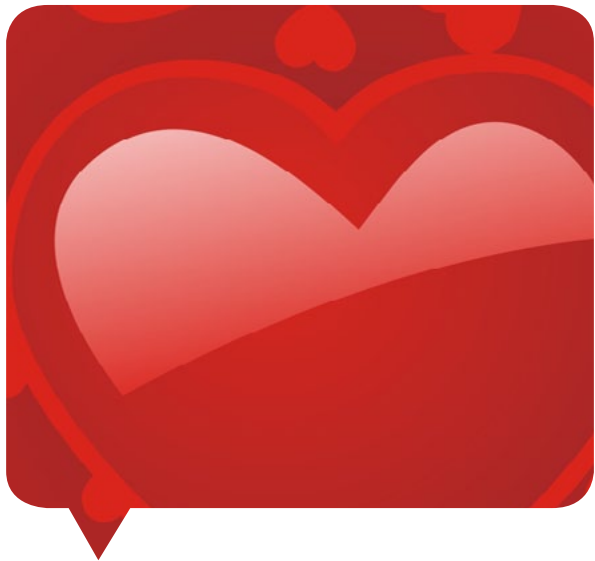


Staff Matters



Spotlight: HEART Program



Healthy Snacks Reminder



Spokane Public Schools
excellence for everyone

Winter Wear and Blanket Drive

AP Summer Institute Dates Set

Bemiss Named Distinguished School

Teacher Principal Evaluation Project

Spotlight: HEART Program



Jan Tarter, left, and Sarah Miller

Support the HEART program by:

- *Donating a gift card in any amount (best are those to big-box stores where students can find a variety of items)*
- *Donating to the HEART program trust (this fund is used to pay fees so students can participate in school activities; buy vouchers for students to get clothing or hygiene supplies; pay for books, supplies, and other items for special school projects; and so much more)*
- *Donating schools supplies, personal hygiene items or clothing*
- *Helping get their clothing bank off the ground by volunteering or donating plastic storage bins or hangers*

The HEART office is particularly busy these days. Compared to this time last year, the Homeless Education and Resource Team (HEART) has seen a 55-percent increase in the number of students they serve. As of Oct. 17, there were 475 students in the HEART program – enough to fill an entire elementary school. There are even more students today.

Federal law requires school districts to provide a variety of supports and services, including transportation and free meals to homeless students, but the HEART program helps in other ways as well. It supplies students and families with referrals to community resources, and information about how to access state assistance, and food and clothing banks. They provide services for students of preschool age through age 21.

Sarah Miller and Jan Tarter make up the entire HEART staff. As such, they rely heavily on school staff to let them know about students who might need services. Those who suspect a student or their family could benefit from HEART are urged to call or email HEART and talk through their particular situation. Miller is always willing to visit schools to share information about the services HEART provides and to do trainings for staff. Some of the topics she covers are what qualifies a student as homeless, how to ID a homeless student, what services the district is mandated to provide, what community resources are available. She is also eager to talk about the rights of homeless students.

“Homeless students have a right to enroll in school right away,” she said. “They need to be in school as soon as possible, since it can provide a bit of consistency in their otherwise unstable life.”

HEART can also help with the registration process. If a student or parent comes to register and doesn’t have copies of their birth certificate or immunization records, and can’t provide an address, that should be a red flag to ask gently for more information about their housing situation.

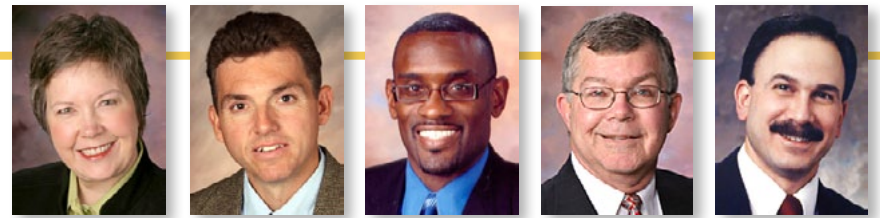
“It’s important to be sensitive to how embarrassing that conversation might be,” she said.

High on the HEART to-do list is creating a clothing bank for HEART students using the items from lost-and-found bins at SPS schools. Miller currently has a substantial collection of clothing items in her basement, just waiting to be sorted. A space at The Community School is ready to be transformed into the clothing bank. All that’s needed are volunteers to do the sorting and arranging, and lots of bins and hangers.

