



Lake Washington School District

connections

News and Events for Parents

Spring 2008

Ten Tips to Help Your Student Prepare for the WASL



Get the number two pencils sharpened and those healthy snacks ready: the WASL is coming. April 14 officially begins Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) testing in schools throughout Washington state for students in grades three through eight. High school students began testing on March 10 in reading and writing and will do science and math testing in April.

WASL testing can be stressful, whether it is the third grader taking the test for the first time or the tenth grader who needs to pass it to graduate or anyone in between. Here are ten tips for parents to help your student prepare for the WASL:

1. Talk with your student about the test beforehand so that they know what to expect.
2. Be careful not to overemphasize the test as it may cause your student to have unnecessary stress.
3. Give your student verbal encouragement before testing and afterwards.
4. Remind your student to listen to all of the teacher's directions and to read the questions fully before answering, to be sure that they are answering questions correctly.
5. Make sure that your student gets plenty of sleep the night before testing.
6. Prepare a nutritious breakfast for your student on the morning of testing.
7. Make sure that your student arrives for school on time both the morning of testing and every other day of the school year.
8. Try not to schedule doctor or dentist appointments during testing. The district calendar lists all of the testing dates so that you can plan around them.
9. Prepare a nutritious snack for your student to bring to school to eat during testing breaks.
10. After a test, ask your student how testing went and give them a place to talk about how they feel they performed.

The Washington State PTSA has developed some additional tips to help families to prepare for the WASL all year. This document can be found on the PTSA Web site, here: http://www.wastatepta.org/resources/WhatParentsNeedToKnow_WASLTips.pdf. To learn more about the WASL itself, go to <http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/WASL/default.aspx>.

School Year Extended Because of January Snow Day

The fine print on the Lake Washington School District calendar reads, "School year may be extended due to inclement weather." A snow day on January 28 has triggered a one-day extension to the school year, from June 17 to June 18. Tuesday, June 17, was to be a half day and it will now be a full day of school. Wednesday, June 18, will now be the last day of school and that will be a half day for all students.

This schedule assumes no further snow days this winter. If there are any further weather-related closures during this school year, this schedule could still change.

June 18, 2008 - Last Day of School

English Language Learners Making Progress

On February 26, 2008, the district received word from the state that it met the Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO) for the last three and a half school years for English Language Learners (ELLs). The state provided information for the last three school years and for half of this school year. This information will be provided to parents on a yearly basis from now on.

There are three AMAOs or targets the district must meet each year:

1. Annual increases in the number or percentage of children making progress in learning English.
2. Annual increases in the number or percentage of children attaining English proficiency.
3. The number or percentage of ELL students meeting Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) targets in reading and math on the WASL.

The results for the Lake Washington School District over the past four years, shows all three AMAO areas have been met each year. It should be noted that the numbers of English Language Learners within the district grew during this time. As a group, they continue to develop their English language proficiency and are transitioned from the program.

For the second target, children attaining proficiency, students are expected to attain proficiency in English within two to five years, depending on the results of their language proficiency placement test when they enter a district school. Students who enter the district with a beginning level of proficiency in English have up to five years to become proficient, while those who enter with an advanced level are expected to transition from the program within two years.

If you have questions about the ELL program, please contact Cheryl Chikalla, at 425-702-3297, or cchikalla@lwsd.org.

Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO)

AMAO Results	School Year 2003-2004	School Year 2004-2005
Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met Target 1 - 62%, children making progress • Met Target 2 - 25% children attaining proficiency • Met Target 3 - AYP in Reading and Mathematics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met Target 1 - 64%, children making progress • Met Target 2 - 30% children attaining proficiency • Met Target 3 - AYP in Reading and Mathematics
AMAO Results	School Year 2005-2006	School Year 2006-2007
Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met Target 1 - 66%, children making progress • Met Target 2 - 35%, children attaining proficiency • Met Target 3 - AYP in Reading and Mathematics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met Target 1 - 68%, children making progress • Met Target 2 - 40% children attaining proficiency • Met Target 3 - AYP in Reading and Mathematics

Student Computer Deployment

Thanks to district voters, nearly six thousand new computers have found their way into classrooms and schools in the past few months. Three thousand of these computers, paid for with funds from the 2006 technology levy, were allocated specifically for student use, replacing older computers. These PCs are available in classrooms and computer labs. Technology levy funds were also used to replace an additional 2400 computers for teachers and staff members between May and September 2007. All of the computers are Hewlett Packard (HP) PCs, use the Vista operating system, and have Office 2007 installed. Through the continued support of voters, the district has been

able to replace student computers every five years.

