m. Release

December 12

Fourth & Fifth Grade Concert
Eisenhower Middle School
10200 25th Ave SE Everett WA
Cafeteria 7 – 7:45 p.m.

December 13

Learning Improvement Friday
2:15 p.m. Release

December 20

Learning Improvement Friday
2:15 p.m. Release

December 23- January 3

Winter Break
NO School



LOST and FOUND

Is your student missing a jacket? Lost a hat? Looking for a misplaced lunchbox? If so, come check out the lost and found! Located in the foyer between the cafeteria and the gym. Items that remain unclaimed will be donated in mid-December. Thank you!

Natural Leaders Training Invitation

Natural Leaders Training

Thursday, December 5th from 5:30 - 7:30 pm at the School Library

Childcare Available

Natural Leaders serve as multi-cultural bridges between students, families, communities, and schools.

Any questions please contact Shelly Connery (third grade teacher) sconnery@everettsd.org

Penny Creek Attendance Corner

If your student is absent from school, please email the attendance office at pceattendance@everettsd.org to let us know the reason for the absence. There is also a direct link on our webpage at: <https://www.everettsd.org/pennycreek>

Did you have a medical appointment for your child, or they were sick and you brought them to the doctor? If so, make sure to ask for a medical note that you can turn in to the attendance office. Those absences can then be coded as a medical excuse.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Many of our students arrive and depart from Penny Creek on assigned school buses. For those families that transport students to and from school by cars, we have designated specific [arrival and departure options](#). Student safety is our number one priority at Penny Creek and we ask that you read through each option and select the method that will work best for you and your student(s). You can view the [arrival and dismissal procedures](#) on the [Penny Creek webpage](#).

For the safety of your students please note the following:

- **Morning arrival:** Morning supervision time begins at **8:50 a. m.** Please stay with your students until staff is present.
- **Kiss and Go:** Drop off lanes will open at **8:50 a.m.** Cars should enter through the west entrance and turn right into the Kiss and Go loop. Follow the lane around in front of the gym, and pull forward to the covered area when directed by staff. Kiss and go lanes will close every morning at **9:10 a.m.** Buses will be entering and exiting our parking lot at that time. If you arrive after 9:10 a.m. please park in the front lot and walk your student into school using the crosswalk.
- **Arrival after 9:15 a.m.:** Please park your vehicle and walk your student into the office where you can sign them in. Students arriving after 9:15 a.m. will be tardy.



Changes to a student's daily going home plan

Occasionally, we need to change the plan of how our child is going home at the end of the school day. Maybe Dad is picking up instead of riding the bus or Grandma will be at Kiss and Go instead of the parent pick up location in the Courtyard. If this is the case for your family, **we ask that a guardian sends an email to the school office at PennyCreek@everettsd.org and the classroom teacher by 2:50 pm on Mon-Thurs and 1:35 pm on Friday.** Please include the name of your student, their teacher, and the change of plan. Our office will then send out a messenger to deliver this information. We ask that you please send this email before these times. This method of communication helps to support our staff with accurate message delivery.

Checking out a Penny Creek student during the school day

Sometimes it is necessary for a parent/guardian to pick up a student before Penny Creek's dismissal time. To help us prepare, please send a note or email the school office at PennyCreek@everettsd.org in advance, letting us know the specific date, time and who will be picking up your child. Students who are dismissed during the school day must be signed out from the school office by their parent/guardian (or adult designee) before leaving the school grounds. If an adult designee is coming to check out your child, a note or email to the school office at PennyCreek@everettsd.org must be submitted by the guardian to confirm. Students will be called from the classroom for dismissal once the parent/guardian (or adult designee) arrives at the office. For the safety and security of students, we will ask for photo identification.

Penny Creek save the date events

December 2, 2019 – Fifth Grade Camp Parent Meeting 6:30 p.m. in the cafeteria

December 5, 2019 - Natural Leader's Training Meeting 5:30 p.m. in the library

December 12, 2019 – Fifth Grade Wreath Fundraiser pick up 3:30 – 6 p.m. in room E5

December 12, 2019 – Fourth and Fifth Grade Concert 7 p.m. at Eisenhower Middle School 10200 25th Ave SE Everett in the cafeteria

December 23, 2019 – January 3, 2020 Winter Break

January 16, 2020 – Natural Leaders Meeting 6 p.m. in the library

January 20, 2020 – No School – Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 23, 2020 – Second and Third Grade Concert 7 p.m. at Eisenhower Middle School 10200 25th Ave SE Everett in the cafeteria

January 30, 2020 – PTA Popcorn Day during recess

January 31, 2020 – PTA Bingo Night 6 p.m. in the cafeteria

Attention volunteers

Our schools rely on volunteers to support many important activities!

