



MCMINNVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITY NEWS | SPRING 2024



Mac High's new medical assistant program includes seniors (from left) Valeria Ponce Martinez, McKenna Graham, Molly Everingham, Abby Eitzen, Summer Rutten, Taylor Zalanka, Nayely Ayala Martinez, Eva Johnson, Aldo Cardenas, Myranda Ramirez Cruz, Erica Sandels-West, Yazmin Alonzo (not pictured Kimberly Lemus Torres). See story inside.

Time to Register for Kindergarten & Pre-K

Do you have (or know of) a child who will be four- or five-years-old by September 1st? Registration day for pre-kindergarten (pre-K) and kindergarten for the 2024-25 school year is Thursday, April 25 from 3 - 6:30 p.m. at neighborhood elementary schools.

All district schools have full-day kindergarten, which runs on the elementary school schedule, and five MSD elementary schools run free pre-K programs, in both morning and afternoon sessions.

Kindergarten students must attend their neighborhood school, but pre-K students may attend any of the five schools that offer the program.

Our pre-K programs are full of hands-on, engaging activities that can help children get ready to read and learn about numbers. The children can also settle into school routines, mixed in with indoor and outdoor play, and have lots of time to interact with other children.

MSD kindergarten is the child's entry into the full school experience with PE and music, field trips, outdoor Science Experiences (pictured) and more.

Why enroll now?

Registered kindergarten students will be invited to a series of "playdates" on school playgrounds. These dates will allow children to play with future classmates and become familiar with the school grounds. The dates will also give families a chance to meet other families and school staff.



All students in grades K-4 go on science field trips made possible by the McMinnville Education Foundation.

Registered kindergartners will also be invited to a half-day Kindergarten Camp, August 12 - 15, to get a jumpstart on learning about their new school. First day

of class for most students is Monday, August 26.

Scan the QR code, visit our website or call 503.565.4000 to get started.



A Bridge to College

On school days, several Mac High seniors don scrubs and travel to Chemeketa Community College to attend their first class of the day. In class, they learn more about body systems, how to take vital signs, record medical histories and more. In the lab across the hall, they practice hands-on skills including drawing blood, giving flu shots, performing strep tests, and other clinical functions.

The students are part of a promising new program that allows them to become certified medical assistants and phlebotomists while still in high school.

To be eligible, students must have performed well in basic courses in the Health Services Career Pathway such as Human Anatomy & Physiology and Medical Terminology and also be committed to the required rigor of the program. A grant funded the students' supplies, books and fees for the national certification exams. They are also required to be certified in CPR.

Student Abby Eitzen (below left) said the experience was very different

from high school "due to the rigorous content and pace" of the course and that the experience made her feel "really prepared to start higher-level classes in college."

For many years, the high school has collaborated with Chemeketa to allow students to earn college credits while taking classes on the high school campus. These classes help prepare students for college-level academics and save on future tuition.

The new partnership puts young people on the college campus, giving them a different experience and allowing them to envision themselves as students beyond high school.

Paul Davis, a dean at Chemeketa who oversees career and technical education, said the partnership was launched, in

part, because of a significant local demand for medical assistants.

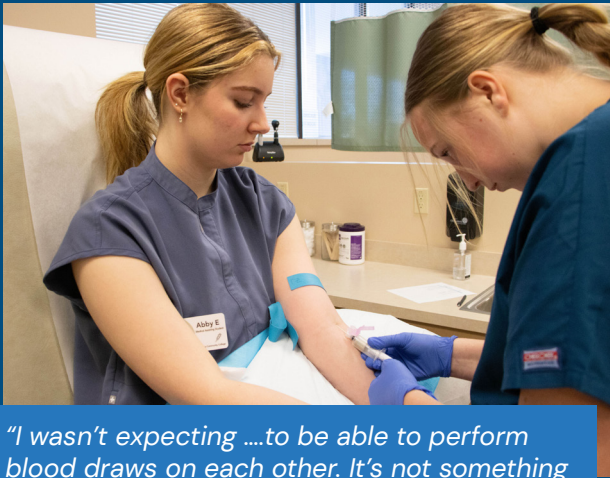
"By offering students a certification that qualifies them for immediate employment post-high school, we not only enable them to support themselves, but also empower them to contribute to the health and well-being of the community," said Davis.

By Spring Break, students were finishing up the course and lab work. Next to come are their clinical rotations, which will be completed at the Willamette Valley Medical Center. The goal is to pass their exams and complete the clinical hours requirement by the time they graduate from McMinnville High School in June.

Most of the students plan to continue working and studying in the field. Several mentioned working as a medical assistant while in college with future plans that include becoming a registered nurse, pediatric nurse, nurse practitioner, radiologist and psychiatrist.



"The depth and complexity of the skills we've been taught are impressive," said Valeria Ponce. Hands-on skills include irrigating ears and administering oral medications, nebulizers, and vaccines.



