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SKAMANIA
SCHOOL DISTRICT

*The Gorge is our
classroom*

SCHOOLHOUSE NEWS

Winter
2019

Superintendent's message: The Gorge truly is our classroom



When you go to school in a National Scenic Area, the opportunities for field study are endless.

In addition to our efforts to establish an outdoor education lab on district property (cover), Skamania's students and teachers are taking this year's motto—"The Gorge is our classroom"—to heart. They're exploring and building lessons around places like Beacon Rock and the National Wildlife Refuge at Steigerwald Lake.

These visits are more than field trips. They are opportunities to introduce students to the geology and biology of their neighborhood while incorporating lessons in math, science, social studies, language arts and even physical education. They learn important concepts while gaining an appreciation of the region they call home. Concepts become real.

When I arrived in Skamania School District a year and a half ago, I had the opportunity to meet many of you. Then, after the Eagle Creek fire hit, I visited many of you, checking on our students' safety. Through our conversations, I learned about the school district's role as a provider of emergency shelter and a Life Flight landing pad.

Those conversations set me on a course not only to focus on what our students need to learn in order to function in the world of tomorrow but what our community needs to remain safe and healthy today.

I appreciate your support as I've been getting to know your district, and I welcome your input as we continue to grow it together.

Dr. Ralph Pruitt, Superintendent



Skamania students visit with Herman the Sturgeon on a recent field trip to the Bonneville Hatchery.

Skamania School District information is online at skamianaschooldistrict.org!



Wondering about weather?
Click the snowflake for updates, snow routes and early dismissals.



Curious about calendars?
Look under the "Resources" tab.



Interested in district business?
Find the Board of Directors and meeting schedules under the "About" tab.



Looking for work? See job openings at skamianaschooldistrict.org/jobs.

Science learning planned for 38-acre parcel

Community well will be maintained

A \$20,000 STEM Lighthouse grant awarded to Skamania School District for the 2018-19 school year will support outdoor learning and teaching plans for its long-held 38-acre piece of property.

"Our idea is to develop it into an outdoor classroom," said Emily Hopple, who co-teaches kindergarten through second grade and coordinates STEM—science, technology, engineering and math—studies. "We'll be able to visit and look at the health of the forest and observe animals, making it an extension of our classroom."

The land is walking distance from the school but difficult to access. The district plans to install a trail or a road, and a shelter where students and staff can conduct research.

In 2018, the School Board established project goals—that it will provide educational benefits, responsible land management and a financial benefit to the school. The district gathered community input, established a 15-member task force and addressed community concerns.

One concern was related to a community well, which the district and task force have determined will be maintained in a protected zone. A logging survey found that some trees will need to be thinned and others removed due to disease. This will produce revenue and contribute to the health of the forest.

Meanwhile, school staff consulted with other districts and STEM resources across the state to learn how to engage students in field studies in many subjects and to incorporate neighborhood partnerships.

Skamania seventh and eighth graders are already studying



At Skamania School, the Gorge is our students' classroom, and we find plenty to study in this resource-rich environment.

stream quality, and fifth and sixth graders are researching what components make a healthy forest. Students will have opportunities to assist with everything from writing letters to the Department of Natural Resources to improving the land.

Skamania School District will be sharing its story and using it to inspire and encourage STEM education in other districts across the state.

The Lighthouse grant is managed by the state Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and recognizes Skamania's innovative practices and ability to reach students with STEM education.

School Board message:



Greetings from the Skamania School Board!

I am pleased to report that many exciting things are happening at Skamania School—including that last year we passed our local levy on the first try. We are very thankful to our community for your support.

Did you know that more than half of our students choose to come to Skamania School District even though they don't live in our school district? Some travel from as far away as Carson and Home Valley—and the state provides funding to Skamania for those students. Here they experience small classes housing two or three grades each, so teachers, kids and families get to know each other over multiple years and develop a deep understanding of each student's learning needs.

Skamania students benefit from our school's growing focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). Thanks to STEM Lighthouse grant funding, our teachers are gaining opportunities to implement new programs as well as sharing with other schools what is possible.

In addition to helping us add educational offerings, grant funding is helping the district improve its facilities. With the kitchen remodel and new plumbing, we are preparing the school to serve as a community center—one that has the capacity to serve, when needed, as an emergency shelter.

Before I close, I want to take a moment to thank our superintendent, Dr. Ralph Pruitt. He is making such a positive impact on our school by bringing a focus on staff development, acquiring grant funding and helping us share what a special place Skamania is. We are lucky to have him.

Angus Anderson, Chairman

Grant funding enriches learning, community

Small school districts share most of the same needs as larger districts—updating textbooks and technology, maintaining buildings and vehicles, and providing stimulating learning opportunities. Plus, as in Skamania's case, they serve important roles in their communities.

This school year, Skamania has won more than \$350,000 in competitive grants, which are being used to improve facilities and enrich learning—and to improve the area's emergency preparedness.

