

Lopez Island School District #144

86 School Road
Lopez Island, WA 98261
Phone 360-468-2202 Fax (360) 468-2212
www.lopezislandschool.org

Dr. Carl Bruner, Interim Superintendent

Mary Fordham, Interim Elementary Principal

Dr. Martha Martin, Secondary Principal

January 22, 2021

Dear LISD Families,

What a beautiful day! This sunshine is such a gift. I've been riding my bike to and from work, and today (true confession) I left home a few minutes later than usual. Normally, running late makes me feel anxious, guilty, and impatient. This morning though, with the sun on my face as I peddled down (or is it up?) School Road, I just could not stop smiling. Please join me in thanking Mother Nature, if you haven't already, by tilting your face toward the sun, closing your eyes, and offering an appreciative grin.

I'm keeping my words brief today, and making some space for the other two members of our LISD leadership team. Enjoy!

From Our Superintendent, Dr. Carl Bruner

About 10 years ago, Jamie Vollmer – a businessman, attorney, and vocal critic of public schools – wrote a book titled, *Schools Can't Do It Alone*. In it he describes his journey towards developing an understanding that schools can only succeed if their communities are willing to partner with them in meaningful ways to help meet students' needs.

During my early days on Lopez, I have seen a community that has embraced Vollmer's proposition in ways that are all too rare in other parts of the state and country. To name a few examples:

- The Lopez Island Family Resource Center provides an array of services, from nutrition to counseling, to mentoring for students and their families. In partnership with the Lopez Island Library and the school district, they are providing tutoring for students who need additional support during this time of remote learning.
- San Juan County supports in-school services to students struggling with behavioral health challenges.

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- The Lopez Island Parent, Teachers, and Student Association (PTSA) provides an impressive array of supports for students, families, and teachers of students across the K-12 school community.
- Every year, the Lopez Island Education Foundation supports a number of STEM and enrichment activities for students.
- The Lopez International Student Travel Education Program (InSTEP) has given in excess of \$100,000 in support of student international travel.
- Individuals have donated approximately \$75,000 in an effort to support the district's loss of levy funds due to changes in the state funding system for K-12 schools.

The list goes on and those of you who have lived here for awhile may be inclined to take these efforts for granted. However, I can assure you that your community's generosity and robust array of opportunities for children, youth, and families are not the norm in many places. I urge you to embrace them as a source of pride!

Switching gears, our efforts to plan for school reopening continue and, by next week, I hope to have some details to share. There are a number of dynamics that make this planning complicated, not the least of which are sufficient numbers of staff and paraeducators who are able to engage safely in face to face interactions with students and the number of families prepared to send their children back to school versus preferring for them to remain in fully remote teaching. The changes Governor Inslee announced to the timeline for vaccinations will, over the next few months, help a great deal. However, we need to create more robust learning opportunities for students in the meantime. Stay tuned for more information.

Thanks for your commitment to our school!

From Our Elementary Principal, Mary Fordham

To Our Elementary Families,

In just three weeks... On one hand, it's hard to believe that it's only been three weeks, because I have met so many staff and community members in Lopez while attending

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meeting after meeting. The many ways that people on Lopez have embraced my arrival makes me feel like I have been a part of the Lopez community for quite some time now. However, on the other hand, I can't believe that three weeks have flown by so quickly. I am really enjoying my time on Lopez with school staff and looking forward to a fun ride this winter/spring.

My primary goal for the first few weeks of my arrival was building relationships. After spending many hours in 1:1 conversations and small groups with staff members, I have come to the conclusion that we are so fortunate to have such a unique, talented, passionate, and dedicated staff who cares deeply about the education and relationships with our students. This is such a special staff and I'm lucky to work with this crew every day. I can already tell that we will be accomplishing great things this spring!

My next goal is getting to know our students and families better. Please don't be surprised if I hop on your child's class Zoom meeting to say "hello". I also welcome families to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns. I feel that it's important to be partners in your child's education and want to hear from you. In the coming weeks, I will be setting up a virtual coffee meet and greet and hope that many of you will be able to come.

I'm looking forward to meeting all of you soon!