- We are digital! All volunteer applications and background checks can only be processed online.
- We are focused on safety! Each applicant requires background check and safety training.

Please plan ahead so your application can be processed in time for volunteer opportunities. The new application is now available online at www.everettsd.org/volunteer.



The gift of attendance

Absences spike in the weeks before and after the winter holiday as families squeeze in a few more vacation days. Just a few missed days here and there, even excused absences, can add up to too much lost learning time and put your child behind in school. This is as true in kindergarten as it is in high school. Put simply, too many absences at any age can affect a student's chances for academic success and eventually for graduation. This holiday season give your children the gift of an education and the habit of attendance.



In Everett Public Schools, we are committed to providing a world-class education to your student. Consistent school attendance supports student learning and achievement. Regular school attendance helps connect children to school, helps them succeed, and prepares them for future success in college and career. Students who do not regularly attend school often fall behind and do not perform as well as their peers.

Chronic absenteeism affects learning

- Starting in Kindergarten, more than two absences per month (excused and unexcused) can cause children to fall behind in school.
- Missing 10 percent (or about 18 days per school year = chronic absenteeism) increases the chance that students will not read or master math at the same level as their peers.
- Absences can disconnect students from the classroom and their peers.
- By sixth grade, absenteeism is one of three signs that a student may drop out of high school.
- By ninth grade, regular school attendance is a better predictor of whether or not students will graduate on time than their eighth-grade test scores.

You are an important partner in your child's education, and we appreciate your support in helping your child maintain consistent school attendance.

What to do when your child is absent

If your child is absent, please contact our school by emailing the attendance office PCEAttendance@everettsd.org within 30 calendar days from the date of the absence. We will be able to excuse your child's absences as long as this time requirement is met AND the reason is valid, in accordance with the state attendance laws. Please refer to the student handbook or visit the district website www.everettsd.org, for more information about the district's attendance procedures ([3122P](#)).

Our promise to you

We know there are a wide variety of reasons why students may be absent from school, from health concerns to transportation challenges. Penny Creek Elementary is prepared to help if you or your child face challenges getting to school regularly or on time. Please contact our school counselor, Diane Roberts, or our administrators if you would like to schedule a meeting to discuss any barriers your family is facing that may affect your child's attendance.



School policies and state laws regarding attendance

We want to ensure you are fully informed of our district attendance policy ([3122](#)) and procedure ([3122P](#)), as well as Washington State Law, to ensure your child is successful in school. State law for mandatory attendance, called the Becca Bill, requires children from age eight to 17 to attend a public school, private school, or a district-approved home school program. Children who are six or seven years old are not required to be enrolled in school. However, if parents enroll their six- or seven-year-old child in school, the student must attend fulltime.

Our district is required to take daily attendance and notify you when your child has an unexcused absence.

If your child has **3 unexcused** absences in one month, state law ([RCW 28A.225.020](#)) requires the district to schedule a conference with the principal/assistant principal/designee. During this conference, we partner with you to identify the barriers and supports available to ensure regular attendance. The district is obligated to develop a plan that may require an assessment to determine how to best meet the needs of your child and reduce absenteeism.

In elementary school, after **5 excused** absences in any month or **10 or more excused** absences in the school year, we are required to contact you to schedule a conference at a mutually agreeable, reasonable time, to identify the barriers and supports available to you and your child. A conference is not required if your child has provided a doctor's note. **Doctor's notes are required when the absence threshold has reached 10 excused absences in a school year.** If your child has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan, the team that created the plan will reconvene.

If your child has **7 unexcused absences in any month or 10 unexcused absences within the school year**, we are required to file a petition with the juvenile court, alleging a violation of RCW 28A.225.010, the mandatory attendance law. The petition may be automatically stayed, and your child and family may be referred to a Community Truancy Board, or you and your child may need to appear in Juvenile Court. If your child continues to be truant, you may be required to go to court.

Ways you can support your child's learning

- Set a regular bedtime and morning routine.
- Prepare for school the night before, finishing homework and getting a good night's sleep.
- Send your child to school every day unless he/she is truly sick.
- Develop back-up plans for getting your child to school on time.
- Keep track of your child's attendance. Missing multiple days of school could put your child at risk of falling behind.
- Establish expectations with your child about the importance of attendance.
- Talk to your child's teachers if you notice sudden changes in behavior.

Working together, we can remove barriers that keep students from the classroom and help each student graduate college, career, and life ready. Thank you for your support!



ATTENDANCE

in the early grades

Many of our youngest students miss 10 percent of the school year—about 18 days a year or just two days every month. Chronic absenteeism in kindergarten, and even preK, can predict lower test scores, poor attendance and retention in later grades, especially if the problem persists for more than a year. Do you know how many young children are chronically absent in your school or community?



