



# PORT ORFORD - LANGLOIS SCHOOL DISTRICT MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

March 2025 | Issue 1

## Welcome - What's happening in POLSD

By Aaron Miller - Superintendent



Welcome to the first edition of the Port Orford Langlois School District (POLSD) Newsletter. This newsletter is intended to keep you up to date on the many great things that are happening within the walls of Driftwood Elementary and Pacific High School.

In this issue you will find information regarding upcoming community input sessions on how we are utilizing our economic resources to meet the needs of our students, the development of plans to maintain and upgrade school and district facilities, the return of full-day kindergarten to Driftwood, how to become a SMART Volunteer and in each issue you will

find at least one article written by a Pacific High School journalist.

We hope you find this newsletter informative, as well as entertaining. There are so many positive opportunities and outcomes for our students here in the POLSD that we wanted to share them with you, our students, parents, and the community.

Again, we hope you enjoy reading about the many positive activities happening here in the District, and if there is anything specific you would like to see addressed in a future article, please give us a call at the District Office (541-348-2455) to provide your suggestion.

## ACADEMICS SOLID

IN PORT ORFORD - LANGLOIS SCHOOL DISTRICT

By Aaron Miller - Superintendent

Small class sizes, and a dedicated staff who care for and support our students help make Port Orford a great place to learn, grow and work.

The addition of a new Title I Reading Intervention program at Driftwood Elementary is reaping strong benefits in its first 6 months of providing services to students. All grades (K-6) demonstrated strong growth on their quarterly assessments, with 43% of our overall population reading at proficient levels, and over 75% moving up at least one level of proficiency. These numbers are significant increases from our 2023-24 school year.

The new program is benefitting for ALL students at Driftwood, especially those in need of developing stronger literacy skills. Great work students and staff!

At Pacific High School, we continue to strive to help each and every student cross the graduation finish line. For the past three years, our 4-year Graduation Rates have been at 100%, 100% and 100%. Congratulations and nice work to all our K-12 staff who have helped and supported our students reach this great achievement.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, March 3rd: *Middle School Girls Basketball Home Game 4 pm*

Monday, March 3rd: *Parent Community Input Session 1 – Pacific High School Cafeteria – 6 pm*

Thursday, March 6th: *Community Bingo Night - Read Across America Week, Driftwood Cafeteria 5:30 pm - 7 pm*

Friday, March 7th: *No School - Grade Day*

Wednesday, March 12th: *Parent Community Input Session 2 – Driftwood Elementary Cafeteria – 6 pm*

Monday, March 10th: *School Board Meeting, at the PHS Library 6 pm*

Wed - Thurs, March 19th - 20th: *Early Release for Students for Parent/Teacher Conferences*

Friday, March 21st: *No School*

March 24th - 28th: *Spring Break No School*

We are here to help our students...

*“Navigate Challenges With Grace, Prepare For Their Futures and Anchor Themselves In Our Community.”*

# Community Input Meeting: Long-Range Planning For Facilities & Educational Programming (And Free Dinner)

*By Aaron Miller - Superintendent*

Tonight, March 3rd at 6 pm in the PHS cafeteria, the POLSD will hold the first of several meetings asking for families and the community to provide input on educational programs and facilities in the POLSD. We will feed you a free dinner, as we gather input from you to develop long-range plans for the future of our school facilities and educational services.

Free is a very good price, and we hope a dinner for your family will entice you to come to school tonight, or on one of the following nights, to give your opinions on potential facility improvement projects, what is going well in the district, and what needs improvement.

Topics of interest on the agenda to discuss include:

1. Facilities and a Potential Bond Request - Our long-range planning committee has been looking at facility needs in the district and we are considering a bond request to help pay for them. We want to share some options and initial pricing, gather your input on which projects are needed and share what these projects would mean for students at both Driftwood Elementary and Pacific High School.
2. The potential move of 6th-grade classes from Driftwood Elementary to PHS.
3. Integrated Academic Programs - We are looking to share

programs and outcomes on how the District is spending its Student Investment Account and High School Success dollars provided by the Oregon Department of Education, and gather your input on what is going well, or in need of improvement in these programs. Examples of how these funds are currently used is helping to pay for social/emotional support for students, providing funding for our Career and Technical Education (CTE - Shop) classes, helping support attendance services needs, and much more.

We hope you can join us at one or more of the following input sessions.

Session One: Pick the night that works best for you, as this session will be held on two different nights. The format for each night will be the same, working to gather input from as many parents and community members as possible. The first available night is Monday, March 3 – 6 pm in the PHS Cafeteria, the second Wednesday, March 12 – 6 pm in the Driftwood Cafeteria.

Session Two: This meeting will occur on Wednesday, April 2nd at 6 pm in the Driftwood Cafeteria. The District will summarize and recap input provided through our first student, parent, staff, and School Board input sessions, and request “final prioritization input” on which measures the District plans to implement.

