

# PORT TOWNSEND SCHOOL DISTRICT 2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT



Greetings,

The 15-16 school year was a fantastic year for the Port Townsend School District and community. Our Maritime Discovery Schools initiative progressed through year two and resulted in embedded maritime and place-based projects in every grade level. There is more detail on MDS later in this report; however, I do want to mention the amazing community partnerships as a highlight of this effort. Port Townsend is a special place to live and learn.

The bond to build a new PK-5 elementary school and make other facility improvements passed with over a 70% yes vote! Our retiring superintendent, Dr. David Engle, noted that this felt like winning the super bowl for the community. Our students will soon be learning in a brand new facility. In addition, we are now also planning for ADA, safety, and security improvements to Port Townsend High School and security improvements at Blue Heron Middle School.

This annual report is designed to share some performance data with the community and provide information on some of the programs in our district; it is not designed to be comprehensive. For additional information on our schools, please go to our website at [www.ptschools.org](http://www.ptschools.org). Also, please feel free to contact me or any of our school principals.

Sincerely,  
John A. Polm, Jr.,  
Superintendent



## Maritime and Place-Based Learning

As we enter into the third year of the Maritime Discovery Schools Initiative we are refining and growing our work, and focusing on long term sustainability. Over the past two years we have developed a pilot K-12 maritime and place-based curriculum, increased professional development and collaboration focused on place-based learning, offered a high school Maritime Academy program, created a farm-to-table scratch cooking model food service program, and developed over seventy community partnerships. As we move forward into the next phase of our initiative we will focus on strengthening our maritime career preparation program, sustaining partnerships, broadening the curriculum, and institutionalizing changes in the district.

## Partnership with Fort Worden Public Development Authority

District students are now regularly attending learning activities at Fort Worden thanks to a partnership with the PDA. Through this partnership the district can use two previously under-utilized meeting rooms as a launching place for outdoor learning, or as a retreat space for focused project work. This partnership supports the PDA's mission to provide a life-long learning center, and supports the district's vision of learning happening beyond the traditional classroom walls.

## High School Maritime Academy

Four Career and Technical Education Courses are offered at the high school with a focus on preparing students with foundation skills in craftsmanship, creativity, and marine transportation that can translate into careers. In these courses students learn about water based operations, marine trades, manufacturing, fabrication, design, and programming. Students sail, build and repair boats, work with hand tools, and manufacture underwater vehicles. This year each student in the boatbuilding course will be building skin on frame kayaks. Each maritime course involves community partners on a regular basis to help provide specialized instruction in the various fields. Through a unique partnership with Sound Experience and their vessel *Adventuress*, students were able to participate in a three day overnight trip, as well as will get hands-on experience during the ship's winter maintenance period in the high school shop and dockside.



## Successes

Our students are engaged in more opportunities to learn in our maritime community, and are making positive contributions to our community. More than 60% of teachers reported their students worked on school projects where they learned about nature, the sea, or our community one day or more every month through the year. A fifth grader remarked, "My best learning experience was when we went to the Dungeness River." A 7th grader said, "My best learning experience is when we worked on nautical charts in math because I got to learn about the different terms on a chart, and I got to work with a group to help me find the markers and scales on the chart." Parents are also excited about what's happening for their kids. A middle school parent shared, "Water quality testing around our community and field trips to local water sources have really sparked an interest in chemistry. She talks about it a lot; salinity, oxygen saturation and things like that."

## Assessment Summary

Students in grades 3-8 and 11 are assessed on the Smarter Balanced English Language Arts and Math exams initiated this year. Port Townsend School District students performed higher than state averages in many areas of the Smarter Balanced Assessments.

Science proficiency is measured on the State MSP at 5th and 8th grades along with the biology End of Course (EOC) exam. This exam is given in any grade in which biology is offered.

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction posts on their website test score and demographic student information for each school in Washington State. District scores are posted on the next page of this report. If you would like further information, please visit: <http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us>

Port Townsend School District and Blue Heron School are in step two of improvement, and Grant Street is in step one of improvement according to federal NCLB's (No Child Left Behind) requirement that all students achieve 100% proficiency on state assessments.

Since the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) has been approved, the 100% proficiency will no longer be in effect. New rules will be established for the 2017-2018 school year.

The following link is to the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), a federal site that compares assessment data from WA to other states: <https://nationsreportcard.gov>



## Our Highly Qualified Staff

In 2015-16, 100% of classes in Port Townsends's high poverty schools were taught by teachers who met the former rules in the ESEA HQ definition. Our teachers continue to improve their knowledge and skills with ongoing professional development. For instance, the Port Townsend School District currently employs 8 National Board Certified Teachers and has 14 teachers currently seeking National Board Certification. If you have any questions regarding the certifications and qualifications of your child's teacher or paraprofessional, please contact the district office.