“We also have a whole lot of families on the cusp of becoming homeless who we can’t enroll in the program,” Miller said. “How great would it be to be able to help them with this resource?”

For more information, contact the HEART program at 354-7305 or sarahmi@spokaneschools.org.

Board Briefs



Sept. 28 meeting

Dr. Tammy Campbell, executive director of Instructional Programs, presented a report on secondary standards-based grading and reporting (SBGR). Dr. Campbell shared what the committee accomplished last year, what work will happen this year, as well as some long-term implementation goals. She also shared several samples of progress keys used in other districts. The plan is to fully implement SBGR at the secondary level in 2013-14, once the staff gets a sense of how the pilot programs work.

Linda McDermott, executive director of Finance, presented preliminary enrollment data based on the fourth-day enrollment count. The total of 28,093 FTE students is down by 28.1 as of the fourth official count date. The 2011-12 budget assumed that the district would have 150 fewer students; however, the final enrollment count shows 85 more students when comparing budget to actual which will result in a positive budget variance and additional staffing changes. The forecast could change, McDermott said, but the staff feels it is a good measurement of where the enrollment will end up compared to last year.

Sept. 14 meeting

Principal Eric Sylling welcomed the board to Shadle Park High School and talked about the fact that the Shadle staff is deeply committed to helping all students graduate college- and career-ready.

Dr. Tammy Campbell shared two strategies for community engagement– Family Math Forums and the new Instructional Programs website. Dr. Campbell explained that Family Math Forums are designed to foster proactive dialogue and collaboration involving parents and the school; to promote transparency about areas of challenge and areas of success; to communicate the work that is occurring at both the school site and at the district level; and to share the district’s vision for mathematics education. Referring to the new Instructional Programs website entitled Curriculum Connections, Dr. Campbell explained that the website will be fully operational in December. The website is designed to provide information about grade level and course expectations, information about college and career readiness, and specific information about content such as homework help, online resources, and video clips.

Dr. Steven Gering, director of Assessment, College & Career Readiness, and Innovative Programs, explained the changes that have taken place with state testing and learning standards. In terms of performance, Dr. Gering said there is a lot to celebrate with eighth grade math results; overall, the three-year trend is showing an increase in K-8 math, and the district is out-performing the state in both algebra and geometry. The district is also exceeding the state level in reading.

Karin Short, associate superintendent for Teaching and Learning Services, said leadership across the system is focused on the improvement of instruction. Six major actions that school directors will be taking this year include: monitoring to see that school improvement plans align with the District Work Plan; having data-driven dialogues around each content area; doing walk-throughs to provide formative feedback to both teachers and principals about instructional delivery; targeting professional development for principals to student performance; supporting the growth and capacity of principals to monitor academic achievement through level meetings; and providing honest and helpful feedback around work being done through the observation and evaluation of building leaders.

Dr. Bierman then shared a chart he developed in an effort to be clear about which of the data is a result of what the district is doing and which have to do with the assessment. He pointed out the clear successes and clear challenges evident in the data and compared Spokane’s results with other districts across the state.





GEAR UP grant will follow students through high school

Spokane Public Schools received a six-year grant from the Higher Education Coordinating Board and the state GEAR UP organization to help increase the number of students who graduate from high school and enroll in, and find success in, postsecondary education.

The GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) money – about \$2.6 million over the life of the grant – will start with the seventh graders at Garry, Shaw and Glover middle schools and will follow these students to Rogers and North Central high schools. Over the next six years, GEAR UP grant money will help schools be able to take the students on college visitations, pay for college entrance tests and application fees, provide educational services to students and families on how to get into college, and provide career guidance and counseling, among many other activities.



Bemiss named a State Distinguished School

The State Superintendent's Office named Bemiss Elementary a 2011 Title I Washington State Distinguished School for exceptional student achievement in math. Only four schools in the state are chosen to be distinguished schools each year. Bemiss was the only school chosen from eastern Washington. This honor comes with a \$5,000 award.

"We are truly honored to have been chosen for this award," said Bemiss Principal Jennifer Keck. "In partnership with our students and their families, our Bemiss staff remains committed to providing whatever it takes to continue our goal of assisting every student, every day, in fostering positive student achievement. We understand it takes a village to support our kids!"