Who Is Affected

Kindergarten and 1st grade classes often have absenteeism rates as high as those in high school. Many of these absences are excused, but they still add up to lost time in the classroom.

1 in 10 kids

in kindergarten and 1st grade are chronically absent. In some schools, it's as high as 1 in 4.¹



2 in 10 low-income kids miss too much school. They're also more likely to suffer academically.¹



2.5 in 10 homeless kids are chronically absent.²



4 in 10 transient kids miss too much school when families move.²



¹ Chang, Hedy; Romero, Mariajose, Present, *Engaged and Accounted For: The Critical Importance of Addressing Chronic Absence in the Early Grades*, National Center for Children in Poverty, NY, NY, September 2008.

² *Chronic Absence in Utah*, Utah Education Policy Center at the University of Utah, 2012.

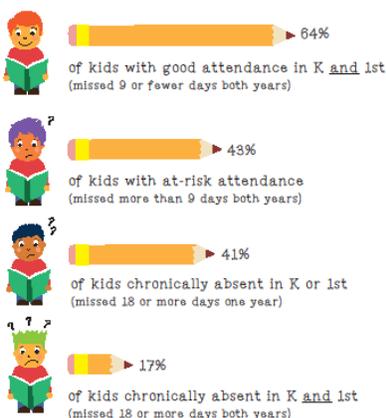
To download a copy of this infographic, please visit www.attendanceworks.org.

Why It Matters

If children don't show up for school regularly, they miss out on fundamental reading and math skills and the chance to build a habit of good attendance that will carry them into college and careers.

Preliminary data from a California study found that children who were chronically absent in kindergarten and 1st grade were far less likely to read proficiently at the end of 3rd grade.

Who Can Read on Grade Level After 3rd Grade?³



³ *Attendance in Early Elementary Grades: Association with Student Characteristics, School Readiness and Third Grade Outcomes*, Applied Survey Research, May 2011.

What We Can Do

Engage Families

Many parents and students don't realize how quickly early absences can add up to academic trouble. Community members and teachers can educate families and build a culture of attendance through early outreach, incentives and attention to data.



Fix Transportation

The lack of a reliable car, or simply missing the school bus, can mean some students don't make it to class. Schools, transit agencies and community partners can organize car pools, supply bus passes or find other ways to get kids to school.



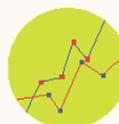
Address Health Needs

Health concerns, particularly asthma and dental problems, are among the leading reasons students miss school in the early grades. Schools and medical professionals can work together to give children and families health care and advice.



Track the Right Data

Schools too often overlook chronic absence because they track average attendance or unexcused absences, not how many kids miss too many days for any reason. Attendance Works has free data-tracking tools.



These are a few steps that communities and schools can take. How do you think you can help?

© Joanna Shieh | The Hatcher Group

New Transitional Kindergarten Program

Everett Public Schools is offering a **Transitional Kindergarten** program this winter for children scheduled to enter kindergarten in the upcoming fall. The program will focus on basic academic, social and self-help skills to jumpstart qualifying students toward success in school. Students will be screened in early January and may qualify based on ability and/or need. This program is located at several of the elementary schools in our district; sites will be determined based on enrollment. The anticipated start date is January 28, 2020. **Transitional Kindergarten** will run through the last day of school, which is currently June 15, 2020.

To qualify for screening, children must:

- be 5 years old by August 31, 2020
- live within the boundaries of Everett Public Schools
- not be currently enrolled in an early learning program
- demonstrate academic and/or social-emotional needs



If you are interested and believe your child qualifies for this program, please visit our website at

<https://www.everettsd.org/earlylearning> and submit the **Transitional Kindergarten** form by December 6, 2019. For assistance, contact Helen Cooley at 425-385-4088 or Early Learning at 425-385-4024.



Graduation rates jump to 95.9%

Our graduation rate jumped even higher for the 12th year in a row. Now 95.9 percent of our students graduate on time, the highest rate on record. The increase in graduation rates can be attributed to the strategically aligned work of district and school staff. It is a focus for everyone, no matter their role in our school district, to ensure each one of our students graduates ready for college and career.

Snow routes are online

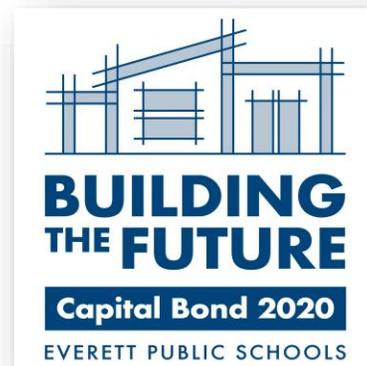
School drop off and pick up locations may change in an emergency situation. If your child rides a bus to school, please become familiar with the snow route information on the district [transportation department's webpage](#).