Secondary Star Testing

Star testing for secondary students, including parent partner students, will be next Tuesday and Thursday during PACK. Each PACK teacher will be sending a Zoom link to all students in that grade level, even those who have unenrolled from PACK.

The Star test is our common interim assessment for math and literacy. It doesn't tell us everything, but when we triangulate the data with both formative and summative classroom assessments, we get a clear picture of a student's knowledge and skills in math and reading.

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Secondary Clubs Update from Jaimie Terada

Secondary student's, jump on this opportunity for IRL fun!

Ms. S and Ms. Terada will host Playground Social Hour Wednesday 27th with Middleschool from 1:00-2:00 and Highschool 2:00-3:00 Students should dress warmly, wear masks and practice social distancing.

Also! Mr B. will host a MS/HS fire pit at Odlin park next Wednesday from 4:00-6:00 (Students should dress warm where masks and bring a few pieces of firewood to contribute.)

There are a limited amount of slots, so students must email the teacher if interested. First come first serve. Students must confirm that there is space with the teacher and ensure they have a way to get dropped off and picked up.

Please email Ms. Terada for playground social hour.

jterada@lopezislandschool.org

Please email Mr. B for a fire pit time.

bbgoff@lopezislandschool.org

So looking forward to sharing laughs with you!

Middle School Science News from Joe Behnke

Middle school students are studying the avian soundscape of different parts of Lopez Island with Mr. Behnke using wildlife acoustic recorders and an analysis program called Kaleidoscope, all purchased with grant funds from the Toshiba America Foundation. The Kaleidoscope software takes several hours of raw recordings, separates them into 0.1 - 2 second sound bytes, and then clusters the bytes into folders of similar sounds. Students can flip through individual sounds or whole clusters. When students play a sound, they also view it as a frequency and amplitude spectrogram, so with practice they begin visually identifying species based on their signature spectrograms. Study sites so far have included Hummel Lake and Lopez Hill. Students chose Lopez Hill as a deployment site after looking at satellite maps and noticing the relatively large swath of forest and distance from main roads. Some

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species identified from the Dec 27th Lopez Hill recordings were great horned owls, American ravens, chestnut-backed chickadees, gold-crowned kinglets, spotted towhees, Pacific wrens, red-breasted nuthatches, and pileated woodpeckers.

For 11th Grade Families

We are hosting a Parent/Guardian/Student Meeting for 11th grade families.

This meeting will be formatted for open discussion about navigating, being, and having a junior during Covid 19.

Smaller interest groups (Running Start, Gap Year, Four Year College, Two Year College, Vocational/Certificate Programs, SAT/ACT, FAFSA, WASFA, etc) will be created for further discussions.

Here are the details:

- **Topic: 11th grade Parent/Student/Guardian Meeting**
- **Time: Jan 25, 2021 05:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)**
- **Join Zoom Meeting [HERE](#)**
- **Meeting ID: 853 3521 8015**
- **Passcode: XFktC2**

Questions and Input on School Reopening

Look for information in next week's family letter on a Lopez Village Square event in early February focused on the theme of school reopening. This will be followed by a Secondary Family Listening Session, very similar to the one we had for elementary families.

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Good news from Amy Studzienko

SAP put fresh plastic on our fourth hoop house this Thursday and it looks great!

School Board Vacancy

The Lopez Island School District is seeking applications for the current vacant position on the board of education. All applicants must be over 18 years of age and be a registered voter.

If you are interested in applying please send an email of interest, highlighting your experience working on boards and with the community to Renee, HR Specialist, at rkoplan@lopezislandschool.org. First review of applications will occur on February 5, 2021.



On Wednesday, Carl, Renne, and I visited Decatur School for the first time. We met with the teacher, Gordon Whitaker, the new custodian, Jill Bliss, and a couple parents. Decatur is our remote and necessary school, currently serving six students. In this one room schoolhouse, learning is largely thematic, with differentiated tasks and learning goals appropriate for each student's level.

All my best,

Martha Martin, Secondary Principal

“There is light, if only we are brave enough to see it. If only we’re brave enough to BE it.” - Amanda Gorman

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