SPS added to College Board's 2nd Annual AP[®] District Honor Roll

Spokane Public Schools is one of 367 public school districts in the nation honored by the College Board with a place on the 2nd Annual AP[®] Honor Roll for simultaneously increasing access to Advanced Placement coursework while maintaining or increasing the percentage of students earning scores of 3 or higher on AP exams. Achieving both of these goals is the ideal scenario for a district's Advanced Placement program, because it indicates that the district is successfully identifying motivated, academically prepared students who are likely to benefit most from AP coursework. Since 2009, SPS increased the number of students participating in AP from 1172 to 1307, while improving the percentage of students earning AP Exam scores of 3 or higher from 59% in 2009 to 62% in 2011. The majority of U.S. colleges and universities grant college credit or advanced placement for a score of 3 or above on AP exams.



Mark Your Calendars!

We are pleased to announce that the third annual Inland Northwest AP Summer Institute will be held July 30-Aug. 2, 2012, at Lewis and Clark High School. The change in dates was necessitated by the Spokane Public Schools calendar and the possibility of snow make-up days during the third week of June. We are excited about Lewis and Clark's willingness to be the hosting school this year. The Davenport Hotel will once again be the Institute hotel. A flier will be forthcoming announcing sessions, including two new offerings: Pre-AP World Languages and Pre-AP 2D/3D Studio Art. Find more information at www.spokaneschools.org/APSummerInstitute.

SPS chosen as part of Teacher Principal Evaluation

Spokane Public Schools has been selected to participate in the Teacher Principal Evaluation Project (TPEP) Regional Implementation Grant for the 2011-12 school year along with seven other school districts within NorthEast Washington Educational Service District (NEWESD) 101.

The eight districts will make up a consortium, led by NEWESD 101, collaborating on a state grant aimed at improving teacher and principal evaluation systems. These districts will be part of a second phase of a multi-year state grant that began last year with the development of new evaluation criteria for both groups of professionals.

Cheney, Chewelah, Lind, Nine Mile Falls, Odessa, Ritzville, Spokane and West Valley will explore three instructional frameworks that will serve as the foundation for a teacher evaluation system to be piloted the following year. A revised evaluation system for principals and central office staff is also underway in Spokane Public Schools, and will see this work continue in the coming year.

The work of these districts, along with the work of the TPEP pilot sites begun last year, will inform the statewide implementation of revised teacher and principal evaluation systems in the 2013-14 school year.

The new evaluation system will be based on revised criteria for teacher effectiveness, brought about by legislative action in the spring of 2010. The new system will improve student learning by providing teachers with enhanced feedback on their instruction, additional guidance for their improvement and higher expectations for their performance.

“This grant will definitely provide us with some much needed resources for professional development and an opportunity to learn from our colleagues in other districts,” said Superintendent Nancy Stowell.



Congratulations

The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services selected Lewis and Clark College & Career Readiness Coordinator **Christine Mackleit** to receive an Exemplary Volunteer Award for making substantial contributions to the promotion of substance abuse prevention.

The City of Spokane honored **Janice Abramson**, Special Programs office manager, with an award for Arts Community Leadership. She has volunteered at Spokane Civic Theatre for 35 years, and also has volunteered with Interplayers, Center Stage and Spokane Children's Theatre, and for 22 years, has sold tickets to Spokane Indians games.

The City of Spokane honored **Shadle Park High School** with a 2011 Mayor's Urban Design Award, which recognizes "excellent design that contributes to the City of Spokane's quality of life and is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan."

Spokane achieved national recognition as one of America's Promise Alliance's **100 Best Communities for Young People** presented by ING for its initiatives to help young people. The competition recognizes communities across the country that focus on reducing high school dropout rates and providing service and support to their youth. Spokane, a fifth-time winner of the 100 Best Communities for Young People competition, has made youth a priority with its numerous programs that support healthy development, protection and care of young children. Spokane also supports early child development with programs such as the Inland Northwest Alliance for Early Learning, which helps prepare children for kindergarten.

The Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board gave a nice mention to the SPS CTE department in its Oct. 19 Washington State Workforce Development News, saying that the **SPS Career and Technical Education** office is sharing its "extensive expertise in organizing student career conference and awareness days" by making several toolkits available.



Are you having a conflict at work?