Session Three: This meeting has not yet been scheduled and will be if the process is not complete and another meeting is needed.

If you have any questions regarding these meetings, please contact Superintendent Miller at the District Office: 541-348-2455.

## FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN IS BACK ON TRACK

*By Aaron Miller - Superintendent*

For the 24-25 school year, there was a higher-than-expected population of kindergarten students that warranted Driftwood Elementary to divide its classes into half-day, morning, and afternoon sessions. This division of the class allowed incoming kindergarteners to be in smaller classes as they transitioned into their school-day routines and began their learning adventures at the big school.

Now that students have had time to learn new routines and gain stamina, the morning and afternoon kindergarten sessions have again been combined so students in the POLSD now have access to full-day kindergarten. This plan for full-day kindergarten is in place for the remainder of the year, as well as for the upcoming 25-26 school year. A special thank you to our kindergarten families who adjusted so well to the changes in schedule, allowing our students to grow!



## KINDERGARTEN START - UP

*By Aaron Miller - Superintendent*

It is hard to believe, but we are currently in the process of beginning preparations for the next school year. Our Kindergarten Start Up meeting for parents of incoming kindergarten students is set for Thursday, May 8 at Driftwood Elementary from 5:30-7 pm.

Getting an accurate count of students registered and on next year's list is critical for our planning and preparation. If you have a student

who will be an incoming kinder next year, or know of another family that has one, we encourage you to call the Driftwood Elementary office at 541-332-2712 to get them on the list for the 2025-26 Kindergarten class, enabling us to provide families with all of the most up to date information on the upcoming school year.

Thank you for your help in registering your student(s) early, and for helping us identify all incoming students to our District.



Excerpt from the upcoming *Jolly Roger, School Newspaper*

## Peaceful Schools Promote Growth & Unity District Wide

By Devin Dupree - Journalism Student

Every month, a few dozen PHS students are called out of class. They don black T-shirts and slip on name tags accompanied by the Rotary Club's seal. These students board buses bound for Driftwood Elementary, with them children's books and booklets of questions. At Driftwood, they read the aforementioned books to grades 1-3. These books deal with questions both simple—"what is sharing, stealing is bad, etc." and yet also complex—"Why is it bad to make people feel bad?"

This program is called Peaceful Schools.

The organizers and managers of Peaceful Schools feel that it is absolutely critical to instill positive ideals and lessons in children when they are young, as this period of time is when they are still developing their core ideas and values—still deciding how they want to be, so to speak. Teaching children what even many adults struggle to comprehend—

that being nice is a good thing—may make them better people in the future.

As a Peaceful Schools student myself, it was initially shocking how readily the second grade took to the lessons, and how receptive to the varied implied messages the elementary students were. Students within my groups have listened to the stories, answered questions well, and though we've had the occasional disrespectful or rowdy 7-year-old, Peaceful Schools, in my experience, has been mostly smooth sailing.

Peaceful Schools is a Rotary program, meaning books and materials are provided by the Port Orford Rotary Club. Peaceful Schools is one of many youth services the club finances and/or offers, some others being ASPIRE, RYLA, and many scholarship reward programs.

Peaceful Schools was initially a program in the Rotary district 5450, a Rotary district of Colorado, but has since grown exponentially. Clubs as far east as New York, and evidently as far west as Oregon, participate in some variation of it. The first Port Orford Peaceful Schools lesson took place in December 2016. Students from the high school read a book (*Hey Little Ant* by Phillip M. Hoose) to 1st and 2nd-graders and delivered a lesson, establishing a pattern of instruction which has carried on to this day.

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# Continued: Peaceful School Promote Growth & Unity District Wide

The high schoolers arrive at driftwood between 1:50 and 2:00. Depending on which grade they are assigned, they may begin immediately after arriving. First, the older children re-introduce themselves along with the topic that they covered last month, then they split into groups—two high schoolers, and however many grade schoolers are appropriate.

One high schooler reads from that month's book, while the other prompts the little kids to think about what the book is trying to tell them, both explicitly and in subtext, with questions prepared by educators from Rotary. When the book is done, depending on what lesson is being taught and how much time is left in the schedule, students may gather together for a group activity.

Last month, February, for example, the book was *How Full Is Your Bucket? For Kids* by Mary Reckmeyer and Tom Rath. *How Full Is Your Bucket?* Deals with emotional awareness—being able to recognize both your own and others' emotions—and empathy. After the book was through, the high schoolers instructed the younger children in the group project: each grade schooler took a paper cutout in the shape of a bucket, placed a sticker on it, and passed it on to the next person. The next person then repeated this process, then so on and so forth.

