



COMMUNITY + Link

A Publication of
Mount Vernon Schools



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You will find our alumni working in every field imaginable, changing the world around us every day. Take a look at what our alumni are doing today and where they started.

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Welcome to the winter edition of our community newsletter.

It's difficult to believe that we are already into the second semester of the academic year!

In this publication, we have chosen to highlight our partnerships with higher education aimed at increasing learning opportunities for students and staff. We made major inroads in developing these partnerships over the past two years and are proud of what we have accomplished.

Also in this edition, you will find updates on the implementation of our Technology and Security Replacement Levy and our facility planning efforts. Mount Vernon Schools are an exciting place to be and this year is certainly no exception. Thank you for your continued support for our efforts to teach and nurture our next generation!



Carl Bruner
Superintendent, M.V. School District



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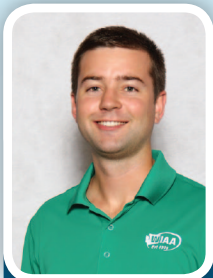




FEATURED ALUMNI

Our alumni are working to change the world around us.

Taylor's work with student activities pays it forward...



Cam Taylor

Mount Vernon High School alum Cam Taylor has leveraged his passion for athletics into a satisfying career that allows him to help provide students statewide with the same opportunities he had to play school sports.

"In working with student activities, I feel like I'm paying it forward," he says. "That's very rewarding."

Taylor graduated from MVHS in 2008 and earned a BA in Business Administration from the University of Washington. Today he is Project Coordinator of the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association, directing preparations for state high school sports championships, coaching programs, other WIAA special events, and more.

A self-professed "total sports nut", Taylor's belief in the value of student activities and athletic programs as part of the total education experience got its start at MVHS.

"Athletics were definitely a highlight of my high school years," he says. "I played basketball, baseball and ran cross country thanks to some terrific coaching from Teresa Thomas, Jess Del Bosque, Jeff Scott, Mac Fraser, Torey Swanson, Dennis Lind and Danny Costa. There was a lot of school spirit and community involvement in MVHS sports, and I always felt I was part of something very special."

Taylor's career advice to high school students is to strive to grow as individuals and to pursue work they are passionate about – guidance he, himself, took to heart. "I always thought that working in the sports industry was for me," he says. "I feel very lucky to be with the WIAA."

"...I always thought that working in the sports industry was for me," he says. "I feel very lucky to be with the WIAA."

– Cam Taylor



Highly Capable Students

Mount Vernon School District will be testing students for the highly capable program during Spring 2015. Students can be nominated for testing by parents, teachers, and community members from February 1st through March 13th, 2015.

To nominate a student please visit:
<http://tinyurl.com/hicap2015>

To learn more please visit:
<http://tinyurl.com/hicapinfo>





Mount Vernon Schools benefit from our close proximity to Skagit Valley College and Western Washington University.

While we have enjoyed a positive relationship with both institutes, during the past several years we have become much more engaged with college administration and faculty to develop mutually beneficial partnerships.

Some of these initiatives are described in the adjacent graphic »



√4

For the past three years, Mount Baker Middle School has been involved in a partnership with Western Washington University and two other school districts to improve teachers' subject-matter knowledge in mathematics, science, and English Language Arts and to enhance principal's and assistant principals' instructional leadership skills in these content areas.

Faculty at Western are currently completing a request for funding to continue professional development for math teachers at both Mount Baker and LaVenture Middle Schools.

Based on the high quality internship student teachers from Western experienced at Washington Elementary, another cohort was added to Centennial Elementary this academic year. Western plans to expand student teacher cohort placements to Jefferson, Madison, Lincoln, and Little Mountain next school year. This arrangement not only brings faculty from Western into our schools, but also strengthens the skills of our teachers as they mentor teachers-in-training.



Mount Vernon School District teachers assigned to courses bearing credit from Skagit Valley College collaborate with SVC faculty to ensure their instruction is aligned with college level courses. In addition, SVC faculty members volunteer on advisory committees for a number of our career and technical education courses.

This school year, members of the SVC math department participated in the district's process of reviewing and adopting new instructional materials for math.

We're fortunate to have forward thinking, creative, and collaborative administrators and faculty at both Western and SVC. We look forward to continuing to expand our relationship in the future for the benefit of our students.



During 2012, we partnered with the Burlington-Edison School District, Skagit Valley College, and Western Washington University to develop a pathway to teacher certification for high school students interested in a career in K-12 education.

