

Renton School District
Good News Announcements
September 10, 2008

1. Renton High School teachers Jim Gold, Stephanie Norton, and Dylan Okimoto have created a Smaller Learning Community at Renton High as they share the same students for three periods a day. The goal of the program is to increase academic rigor, relevance, and relationships with students in the learning community. The three teachers held a parent information meeting in late August to explain the program components to parents. Some unique aspects of the Smaller Learning Community are:
 - the three classes have the same behavioral and academic expectations,
 - the teachers have a common planning period when they personally call the parents of those students who are absent, and
 - consistent procedures for the start and end of class.The teachers also spent the first week of school contacting the parents of those students who did not show up to class to determine if they planned to attend Renton High School and let them know about the Smaller Learning Community. Several parents have already expressed their gratitude about the lengths to which these teachers are attempting to meet the needs of their students.
2. About 40 Highlands Elementary School students in kindergarten through second grade attended Highlands Summer School this August to review previously learned reading skills and preview upcoming reading expectations. The students showed growth in their reading fluency rates over the three week course.
3. The District's English as a Second Language department (ESL) implemented new procedures in August that resulted in over 60 secondary students being assessed to be eligible for the program prior to the first day of school. ESL staff administered the Washington Language Proficiency test to the students who were new to the state or the country. The process allowed the students to have an appropriate schedule and a smooth transition into their new schools from the very first day.

4. Joe Lamborn, Manager of Facilities and Operations for Maintenance, recently completed FEMA's Emergency Management Institute course called Introduction to Incident Command System. The course, conducted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, is intended to promote school safety by familiarizing district staff with principles that can be applied in school-based incidents and working with community response personnel.

5. More than 50 Hazen High School students in the Future Business Leaders of America and DECA programs recently spent a Saturday at Renton Technical College helping the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the Department of Revenue and other federal and state agencies at the Washington State Small Biz Fair. More than 600 people attended the business fair to hear about starting a business, taxes, business planning, and marketing. Students helped set-up the event, introduced speakers, took exit surveys and more.