This represents how people—like the buckets—are affected by how others add (or subtract!) from them. Once one bucket has been passed around the room, it still represents the

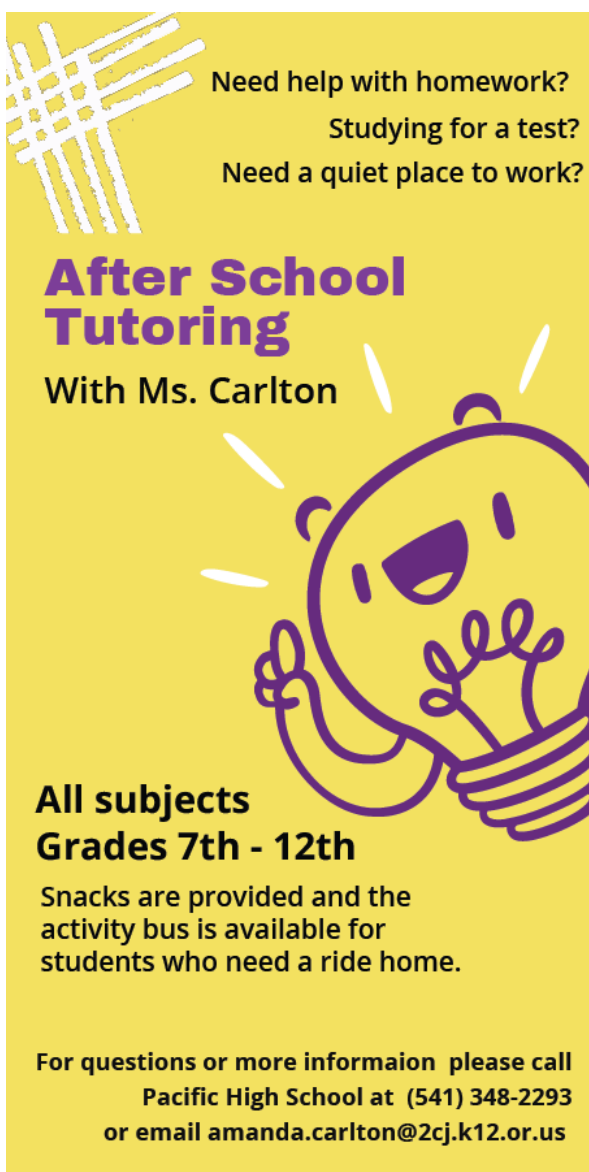
same bucket, but it has been affected in many ways by the children adding stickers to it. In other words, it has changed in appearance, but the name written on the back is still the same. One Peaceful Schools student did admit that, while the first grade had fun with the activity, they were a bit overzealous with the stickers—placing them not just on the buckets, but also on others' faces.

One of Peaceful Schools' main tenets are the "4 Awesome Questions," 4 questions taught repeatedly (to encourage memorization) that teach children to be more considerate of how they act. Many other organizations, including other branches of Peaceful Schools, have variations on the "4 Awesome Questions," but these are those used by the Port Orford club:

1. "Is it TRUE?"
2. "Is it FAIR to everyone?"
3. "Will it help build FRIENDSHIPS?"
4. "Will it be good for EVERYONE?"


The younger kids are supposed to, when approaching a situation that will be confrontational, apply one of the four questions listed above to how they act in said situation. This is a measure that is intended to teach the grade schoolers to be calmer and kinder when interacting with their peers. For most situations a young child is likely to be in, the "4 Awesome Questions" will be applicable in some form.

Peaceful Schools has been running for a little over 8 years. Those who were 1st-graders back in 2016 are now old enough to be participating in the program themselves. I would say, as someone who helps with the program, that I think the lessons being taught by the books are quite good to learn at as young an age as the grade schoolers are. I also think that having high schoolers teach the younger kids is quite a good idea, as there tends to be greater respect (and admiration) from the children towards them than there is in the case of adults.



Need help with homework?  
Studying for a test?  
Need a quiet place to work?

**After School Tutoring**  
With Ms. Carlton



**All subjects**  
**Grades 7th - 12th**

Snacks are provided and the activity bus is available for students who need a ride home.

For questions or more information please call Pacific High School at (541) 348-2293 or email [amanda.carlton@2cj.k12.or.us](mailto:amanda.carlton@2cj.k12.or.us)



Hosted by 2CJ School District

**Community BINGO NIGHT**

Driftwood Elementary School Cafeteria

**Thursday**  
**5:30 - 7 PM**  
**March 6th**

Join us for a fun and festive evening as we celebrate Read Across America Week with bingo, prizes, and community spirit! This event is all about supporting literacy, having fun, and building community connections. Enjoy exciting rounds of bingo and win fantastic prizes donated by local businesses and community members, and book giveaways!

It's a great way to celebrate the joy of reading and coming together as a community. Food will be provided and there is no charge for attending this event. Students under the age of 15 must be accompanied by an adult.