2015-16 Classroom Teachers	81
Average Years of Teacher Experience	14.3
Teachers with at least a Master's Degree	76.5%
Total number of teachers who teach core academic classes	78
Percentage of teachers teaching with an emergency certificate	0.0%
Percentage of teachers teaching with a conditional certificate	0.0%
Total number of core academic classes	400

## Maritime and Place-Based Learning Accomplishments

- 70 Community partners engaged in maritime and place-based learning
- 42 Maritime and place-based projects implemented in the curriculum
- 13 Multidisciplinary projects across the curriculum
- 15 Projects focused on stewardship of place, the environment and the sea
- 13 Projects focused on craftsmanship and creativity
- 14 Classroom-wide projects with students directly making a positive impact on our community
- 100 Native Trees planted
- 600 Linear feet of creek bank stabilized
- 50 Square feet of non-native plants removed
- 2 Truckloads of trash removed from Port Townsend beaches lead by BRAVO Team
- 78 Student-led senior projects presented to the community at Senior Symposium
- 1 Student created menu item on our school lunch menu (Healthy Nachos!)
- 47 Teachers on district leadership committees
- 22 Community Members on district leadership committees

### State Required Assessment Scores

#### 2015-16 Smarter Balance Assessment English Language Art (ELA)

	State	District
3rd	54.3%	60.8%
4th	57.0%	63.3%
5th	60.1%	62.3%
6th	56.5%	57.3%
7th	58.5%	75.7%
8th	59.7%	76.4%
11th	75.5%	82.9%

#### Math

3rd	58.9%	63.4%
4th	55.4%	55.7%
5th	49.3%	34.3%
6th	48.0%	28.0%
7th	49.8%	48.6%
8th	47.8%	58.3%
11th	21.8%	33.0%

#### 2015-16 State - Measurement of Student Progress (MSP)

	State	District
5th gr- Sci	63.3%	74.5%
8th gr- Sci	67.5%	72.2%

#### 2015-16 State -End of Course Exam

	State	District
10th gr - Bio	72.2%	89.9%

## Food Services

2015-2016 was an exciting year for food service. We unveiled a new menu that was healthy, tasty and highlighted lots of local food. We also continued with the change to scratch cooking with fresh soups, rolls, tacos, muffins, and pizza. We also welcomed some great new staff and a new head cook-Shannon Minnihan. During 2015-16 we:

- Increased the amount of local food purchased
- Hired a Garden Coordinator at the High School garden and started producing food for the cafeteria. In the spring it was salad greens and spinach. Over the summer we grew green beans, raspberries, cabbage, zucchini, tomatoes, basil, and potatoes. Those veggies were processed in the Blue Heron kitchen and frozen to be served in the 16-17 school year. We have made soup, muffins, crisps, parfaits, and pesto out of them.
- Started using Nash grain in our muffins, cornbread and rolls
- Participated in Taste Washington Day with an all local menu
- Did local squash taste testing with students
- We had a lot of fun coming up with new recipes and making food for the students.

The students and staff seem to be happy with the changes and I will continue to work hard to produce the best tasting, high quality local food that our kids need in order to be the best students they can be.



## Technology

The Technology portion of the Capital Projects Levy allowed the district to continue to upgrade technology. During the 2015-2016 academic year, students gained further access to Chromebooks for schoolwork and research through the purchase of additional devices. Teachers and students shared assignments and resources through the Chromebooks and the *Google for Education* suite of applications; science classes used software applications in their experiments and the robotics and maritime classes used technology applications for coding and design to enhance their hands-on work. Through the use of technology in classroom instruction and in place-based learning projects, students learn essential 21st Century skills.

The district also upgraded the district networks and infrastructure in 2015-2016. Older network drives needed upgrading to prevent network failure, and batteries for the network were purchased to provide uninterrupted power supply during power outages. In addition, the wireless infrastructure was enhanced to enable student use of laptops in classrooms and to provide online testing for required Washington State assessments. The district technology committee met throughout the year. This committee, consisting of teachers, administration and board members, focused on researching technology best practices and then updating the Technology Plan for 2017-2021. The updated plan will be completed by the end of 2016, and with school board approval, will be adopted to guide technology decisions for the upcoming years.

## NEW Elementary Construction

After a successful bond vote from Port Townsend voters, the work of envisioning and constructing a beautiful new birth-through-5th Grade elementary school began. The executive committee met regularly to execute the vision of the building, working with groups such as soil engineers, environmental specialists, the City of Port Townsend, the City Library, The Organic Seed Alliance, and other community partners. Integrus Architecture was selected from several architectural firms. Community members, students, Birth-through-Grade 5 teachers and staff helped to



create the vision for the new elementary school. Based on their vision statements, Integrus Architecture created the building design. Absher Construction of Puyallup, WA was chosen after a bidding process. The project manager, Kirk Robinson, of The Robinson Company of Seattle, has worked with both Integrus and Absher to ensure an efficiently run and cost effective project. The school facility will meet rigorous standards for environmental design. The new school's resources, available to the larger school community, will include a well-child clinic,

a family education center, and a collaborative library with the Port Townsend Public Library. The community will be able to use the facility after hours to enable connections to social services and recreation opportunities outside and in the gymnasium. A contest to name the new school is set for the 2016-17 school year. Noticeable construction activity will begin in the Spring of 2017.

## Family and Community Involvement

Port Townsend School District is committed to the goal of providing quality education for every child. To this end, we will establish partnerships with parents and with the community. Everyone gains if students and families work together to fulfill our district mission: Through community focused, maritime place based projects, students develop effective thinking, effective action and effective relationships. As a result, our students demonstrate meaningful accomplishments as engaged citizens.

Parents play an extremely important role as the child's first teacher. As children develop and mature through their elementary, intermediate and high school years, parents are vital in supporting their academic program and holding high expectations for their child's participation and success in and out of school.

We encourage you to be actively involved in the lives of your children at school. Please review our parent involvement policies for our schools and district found on our website in the "for parents" section. Paper copies are available at your school's office.