



Alki Middle School

Principal: Curtis Smith

Associate Principal: Doug Warner

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October 2009

Each year the staff at Alki reviews our previous year's performance data. We look for areas to celebrate: growth, honor roll percentages and state and local test results. Additionally, we look for growth opportunities. I am very pleased to share that we have much to celebrate. At all grade levels, and in all areas (reading, writing, math and science), we surpassed both the State and District averages. The only area that we were slightly below the State was in 7th grade math (-1.4%). In always striving for continuous growth we have identified key areas to focus our professional growth and energy. This year we will focus on sharing clear learning targets with our students in each of our classrooms. This will help them make connections to what they are learning and know why they are being taught specific skills or concepts. Additionally, we will be paying special attention to math. This year our math WASL data showed that our special education students and poverty students did not meet standard.

In order to help move Alki, and the other schools of Vancouver Public Schools forward, 1 hour late starts have been implemented every other week throughout our system. Our Alki team is dedicated to working as Professional Learning Communities. At each meeting we will be striving to answer the following questions: 1. What do we want students to learn? 2. How will we know when they have learned it? 3. What will we do if they don't? 4. What will we do if they already know it?

Through professional dialogue and focused planning we hope to help even more students experience school success.

Curtis Smith
Principal

Alki Middle School Newsletter

**YOU CAN FIND MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS
ONLINE @ <http://alki.vansd.org>**

DATES TO REMEMBER:

October 21	Inside Alki 9:00 a.m.
October 21	2 Hr. Early Release
October 22	Full Day of School
October 23	No School
October 26	1 Hr. Late Start
October 29	School Social 3:30-5:00
November 1	Turn clocks back 1 hr.
November 5	Picture Retake Day
November 5	Volunteer Training (see attached)
November 6	Yearbook on Sale \$22
November 9	1 Hr. Late Start

One-hour late start provides time for Professional Learning Communities

This year Vancouver Public Schools began a Professional Learning Community (PLC) in each school. A one-hour late start every other week provides time necessary for teachers to collaborate with one another to meet student needs and improve student learning.

Educators in the PLCs work together to assure that students are not just taught, but that they actually learn. Research shows that significant learning gains may be achieved if time is provided for educators to work together.

Four questions drive the work of educators in PLCs:

1. What do we expect students to learn?
2. How will we know when they have learned it?
3. How will we respond when they don't learn?
4. How will we respond when they already know it?

According to many education experts, the development of Professional Learning Communities is the most promising strategy to help all students achieve high academic standards.

Please Help Alki Musicians Honor Our Veterans

Do you have a family member who has served our country in the military? We will be having an assembly on Tuesday, November 10th, to honor veterans in our families and the sacrifices they made to serve our country. During the assembly, the honorees' military information will "scroll" on a screen while the band, choir and orchestra present patriotic and historical musical pieces.

We would also appreciate it if you could send any stories, pictures, letters, awards, etc. to school. We would love to include these personal touches in our Veterans Day Assembly script and PowerPoint. Please do not send originals as they do not always make it back home.

Send your stories, military information (Scroll of Honor), and/or *photocopies* of images with your student to Alki by Tuesday, November 3rd. You can find a "Scroll of Honor" form on Ms. Hebner's district web page. There will be some forms on the office counter as well. There is a box in the office where all information may be dropped off. You may also e-mail stories, letters, digital images and "Scroll of Honor" forms to katie.hebner@vansd.org by November 3rd.

Thank you for helping us to create a home-school-community connection for Alki students so they can better understand why we celebrate this important federal holiday.

Katie Hebner

H1N1 INFORMATION

Health reminder to parents

As the school year begins, please help us keep our students well and safe. To avoid illnesses, including the H1N1 Swine Flu virus, please remind your children of basic ways to stop the spread of germs and stay healthy. Things you can do to prevent the flu:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Hand sanitizers work too, but soap and water is most effective.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands.
- Get vaccinated for the flu. This year the Department of Health is recommending that children and their families get vaccinated for both seasonal flu and H1N1 Swine Flu (when vaccines are available).
- Stay home if you show symptoms of the flu. Students should stay home from school at least 24 hours after their fever has passed (without the use of fever-reducing medicine).

***At this time we do not require a doctor's note to confirm illness for an absence lasting more than 5 days.**

Facts about the H1N1 Swine Flu are on the district website: www.vansd.org. More information is on the Washington State Department of Health website: www.doh.wa.gov/swineflu.

