

# Madison Husky Highlights

MADISON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

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Principal

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SEPTEMBER 2018



## From the Principal

Dear Madison Families,

It is with great excitement and gratitude that I welcome back our families this year. My first year as your Principal was so rewarding in many ways, and I am pleased to work for your children again this year. We have many things to celebrate and look forward to.

Last year, our PTA really put the life back into our school events, hosting successful Movie Nights, scholarships for 5<sup>th</sup> grade camp, Skate Deck Nights, a Fantastic Fall Festival, Teacher Classroom Grants, an awesome Field Day and much more. I look forward to our continued partnership. Parents, please be sure to join PTA to support all of the awesome things they do for your children.

Last year we changed arrival and dismissal procedures to make our school safer. I have received nothing but positive feedback from parents and teachers alike. We will continue the arrival and dismissal procedures from last year. In addition, you will see many district upgrades to security, including new badge entry systems for employees, a video-comm entry way system, new gates and fencing, and the ability of the Principal and main office to lock the school down with the switch of a button. We know that in today's world, school safety continues to be of utmost importance, and it is my number one priority.

In addition to culture and safety improvements, we made a lot of learning gains last year! **We increased our state performance significantly in 5 out of 6 tested areas.** This is incredible growth, and exemplifies your students' and the teachers' commitment to excellence in learning.

Looking forward, I would like to communicate our school-wide areas of focus for the coming year.

In analyzing our student achievement data, we have identified 3 main areas for growth. We need your help, families! In English Language Arts, we see that our students are struggling with identifying the main idea, and also with editing their writing. How can you help? When you are reading with your child, or after they have read a story or passage to themselves, simply have a discussion with them; ask questions such as: what is the story about? What are the big ideas in the story? What is the main idea? Why do you think that? Don't worry about having the "right" answers—just having the conversation with them, and having them explain their thinking, helps their development. Encourage your children to practice writing at whatever level they are able. Maybe you ask them to write you a note instead of verbally asking you a question. Importantly, ask them to EDIT their writing; check spelling, read it out loud and see if they are missing words, and most importantly to re-write it. Our students need to understand that writing is a process, and we continuously work to improve it. Encourage them that they can do it!

In math this year, we are really emphasizing explaining our mathematical thinking. This is easy to support at home. Have conversations with your children about math. Ask them lots of questions, including WHY they think what they think. Have them explain. If you're out shopping, point out a shelf of cans. Ask them how they might go about figuring out how many cans there are. Easy ways to get them started are by asking them: What do you notice? What do you wonder? These are questions our teachers practice regularly with your children. The goal is to allow them to explain their thinking. There are no right or wrong ways to do this.

You may notice some changes in homework policies this year. Our Leadership Team developed a homework values statement. At Madison, our value statement says: **Homework is designed to support literacy, reinforce skills, and involve the family in**

### Sept 4

Back to School Night, 4-6 pm

### Sept 5

First Day of School (Gr 1-5)

### Sept 7

Learning Improvement Friday  
→ Dismissal at 1:35 pm

### Sept 10

Kindergarten's First Day of School

### Sept 14

Learning Improvement Friday  
→ Dismissal at 1:35 pm  
Back to School BBQ, 5-6:30 pm

### Sept 21

Learning Improvement Friday  
→ Dismissal at 1:35 pm

### Sept 27

Parent Institute, 5:30-7 pm

### Sept 28

Learning Improvement Friday  
→ Dismissal at 1:35 pm

## Welcome back!



**the instructional program.** What does this mean? This means, every child is expected to read or be read to every night. This is incredibly important for literacy. Reinforcing skills means your child may bring home 2-3 math problems to practice. Students should only receive a few number of **practice problems that they already know how to do.** If your child does not understand their math, contact the teacher and let them know. You might also receive homework that you are asked to do with your child, such as, find 10 objects together that start with the letter A. These are intended to be positive and fun activities that help strengthen family connections with the school.

The last area that we need parent support in is Attendance. **Attendance is an emergency at Madison!** We have far too many student absences. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing more than 5% of the school days. This means that **any student who is absent for more than 1 day per school month** is considered chronically absent and AT RISK.

I have had many conversations with parents about attendance. Some parents think “it’s only kindergarten, it doesn’t matter if they miss a few days”. There is a growing body of research that says that attendance patterns are formed early in life, and students who are absent in elementary go on to be absent in high school, and having a smaller chance of graduating and increased chances of getting involved in drugs and crime. In addition, students who are chronically absent in elementary **miss crucial skills, feel socially isolated, and have trouble forming lasting relationships with their teachers.** Did you know that students who miss 2 or more days per month in K-1<sup>st</sup> grades are only **17% likely to be able to read by the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade?** I don’t know about you, but I don’t like that percentage!

There is **no assignment** that can “make up” for missed days. Therefore, we will no longer provide makeup work—we may provide alternate assignments that do not make up for lost instructional time.

Please join me in committing to our school wide goal this year of no more than 5% absences for each student. This means that your child should miss 1 or less days per month. Students will have a chance to get rewards, pizza parties, and trophies for excellent attendance. Please schedule vacations outside of the school year, and according to our district released calendar—your child’s future depends on it.