- **Urgent Repair Grant—\$200,000 (the maximum offered).** Built in 1946, Skamania School has had an ongoing problem with lead in its water. This state grant will fund a complete plumbing replacement for the school.
- **Healthy Kids Healthy Schools—\$89,716.** The district will use this grant to remodel the school kitchen and contribute to the Parent Teacher Organization's garden project. It also supports the district's effort to create an emergency shelter for the community.
- **Bus replacement—\$35,000.** This state Department of Ecology grant makes it possible for the district to replace an aging school bus with a new one that meets environmental requirements.
- **STEM Lighthouse—\$20,000** (Please see page 1 for details).
- **Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant (Title IV)—\$10,000.** This federal funding supports enrichment activities for Skamania students: swim lessons for third and fourth graders, outdoor school for fifth and sixth graders, an outdoor experience for seventh and eighth graders, and an after-school drama program for all students.

Partnering for safety

With Skamania School's growing capacity to provide shelter and a field that can accommodate a Life Flight landing, it is a natural emergency services partner.

"Most communities know of their fire station and of their schools, and they know that's where they can get information or help," said Skamania County Emergency Management coordinator John Carlson.

With a remodeled school kitchen and a grant-funded backup power generator, the school will be able to provide shelter, Carlson said, whether for a more common event, like a winter storm, or a rare event, like an earthquake.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT Skamania School District 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. The following employee has been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination: Ralph Pruitt, Title IX Coordinator, Section 504/ADA Coordinator Compliance, Coordinator for 28A.640 and 28A.642 RCW | 509-427-8239 | rpruitt@skamania.k12.wa.us | 122 Butler Loop Road, Skamania, WA 98648

2017-18 Revenues & Expenditures

Revenues by Source

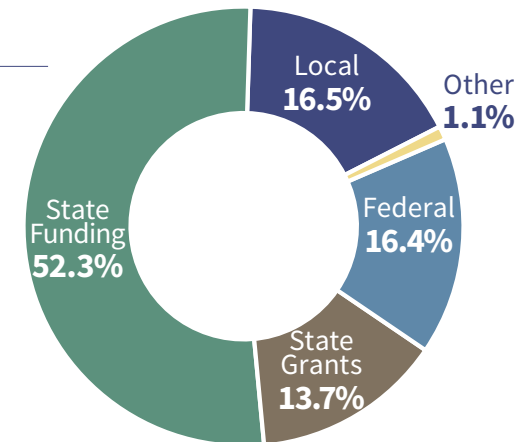
LOCAL
Levies \$177,371
Non-tax \$38,449

STATE
Funding \$682,469
Grants \$178,954

FEDERAL \$213,437

OTHER \$14,012

TOTAL: \$1,304,693

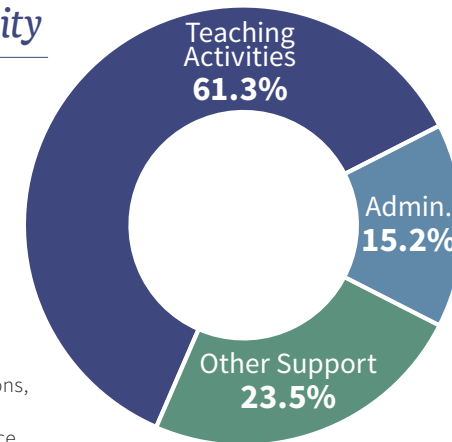


Expenditures by Activity

TEACHING - \$771,531
Classroom and extracurricular activities, library, guidance and counseling, professional development, curriculum

OTHER - \$295,849
Maintenance, custodial and grounds work, utilities, insurance, food services, transportation and public activities

ADMINISTRATION - \$190,914
Principal/supt., office manager, supplies, materials, school board expenses, elections, audits, outside contracts, supervision of transportation/food services/maintenance



TOTAL: \$1,258,293

2017-18 Expenditure per Student = \$14,463

Funding causes challenges statewide

A complex new school funding model was implemented by the Washington State Legislature in 2018. It led to an increase in state funding to education but dramatically reduced the ability for districts to fund education locally, resulting in significant financial challenges for many school districts.

Watch a video and learn more about the statewide situation at www.esd112.org/schoolfunding



District Data

Our Students

87 students enrolled
(As of May 2018)

Hispanic/Latino - **5.7%**
Two or more races - **6.9%**
White - **87.4%**

56.3% of our students qualify for free or reduced-price meals

Our Staff

- 9** support staff
- 7** teachers/certificated staff
- 1** district administrator

STUDENT : TEACHER RATIOS

- 1:15** K-2
(1.5 teachers with 23 students)
- 1:17** 3rd-4th
- 1:24** 5th-6th
- 1:21** 7th-8th



2018 State Assessments

% of students meeting standard

Grade	ELA (English)	Math	Science
3rd	58.3	33.2	-
4th	40.0	40.0	-
5th	54.4	45.3	54.4
6th	46.6	46.6	-
7th	*	*	-
8th	49.9	24.9	16.6

* OSPI does not calculate average scores when the grade has fewer than ten students.

This information is also available on the OSPI website at reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us

Select "School" under Organization Type and "Skamania Elementary" under Organization for the most recent update.