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GIVE KIDS A HAND

Alki's leadership class is hosting a week of fund-raising activities for the "Give Kids a Hand" campaign. Also known as the Student Chest Drive, this week of fund-raising will be held Monday, November 16 through Friday, November 20. All proceeds go to the Vancouver Schools Foundation, a non-profit organization that provides such things as assistance to students in need, grants to staff, and scholarships to selected Vancouver high school students. Many Alki students and staff have benefitted from VSD Foundation grants over the years and Alki students have traditionally dug deep to show their care for the community during this event. We currently hold the district trophy for our efforts and are looking forward to another successful campaign.

FOSTER PARENTS NEEDED

Children in your community need a safe, healthy and happy place to call home. You can make a difference in the life of a child by becoming a foster parent.

Service Alternatives, Inc. is a private agency providing excellent on-going support to foster homes and children.

Please visit our website at www.servalt.com/fostercare or call Maggie at (360) 921-1851 to learn more.

Disinfectant Wipes are Needed

Dear Parents, we are sure you are as concerned as we are about the H1N1 virus, also known as Swine Flu.

One way we can help mitigate the spreading of the virus and other germs is to use disinfectant wipes on our many computer keyboards frequently. This is where we can use your help by donating Lysol, Clorox, or Kirkland brand disinfectant wipes which claim to have an effectiveness against "type A" influenza (this includes Swine Flu) viruses on the label or product information. These products are considered safe to use on our keyboards and can be brought in by your student and given to their 1st period teachers. These wipes can also be used for quick wipes on desks etc throughout the day. Thank you for your consideration on this.



LIBRARY PAGES

Bookmarks: Students celebrated this time of year by designing bookmarks for fall and/or Halloween. Winners received their favorite candy bar and had their bookmarks reproduced and passed out in the library: Olivia B, Daniel B, Jason, Heaven L and Mr. Coffey.

Battle of the Books: Mrs. Hanes is signing up students to participate in this annual event. It is similar to Jeopardy with teams ranging from 1-4 students. Competition will begin after winter break. Teams that compete in 2 of the 3 rounds will receive a candy bar. The titles and power point are found on the Alki Library Home page.

Overdue items: Students that have items more than 4 weeks overdue will not be allowed to attend school events such as socials or spirit assemblies. Please help students renew or return items.

Research: On the library web page are web sites, magazine databases and other resources that will help your student with homework.

BEFORE SCHOOL BUILDING USE

Our Commons will be supervised from 8:30-8:55 each morning. Any student arriving prior to classrooms opening at 9:00 a.m. should report to the Commons. Students are also welcome to be outside in front of the school. Supervision will be provided in this area as well. Thank you for assisting us as we try to provide supervision for students prior to teachers opening their classroom at 8:55 a.m.

NO STORAGE IN OFFICE THIS YEAR

Please note that students will not be allowed to store any items in the office this year (i.e. food, band instruments, skateboards, lunches, etc). If your child chooses to ride a skateboard to school, they must make arrangements with a teacher for storage; students may not carry it around the building all day. Thanks for your cooperation!

OFFICE HOURS

Our office staff is always ready to serve you. (313-3200)

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Business Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Please remember our policy regarding schedule changes. Our staff has spent a great deal of time balancing classes and placing students in what we consider to be positive learning environments. At the beginning of the year there is a lot of anxiety about new classes and new teachers. If a situation develops during the year please keep in mind our policy which you can also find in the student handbook.

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Schedule Change Policy

Goal: To resolve any issues that may arise in the classroom with the least disruption to the student
The following steps should be taken when a problem arises in the classroom:

1. Parent should make contact with the teacher to discuss the issue(s) and come to an agreement on how to resolve the problem
2. Provide a two-week window in which to measure the success of the resolution
3. If the problem is not resolved, the parent may contact their son/daughter's counselor or administrator to discuss the issues
4. The administrative (counselor, teacher, administrator) team will meet to discuss further action and to decide if a change would be in the best interest of the student
5. If a schedule change is warranted, the student will be placed in another class based on the student's schedule and classroom numbers. Please note that this may involve changing the student's entire schedule.

A NOTE FROM THE COUNSELORS

We are finally getting settled in from the start of the year and we appreciate everyone being understanding with all of our schedule changes due to students needing interventions and class sizes.

Being done with that gives us a chance to do what we really like and that is help students. We are here to help your students with whatever comes their way whether it's academic, social, or outside school. If you have any concerns about your students please feel free to contact us and we can discuss ways that we can help you.

Again, let us know how we can help you.

Jennifer Harold – last names A-K, and Myke Pace – last names L-Z

8th Grade Promotion

Parents please note that our 8th grade promotion has taken on a different look. In alignment with other middle schools in the Vancouver Public Schools and in lieu of a formal promotion ceremony, we will provide informal activities; such as an awards assembly, a BBQ, Field Day and/or other activities that will allow our 8th grade students to celebrate their experience at Alki.