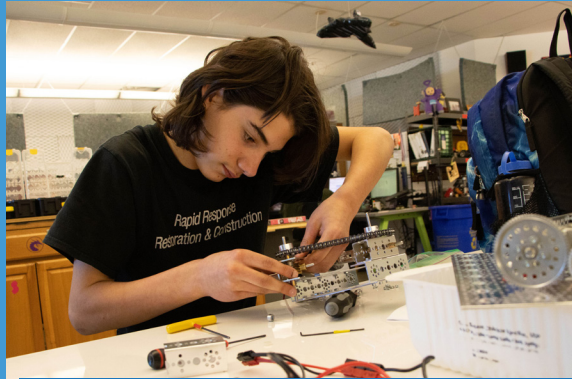
"I wasn't expecting ...to be able to perform blood draws on each other. It's not something that is ever done at the high school," said Taylor Zalanka (right).

Teaching Digital Literacy

The dizzying pace of technology change can make preparing students for the workforce challenging, particularly when considering the promise (and peril) of artificial intelligence (AI). While no one knows exactly how technology will evolve, one certainty is that future jobs – from mechanics to teachers to doctors – will require digital literacy.

Some of the ways that MSD supports digital literacy includes annual district-wide participation in the "Hour of Code," an international event that teaches coding to all students from kindergarten up; third-grade robotics, with student teams assembling, programming and running little machines; after-school clubs with STEM projects, robotics and video game design; summer programming camps for middle schoolers; STEM classes that use 3-D printing;

middle and high school podcast studios; Mac High's Computer Science and Engineering & Aerospace Science pathways and more.



Classwork, after-school programs (pictured) and summer camps all help students learn how to use digital tools and technology.

Coding is key to digital literacy. Coding is like a translator that turns human input into numerical sequences that computers can understand. Coding is what students do when they use a computer to make a robot perform specific functions, which is fundamental to robotics competitions. But coding isn't just about numbers. Coding requires problem-solving, logic and creative thinking. Working on coding projects can help with collaboration and teamwork skills and help students break a big project down into bite-sized pieces.

While AI may change the face of coding, what MSD students are learning today is adding to their growing digital literacy and preparing them for jobs of the future.



Superintendent's Corner

As the spring season unfolds, I am filled with both pride and a sense of responsibility. Our district continues to evolve, guided by our dedication to educational excellence and the holistic well-being of our students.

I am particularly excited about the expansion of our Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. Our pioneering medical assistant program, in collaboration with Chemeketa Community College, stands as a testament to our commitment to providing students with a rigorous academic foundation alongside practical skills. This, coupled with our steady support for

our students' mental wellness, showcases the extraordinary efforts of our staff every day.

This year also marks the rollout of our first three-year strategic plan, which will serve as our roadmap through the 2023-2026 school years. This plan embodies our vision for the future, laying out clear objectives to ensure we continue to foster an environment where every student can thrive.

Yet, we face significant challenges ahead. The end of emergency relief funding, vital in our post-pandemic recovery efforts, presents a financial hurdle. Additionally, we are confronted with a funding gap that does not adequately cover our current service levels nor allow for necessary adjustments to accommodate our staff's cost of living increases. These challenges highlight the need for community engagement and innovative solutions to sustain our high standards of education and support for all students.

In these times of achievement and adversity, our commitment to our students and staff remains unwavering. Let us embrace our strategic plan as our guide and confront our challenges with collective resolve. Together, we can ensure that the McMinnville School District continues to be a place where every individual is honored, empowered and prepared for the future.

Debbie Brockett



McMinnville

SCHOOL DISTRICT

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(From left) Skyline Homes' Richard Harris and students Johny Lemus and Aiden Williams above the plant floor. Both Aiden and Johny hope to work while completing Chemeketa's electrician apprenticeship program.

This year, Mac High launched a new partnership with Skyline Homes to give students in the Construction Career Pathway a chance to get out into the field and see firsthand what a job in the industry would look like.

Seven students in the pathway were selected to intern at the business, spending a few hours a week onsite to learn about the process of building manufactured and modular homes.

"The students all seem very engaged and want to be in the business," said general manager Todd Haddican. He noted that the internships are a service to the community and will also help the company find qualified workers.

Support our Students!

The McMinnville Education Foundation has provided valuable learning experiences to MSD students since 1998. Programs include Battle of the Books, Science Experiences, Artist-in-Residence and teacher mini-grants. The foundation runs a number of fundraisers like last year's pickleball tournament, this year's wine pairing dinner/auction and the long-running family fun run Runtoberfest. Scan to find out more or visit www.mac.40kids.org to donate or volunteer.



MSD School Board member Lu Ann Anderson is one of our board members who volunteer for the Survival Swim program, a decades-long partnership with McMinnville Aquatic Center. The program teaches kids how to be safe in and around the water with the goal of preventing drownings.



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McMinnville School District will honor, empower and prepare each individual to thrive and contribute.