During their junior and/or senior year in high school, these students take a class where they learn about child development and the fundamentals of teaching and learning through a combination of classroom-based and internship experiences. Upon graduation, these students enter Skagit Valley College, where they receive support to complete a transfer degree, or Western Washington University. When they reach their junior year in college, students may gain conditional admission to Western's Woodring College of Education. A companion program, titled Maestros Para El Pueblo (Teachers for the Community), is aimed at reaching native Spanish speaking students. The first cohort of students in this program is currently in their freshman year at Skagit and Western.

In the coming months, we will be meeting with Skagit Valley College and Skagit Regional Health to explore a pipeline to health careers, based on the Recruiting Washington Teachers model.



Through agreement with Skagit Valley College, students attending Mount Vernon High School are able to earn college credit for 15 Career and Technical Education courses. Students enrolled in programs through the Northwest Career and Technical Academy may also earn credits through Skagit Valley College.

Recently, the district has expanded our partnership with SVC to include academic courses. Through the College in the High School program, students may earn college credits for eligible courses in English, Spanish, and AVID.



Since 2012, a partnership between Washington Elementary School and Western's Woodring College of Education has been one of only three such partnerships statewide to receive funding through the CSIS program. The initiative is designed to:

1. Improve instructional practices
2. Increase family engagement
3. Enhance teacher preparation and professional development

For the past two years, cohorts of 6 – 8 student interns from Western have completed their student teaching experience at Washington Elementary as part of the CSIS grant.

The ultimate goal of this partnership is to share what Washington and Western have learned with other schools in our district and with other districts around the state.



At a Glance – Our increasing partnerships, programs and pathways equip students for college and career success.

4x **GROWTH**

2014 was the first year Mount Vernon High School students could enroll in the Skagit Valley College to Western Washington University teacher certification pathway. Current 2015 enrollment has grown **nearly 4x since last year** and is projected to increase.

15

Mount Baker Middle School teachers and leadership have partnered with Western Washington University staff for 3 years to improve their subject-matter knowledge and enhance leadership skills in mathematics, science, and English Language Arts.



Centennial and Washington Elementary Schools are now benefitting from working with student teacher interns from Western Washington University.

In 2015-16 Western Washington University plans to expand student teacher placements to the following four elementary schools!

- ✓ **Little Mountain**
 - ✓ **Jefferson**
 - ✓ **Madison**
 - ✓ **Lincoln**
- 



129

MVHS students are earning Skagit Valley College credits for eligible courses in Spanish, AVID, and English.

7,617



COLLEGE CREDITS EARNED

Through the Tech Prep partnership, Mount Vernon High School students have earned 7,617 credits at Skagit Valley College over the past three years. This translates to \$870,623 in college tuition savings.

The healthcare and social assistance job sector is projected to grow at an annual rate of 2.6 percent, adding 5.0 million jobs between 2012 and 2022*. Mount Vernon School District is exploring future partnerships for our students with Skagit Valley College and Skagit Regional Health.

5 Million JOBS



*U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Technology and Security Update



In February 2014, voters approved a replacement capital levy, which was intended to fund continued efforts to improve student and teacher access to current technology and make our schools more secure. Collection of these funds will begin in April. This spring, we will begin work to:

- Install keyless door lock systems
- Install 55 school surveillance cameras
- Purchase and distribute 20 portable technology labs

In addition to these levy-funded projects, this fall the district added a third security monitor position at Mount Vernon High School and a full time position at LaVenture Middle School.

While secure school facilities are vitally important, we know that prevention in the form of a positive and supportive school climate must be a top priority. This year, both middle schools are working to strengthen their student recognition and advisory programs, while Little Mountain Elementary is implementing the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports model school wide. Across the district, creating opportunities for students that help increase their sense of belonging is a significant priority.



Facility Planning Update



On December 1, the School Board met with our architectural consultants to review the projects recommended for consideration by our Facility Advisory Committee.

In that meeting, it became clear that in order for the Board and District to ensure that project cost estimates were as accurate as possible – a commitment made to the public after an analysis of the 2001 bond – more detailed work was needed.

The District's Facility Advisory Committee met with our architects on January 29 to review their work to date. A work-study session for the Board to review updated project cost estimates is tentatively scheduled for March. Once the Board makes a preliminary decision on the scope of projects, we will schedule a survey and a series of focus groups to gain community input.



National Board Certification

Mount Vernon now has 59 teachers who have successfully earned National Board Certification – 2nd only to Bellingham School District in Northwest Washington.

Exploring the Universe

MVHS is one of only two high schools in Washington state with a science program equipped with an on-site planetarium.