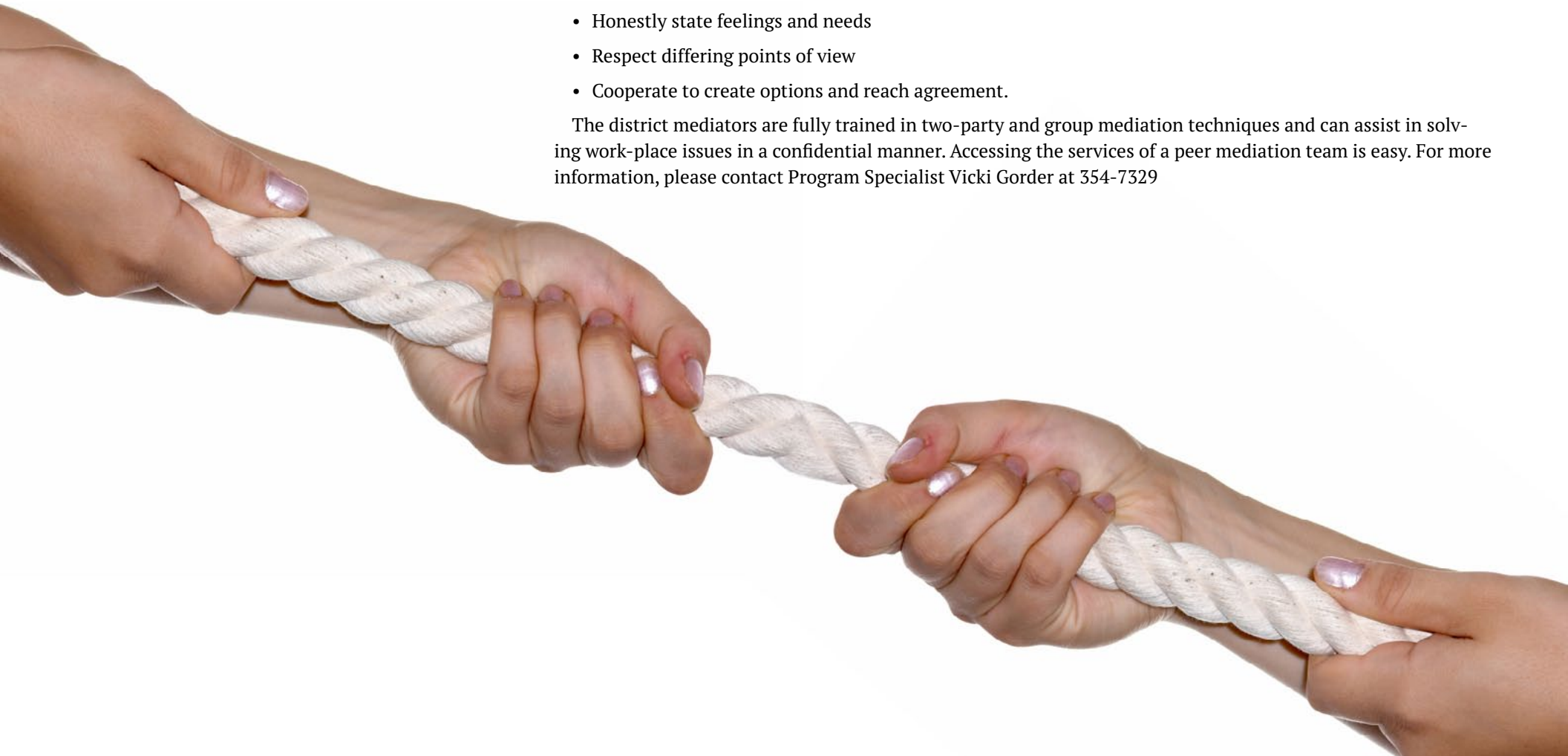
Help is available!

Spokane Education Association and Spokane Public Schools encourage mediation as a way to solve conflict in the workplace. Mediation is a voluntary, safe and constructive way to help identify and resolve issues. Many work-related problems do not go away on their own. They are sometimes ignored until resentment builds and working relationships are damaged. Mediation is a safe and cooperative approach. With open communications and mutual respect, most conflicts can be resolved.

Alternative dispute resolution is based on the belief that in order to resolve conflicts, people must be willing to

- Focus on the problem and not the person
- Honestly state feelings and needs
- Respect differing points of view
- Cooperate to create options and reach agreement.