Each school received computers based on student enrollment. A formula ensures that the computers are dispersed fairly. This formula allows for one computer for every four full-time students at each school, plus the computer labs. For schools with 900 or fewer students, 30 student computers are deployed in a lab. For schools with populations of 900 students or more, 60 student computers are deployed to create two labs. At the high school level, schools receive an additional 60 student computers for Career and Technical Education programs.



Math Resources

Tools and Information Available to Parents to Help Children with Math

Is your elementary or junior high student struggling with math? Are you struggling to help your student with their math assignments? If so, the Lake Washington School District has a great new online resource available to help. These tools were designed to help parents reinforce the learning that occurs in the classroom, and are appropriate for all students, not just those who may be struggling.

Since the beginning of the school year, the district's curriculum department has developed a "Math Resources" section of the district Web site. This section includes tips for parents in assisting their child with math homework. It explains the changes in how math is being taught and specifically lays out the key features of the Investigations curriculum, which is used in kindergarten through fifth grade, and the Connected Math Project (CMP) curriculum, which is used in sixth grade through eighth grade. The goal of developing these resources was to provide parents with the tools and the understanding of how to help their child to be successful in math.

The "Math Resources" section is available on the "For Parents" section of the district Web site, and is found under the heading, "Teaching and Curriculum." After selecting the "Math Resources" page, you have the option to select your child's grade in school. Once you have selected a grade level, you will see an overview of the curriculum and what subjects or areas are being focused on throughout the school year. You will also see detailed information about the different math units that will be taught at your child's grade level. By clicking on a specific math unit, you will be able to see sample activities, the vocabulary being taught, tips for helping at home, and games or activities to do at home to help your child progress through the unit.

These Math Resources are currently available for students in Kindergarten through eighth grade. Resources for other subjects are also being developed: keep checking back in the parent section of the Web site for more information.

Awards and Achievements

Mann Elementary School and **Alcott Elementary School** were honored as two of 86 "Schools of Distinction" statewide for dramatic improvements in student reading and mathematics over the past several years in the 2007 State Superintendent's Learning Improvement Awards. In addition, eight district schools received honorable mentions. They are **Audubon Elementary, Evergreen Junior High, Finn Hill Junior High, Kamiakin Junior High, Kirkland Junior High, McAuliffe Elementary, Redmond Junior High** and **Rose Hill Junior High**. These schools received honorable mentions for meeting high standards in both reading and mathematics on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). These schools also moved at least half of their students at least one level in math and reading over the past six years.

Paula Ferguson, Orchestra teacher at **Redmond Junior High (RJH)**, was named "Most Outstanding Teacher" for the Northlake region at the grand opening session of the Washington Music Educators Conference on Friday, February 15, at the Yakima Convention Center. The RJH Orchestra also performed at the conference on Sunday, February 17. They received roaring applause from the hundreds of music educators in attendance.

On November 13, four schools in Lake Washington School District qualified for the 2007 American Math Contest 8 (AMC 8) Honor Roll, sponsored by the Mathematical Association of America. The four schools are: **Einstein Elementary, International Community School, Redmond Junior High** and **Rose Hill Junior High**. These schools qualified for the Honor Roll by attaining a score between 66 and 75 when adding together their top three student scores. (Each student can receive a maximum score of 25.) Only 11 schools in the state of Washington qualified out of 50 that participated. Worldwide, 2,260 schools participated, and 197 made the Honor Roll. Priya Ganesan and Albert Jiang, both seventh grade students at International Community School, and Brandon Ang, an eighth grader at Rose Hill Junior High, all achieved perfect scores. Only 129 students achieved a perfect score out of the 150,618 students worldwide who took the test.

Eleven Lake Washington School District students were selected out of hundreds of applicants from Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Wyoming, Montana, Alaska and British Columbia to sing in the 2008 Northwest American Choral Directors Association Honor Choir held in Vancouver B.C. in February. Nine **Kirkland Junior High** singers were chosen: **Nina Couch, Savannah Hammontree, Natasha Lindquist, Ryan Lustgarten, Jake Nathlich, Jeremy Parkhurst, Dallen Smith, Hana Holmes, and Emma Reeve**. Two **Lake Washington High School** students, **Sophie Price** and **Madison Sefton**, were also accepted.