Bond 2020

The Everett School District's board of directors on Tuesday, October 8, 2019, approved placing a \$317.4 million capital bond on the April 28, 2020 ballot to fund STEM career-connected learning pathways for students, ensure equitable access and opportunities for all students, increase safety and security and ensure students have enough room to learn by adding [21st century learning](#) classroom space.

The 2020 capital projects bond prepares our students for the future by:

- **Giving our students facilities and tools necessary for STEM career pathways**
 - The bond funds modernization and upgrades to high school classrooms to support the Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) career pathway programs and new science standards.
- **Increasing safety and security for students and schools**
 - Secure locks and keying systems will be added districtwide.
 - Access control systems at two high schools
 - Upgrades to fire alarm systems, security systems and fencing
- **Ensuring students have enough room to learn by adding 21st century classroom space, modernizing and repairing building systems**
 - Adds new elementary school classrooms throughout the district to reduce overcrowding, keep class sizes low and keep more kids at their neighborhood schools
 - Repairs aging school systems in our schools like HVAC, roofing and flooring replacements, that extends the longevity of schools
- **Providing equitable access and opportunities for students** by funding capital projects at all schools throughout our district, while reducing the overall school district tax rate



More information is available on the [Capital Bond 2020](#) district webpage.



2020 Census

The 2020 Census is closer than you think! Here is a quick refresher of what it is and why it is essential that everyone is counted.

- **Everyone counts.** The census counts every person living in the U.S. once, only once, and in the right place.
- **It's about fair representation.** Every 10 years, the results of the census are used to reapportion the House of Representatives, determining how many seats each state gets.
- **It's in the constitution.** The U.S. Constitution mandates that everyone in the country be counted every 10 years. The first census was in 1790.
- **It's about \$675 billion.** The distribution of more than \$675 billion in federal funds, grants and support to states, counties and communities are based on census data. That money is spent on schools, hospitals, roads, public works and other vital programs.
- **It's about redistricting.** After each decade's census, state officials redraw the boundaries of the congressional and state legislative districts in their states to account for population shifts.
- **Taking part is your civic duty.** Completing the census is mandatory: it's a way to participate in our democracy and say, "I COUNT!"

Every household will have the option of responding online, by mail or by phone. Nearly every household will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census from either a postal worker or a census worker.

Look for your invitation to respond starting in mid-March.

United States
Census
2020

Family resources

Could you or a family you know use some help? Find information and links to helpful resources on the district's [Parent Tools webpage](#):

- Washington State Library – local and regional information about services and agencies offering help to families in a variety of ways including food, shelter, clothing, childcare, legal services, employment opportunities, and counseling
- Everett Public Schools [Kids In Transition \(KIT\) program](#) – supports homeless children and youth to continue their education
- Snohomish Health District for Snohomish County community dental resources for children and adults
- United Way of Snohomish County – 2-1-1 is a free telephone number that is your best "first call" to quickly find the right source of help. The information line is staffed by trained operators from Volunteers of America Western Washington who can connect you to a wide range of community services.



Delayed start or closed schools

If we must cancel school or delay the start of school, we will use our parent communication system to call in the morning, typically around 5:30 a.m., with a brief message about the reason for closure or delay. We will also use local media and post the message on our website. **If there is no announcement about Everett Public Schools, school is on the regular schedule.** More information and resources for school closures or delays is on the district website under the *Parents* tab.

In cases of inclement weather or other emergencies, please:

- check your email or phone for district messages
- listen for media announcements
- view the district's website at <https://www.everettsd.org/>
- watch district [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#) accounts

Accepting Highly Capable nominations until Dec. 18

Find forms, information and evening events on the [Highly Capable website](#). Referrals are for students currently in grades one through four for winter testing, which will take place on February 1, 2020.

Food and Nutrition

This month, the Food and Nutrition Department brings you kale grown in the PNW! Be sure to give it a try this month in our Kale Caesar salad and on the salad bar!

Did you know that just one serving of kale has more vitamin C than an orange? Find out more by checking out the Harvest of the Month flyer on our website at <https://www.everettsd.org>. It's not easy being green! Don't kale my vibe!



3900 Broadway
Everett, WA 98201
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www.everettsd.org

Everett Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, 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 in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Designated to handle inquiries about nondiscrimination policies are:

- Affirmative Action Officer – Randi Seaberg, rseaberg@everettsd.org, 425-385-4104
- Title IX Officer – Mary O'Brien, MO'Brien@everettsd.org, 425-385-4106
- 504 Coordinator – Becky Ballbach, rballbach@everettsd.org, 425-385-4063
- ADA Coordinator – Becky Clifford, rclifford@everettsd.org, 425-385-5250