The district mediators are fully trained in two-party and group mediation techniques and can assist in solving work-place issues in a confidential manner. Accessing the services of a peer mediation team is easy. For more information, please contact Program Specialist Vicki Gorder at 354-7329



Healthy snacks reminder

Provided by Nutrition Services

Classroom snacks can benefit our student learning environment, but it is important to provide safe and healthy snacks for our students. Below are the guidelines for safe foods/snacks in the classroom.

Party & Snack Guidelines: [View list here](#)

- Classroom parties should be held after lunchtime.
- Incentives: It is recommended to not use candy as a classroom incentive.
- Offer nutritious foods.

Safe Foods, Food In Classroom:

- Use the Spokane Regional Health District ([SRHD safe foods list](#)).
- Avoid protein-containing foods (No protein-containing foods brought from home that are shared)
- Classroom Food Activities: Use commercially prepared foods (purchased from a store)
- Remember be aware of allergy issues and choking hazards
- Choose more nutritious food items (fresh fruits, whole grains)
- Follow the Basic Sanitation Rules

Basic Sanitation Rules:

Always use good hygiene and basic food safety skills to prevent contamination of food items. These practices prevent foodborne illnesses.

- Thoroughly wash hands with soap and water before preparing or serving food.
- Cook hot foods to 165 degrees F.
- Hold hot foods at 140 degrees F or more.
- Hold cold foods at 40 degrees F or less
- Cool hot foods to 40 degrees F or less within 2 to 4 hours
- Handle and serve food only in a clean and safe environment
- Wear plastic gloves when preparing and serving foods.
- Clean all preparation areas by washing surfaces and then sanitizing.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the Nutrition Services office at 354-7234.





Construction moves along on the Ferris High School modernization project. Watch the progress on the Ferris webcam.

ETC.

Staff Matters is your publication, a chance for you to communicate with staff district-wide about successes and challenges in both your work and after-work life. But we can't share your news if we don't know about it. Call 354-7387 or e-mail Kristy Mylroie at Kristymy@spokaneschools.org any time with story ideas, comments or thoughts on what you'd like to read about in Staff Matters.

Community Thanksgiving Dinner • Everyone welcome!

Saturday, Nov. 19, 4-7 p.m. • Rogers High School commons • 1622 E. Wellesley

Sponsored by the Women's and Children's Free Restaurant, Pawn 1 and Spokane Public Schools



Community Leaders Breakfast

Each year for at least the last decade, Spokane Public Schools has hosted a special event for the city's leaders called the "Community Leaders Breakfast." More than 100 representatives from business, medical and religious communities, education, media, neighborhood councils and other community organizations attend to learn more about Spokane Public Schools and timely topics in education. Student speakers and musicians are typically part of the morning's events, as well as an address from the superintendent. This year, Dr. Stowell spoke about preparing students for college and careers.

New School Talk shows

The "Great Grad" video interview series continues this year, highlighting some of the many fabulous graduates of Spokane Public Schools. The current interview features Heather Parker, a Ferris alumna and accomplished opera singer. Watch the interviews at spokaneschools.org or on YouTube. If you have an idea for a great grad interview, contact Terren Roloff at terrenr@spokaneschools.org.

Spokane Public Schools also produces three new education-related shows each month, posts them at spokaneschools.org and on YouTube, and airs them on Comcast Cable channel 17 at 7 a.m., 3 p.m., and 7 p.m. daily.



Donations needed

The Madison Elementary faculty was saddened to learn about a tragic accident that occurred to one of its students.

Snezhana Dedkov is a student with special needs. In her nine years in SPS she has overcome many obstacles. However, her biggest obstacle occurred recently when she was severely burned, and had to be flown to Harbor View Medical Center. Snezhana will undergo at least three surgeries and months of therapy. If you would like to support her, please make donations to FBO Snezhana Dedkov at any STCU branch.

SPS Winter Wear and Blanket Drive

Todd Clouse, head custodian at Holmes Elementary, is organizing a district-wide winter clothing and blanket drive to benefit our community's homeless population.

Clouse is currently trying to arrange for collection boxes at each school, which will be in place through Dec. 15. He will visit each site Dec. 16 to collect the donations and distribute them to homeless shelters in Spokane on behalf of SPS and SEA.

"We are doing this because even the individuals who live on the street are human beings and some of them are even patrons of our schools," Clouse said.

Anyone willing to put a collection box at their site should contact Clouse at 354-2985 or 993-4260.



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