The Madison staff is here, ready to serve your students for the new school year. We need your help in changing lives for the better. I look forward to working with each one of you and your precious gifts to us, your children.

Sincerely,

Amanda M. Overly, Principal

## Access to public records

District records are public records. Parents and other citizens have the right to ask to view or have copies of records defined as “public” under state and federal laws. These include parents’ and legal guardians’ student’s records and records about discipline of school employees.

The district’s finance and business services office handles public records requests. Request records by writing to that office at PO Box 2098, Everett, WA 98213, sending an email request to [publicrecords@everettsd.org](mailto:publicrecords@everettsd.org), or calling 425-385-4150.

## Your student’s records are confidential

Everett Public Schools is serious about protecting student records and privacy. The district uses multiple security measures to safeguard student transcripts and other education-related records. Only those teachers, administrators and other staff members who work directly with students (and have an educational need to know) have access to individual student records. Staff members are required to maintain confidentiality of all information in a student’s records.

## Vaccination requirements

Students in kindergarten through 12th-grade need two doses of Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine or a health care provider document verifying they have already had chickenpox. Review vaccination requirements for your child on the [Washington State Department of Health website](#).

## Four ways to stay in touch

At the bottom of every district webpage, you can sign up for [InTouch](#) announcements and school board meeting agendas highlights delivered to your email box twice monthly. You can also follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).



## Attendance procedures

We look forward to seeing your child at school every day. Regular school attendance is important, and we will work with you to ensure your child is present to benefit from an excellent education. If your child is absent, please email the school at their attendance email address, which you can find on the school website.

If email is not possible, and even if you leave a message with the school attendance line, please send a written note to the school office within 30 days after your student returns to school.



## ECEAP preschool accepting applications for 2018-19

Everett Public Schools' Early Childhood Education & Assistance Program (ECEAP) is a FREE preschool program for three- and four-year-old children from families with limited income. ECEAP prepares children for kindergarten and includes family support and health and nutrition services. It is funded by the [Washington State Department of Early Learning](#).

The five ECEAP sites within our school district are Garfield, Hawthorne, Lowell, Madison and Silver Lake elementary schools. Space is limited – apply early! For an application or more information, please call 425-385-4628.

## Capital projects updates

Thank you for making so many capital projects possible through the April 2016 Capital Bond! You can follow progress on those projects online at [www.everettsd.org/capitalprojects](http://www.everettsd.org/capitalprojects).

## Register to vote!

It's easy! You can register online at <http://bit.ly/VoteRegistration> or stop by your school office to pick up paper registration materials.

## Student opportunities and activities eflyers

We use *Peachjar* to email approved flyers from community organizations to parents and guardians. Schools also post those flyers on their websites. Look for the Peachjar button in the *Quicklinks* section of your school home page to see those flyers. You can also register there to have those flyers delivered to your email address if you aren't already receiving them.



## Kids in Transition program

The Kids in Transition (KIT) program supports students who qualify as homeless under the federal [McKinney-Vinto Homeless Act](#). Students without a fixed, regular, or adequate nighttime residence may qualify. The KIT program works to eliminate barriers to students' academic success and extra-curricular involvement. We ensure homeless students have school supplies and provide tutoring or help students join in extended day or summer school classes. We help students with the fees required take part in activities such as sports or clubs. KIT transports eligible students to maintain school stability, as long as the commute is feasible.

Last year, Everett Public Schools served over 1,100 homeless students at some time during the school year. For more information, visit the [KIT website](#) or contact Amy Perusse at 425-385-4032 or [aperusse@everettsd.org](mailto:aperusse@everettsd.org).



## Attention volunteers

Our schools rely on volunteers to support many important activities and our volunteer application has been updated.

- We are digital! All volunteer applications and background checks can only be processed online.
- We are focused on safety! We have new background check and safety training requirements.

**ALL volunteers must fill out a new application for the 2018-19 school year.** The new application is now available online at [www.everettsd.org/volunteer](http://www.everettsd.org/volunteer).

## Safety tip line

Do you or your student have a concern about someone experiencing bullying or harassment? Or have you perhaps heard a rumor about someone bringing a weapon or drugs to school? **Report it!** You can talk directly with your school's office or you can call, text or email your concern.

If there is reason for concern about safety on a designated walkway to school, call 9-1-1 immediately for authorized, quick help. We have strong partnerships with local law enforcement who share our interest in safe schools and neighborhoods.

Student safety is a priority for all of us. Working together, we can help make our neighborhoods and schools nurturing places for students to safely learn and grow.

## 3 easy ways

Text or call

 855-637-2095

 1350@alert1.us

 <http://1350.alert1.us>



3900 Broadway  
Everett, WA 98201  
425-385-4000  
[www.everettsd.org](http://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](mailto:rseaberg@everettsd.org), 425-385-4104
- Title IX Officer – Mary O'Brien, [MO'Brien@everettsd.org](mailto:MO'Brien@everettsd.org), 425-385-4106
- 504 Coordinator – Becky Ballbach, [rballbach@everettsd.org](mailto:rballbach@everettsd.org), 425-385-4063
- ADA Coordinator – Becky Clifford, [rclifford@everettsd.org](mailto:rclifford@everettsd.org), 425-385-5250