As the school year progresses, 8th grade parents will be notified in a timely manner regarding our promotion as determined by the staff, students, and parents. Please check your monthly newsletter for

future information regarding 8th grade promotion.

NEW: ATHLETICS FEE INCREASE

With the support of our Board of Directors and Superintendent, we are the only school district in Southwest Washington to continue to offer a comprehensive athletic program for all our students. Vancouver Public Schools will continue to offer no-cut programs at the elementary and middle school levels. Vancouver Public Schools will also offer an extensive athletic program at the high school level. We feel this is important due to research showing the most vulnerable time for our students is from 3-6 PM.

We take great pride in offering healthy options for our students. We wish to involve ALL students in our athletics by embracing "no cut" and "equal participation" policies. Every athlete, regardless of ability or on a team and will experience equal playing opportunities and instruction.

In order to maintain the comprehensive program, the district has made modest fee increases. They are: Elementary school goes from \$0 to \$10 per sport. Middle School goes from \$15 to \$20 per sport. High School goes from \$35 to \$50. As always, families with financial hardships are requested to approach their principal at the elementary level and their athletic directors at the middle school and high school levels to work out a plan for their students.

Again, we regret having to make these modest fee increases, but wanted to make sure all our students have the best opportunities available to participate in healthy activities.

ASB CARD (Associated Student Body) - \$5.00:

This card is required for participation in 7th and 8th grade athletics, the 6th grade track program in the spring, the extra-curricular music program, leadership groups, and academic teams. It also entitles the student to a \$1.00 reduction off the admission price of high school sporting events. This money helps support these school activities.

LUNCH TICKETS

The daily plate lunch or salad bar may be purchased for \$2.05; meal tickets can be purchased in any dollar amount. Free and Reduced Lunch Applications will be available in the student's First Day Packets. **Only one Free and Reduced Lunch form per family. This needs to be completed at the school of the youngest child in school. Students (4th – 12th grades) who qualify for reduced-price meals will be charged \$.40.**

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Please continue to recycle used Ink cartridges, Cell phones, and batteries thru Alki.

BREAKFAST

The cafeteria will be open for breakfast 8:30 – 8:55 daily. Individual breakfast price is \$1.05. Reduced price is free (**this only applies to breakfast**).

ACTIVITY FEE - \$20.00

An activity fee is charged for each extra-curricular sport in which a boy or girl participates during the school year. It is also required for participation in jazz band which is part of the extended day program. This fee helps defray the cost of equipment purchases, maintenance, transportation, awards, and officials.

*Swimsuit Fee – Girls participating in Swimming will need to pay a \$20.00 fee for their team swimsuits. Swimmers will be able to keep their suits at the end of the season.

ART CARD - \$15.00 all year or \$5.00 per TRI

This fee covers the cost of the supplies used. Mrs. Harris, Art teacher, will explain the cards to the students. There are no art fees for 6th grade.

DRAMA CLASS - \$15.00

A \$15.00 fee is charged to help cover the cost of the scripts and props used in this class

METHOD OF PAYMENT:

Parents may write one check per student (to: Alki Middle School) for all fees except:

- Lunch Ticket (bring a separate check directly to the cafeteria on the first day of school; payable to "Alki Cafeteria").
- Breakfast Ticket
- Insurance (information to be hand carried home by the student).
- Picture Packet (information to be hand carried home by the student).
- Please contact any administrator if financial assistance is needed.

ACTIVITIES INFORMATION

Alki activities information can be found on our website: <http://alki.vansd.org>.

ACTIVITIES

An important part of life at Alki is extracurricular activities; we encourage all students to participate. If a student has questions about any of the activities or needs help in order to participate, they should contact any staff member. **Students must have passed at least 6 classes in the preceding trimester**

to participate without being placed on Academic Probation.

ATHLETIC CHOICES:

Each student has a choice of sports as listed below:

EARLY WINTER SEASON:

7th & 8th Grade Boys Wrestling (3:30-5:30)

7th & 8th Grade Girls' Basketball

(7th 7-8:30 a.m., 8th 3:30-5:15)

October 26 Practice begins

November 2 Last day to clear

December 18 Season ends

LATE WINTER SEASON:

7th & 8th Grade Boys' Basketball – January 4, 2010

(7th 7-8:30 a.m., 8th 3:30-5:15)

7th & 8th Grade Girls Swimming (6:30-8:30 a.m.)

January 19 Practice begins

January 26 Last day to clear

March 19 Season ends

SPRING SEASON:

6th, 7th, & 8th Grade Boys' & Girls' Track (3:30-5:00)

April 5 Practice begins

April 12 Last day to clear

June 1 Season ends

ATHLETIC CLEARANCE PROCEDURES

Academic eligibility – In order to participate in athletics, a student athlete must have passed at least 6 out of 7 classes in the preceding trimester. If your student has two or more failing grades, they will be placed on scholastic probation and their grades will be monitored weekly to determine eligibility to participate in contests/games.

All students must be fully cleared through the school business office before they can actively practice for any sport. Boys and girls grades 7 & 8 who are interested in participation in the fall sports program can now pick up the athletic clearance packet in the Alki Business Office. Athletes in all interscholastic sports are required to have a valid physical examination form on file before they may participate in practice; any physical examination taken for athletics is valid for two full years from the date of examination. Please try to schedule an exam immediately if your child intends to participate in any of Alki's sports programs. (Physical examination forms are available in the school office and are valid for two years)

If finances for either physical exams or athletic fees are a problem, please contact the business office for assistance (confidential), 313-3200. Coaches will provide additional information regarding procedures and policies during the first week of practice.

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ATTENTION POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERS!

Have you been thinking about volunteering at one of our district schools, but aren't sure how to get started? It's easy. You can pick up a Volunteer Packet from the school office, or you can download it from the district website. Go to www.vansd.org click on Partnerships and Volunteering, and select Volunteer Opportunities from the pull-down menu. On the volunteer page, under the heading "qualifications" you will see a link called "clearance process." On the "clearance process" page you will see "Downloading a Volunteer Packet and Application." Print all five pages, complete the forms, and bring them to the school office with your Washington State identification. If you have any questions, please call the school office or Sue Knable, Community Partnerships Office, 313-4720. Thank you for your interest in helping Vancouver students.

PRINCIPAL/PARENT COMMITTEE

Are you looking for a way to get involved at Alki? Do you like to know what is going on at school? If so, the Principal/Parent Committee may be of interest to you. Once a month a group of parents meet with Curtis Smith, Principal to learn about Alki. This committee gives input to Mr. Smith about issues which impact Alki staff and students. The meetings will generally be held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 3:45 p.m. Please consider joining this committee.

The dates for the 2009-10 Principal/Parent Committee are as follows (3:45 p.m. in room 102):

Tuesday, November 17th

No meeting December

Tuesday, January 19th

Tuesday, February 16th

Tuesday, March 23rd

Tuesday, April 20th

Tuesday, May 18th

If you are interested in serving on this committee please contact Mrs. Gayle Hoffman, Secretary at 313-3200.



INSIDE ALKI – NEW DATE

October 21st INSIDE ALKI

Inside Alki is a day parents are invited to attend classes with your child. This is a great time to see first hand the superior teaching and learning which is going on at Alki. We are excited about this day and will give you an opportunity to provide in writing a "Way to Go" comment to your child's teachers. The positive comments are greatly appreciated by all educators who work hard to do the best each day for each student.

We hope you will clear your calendar for Wednesday, October 21st and spend the day going back to school with us.

PARENT/FAMILY ACCESS ACCOUNT

All parent/guardians of secondary students may have access to their students' attendance and demographic data through a Family Access Account. They may also view the teachers online grade book entries and class progress reports.

Your Parent @ccess Account enables you to view information about your children's schools and their achievement including attendance and assessments. Parents of secondary students will also have the ability to view classroom assignments and grades.

Please keep your login and password information in a secure location. Access to the information on Parent @ccess is password protected using Secure Socket Layers (SSL) encryption.

Parents of registered students will be able to log in to their Parent @ccess account within a few days.

- For Parent @ccess enter the following URL into your Web Browser's Address Window www.vansd.org/parent or click on the Portal Login link on the VSD or school website.
- At the Login Screen enter your User Id and Password.
- If you have more than one child enrolled in Vancouver Schools, use the dropdown arrow next to the student's name to select another student. Click the Go button to display the selected student's information (it may take a few seconds to load).

In order to sign up for this access, please contact Gayle Hoffman at the office @ 313-3200. You will need to show your picture ID.

Volunteer Training

Thursday, November 5th
10:00 to 11:30 am

Bates Center formerly the CEL, 2921 Falk Road
(south side of Roosevelt Elementary School)



Topics will include:

Importance of Volunteers in our schools

How Students Learn and Basic Needs

Confidentiality and Safety

Expectations and School Guidelines

Motivating Students

Questions:

Barbara Nordstrom,
VSD Foundation Lunch Buddy Program Coordinator
313-4725 or barbara.nordstrom@vansd.org

or Bobbi Casanova
Volunteer Connections Manager
Human Services Council
735-3680 or bobbic@hsc-wa.org

