

# COMMUNITY NEWS

*Achieving Excellence in Education through High Standards of Teaching and Learning*



## **McMINNVILLE HIGH SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION UPDATE**

Last March, older sections of McMinnville High School were demolished in order to begin stage two of the new addition. Demolition debris was sorted for recycling and disposal. The Red Gym was removed to make

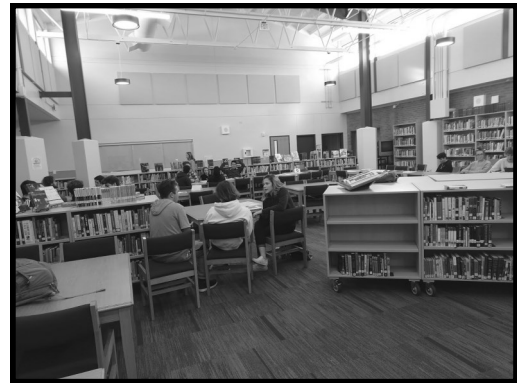
way for new classrooms and a 'Main Street,' which is a corridor that runs the length of the school, east to west. When fully completed, it will be about 12-14' in width. All other halls in the building will connect to Main Street, which will improve student traffic flow throughout the building.

Music and performing arts spaces were upgraded with expanded classrooms for choir and band, including practice rooms and instrument storage. A new 'Black Box' theatre was created for small productions. A scene shop was added adjacent to the theatre for scene construction and fabrication and to store props and costumes.

The new space for the Visual Communications pathway has an on-site video production lab, a news anchor desk, guest interview space, and a control room. The space also features a computer lab for production of the school's award-winning newspaper, The Bruin, and the MHS yearbook. Bear Hugs, the early learning center at MHS, has been expanded with new classroom space and an outdoor, fenced play area.

This past summer, the library and older classrooms in the center section of the building were demolished so instructional space could be reconfigured. An open-

concept library, featuring lots of natural light coming in from two-story windows, was created in what was once the Commons area. The library has comfortable seating designed to create smaller, more informal spaces in which students can work collaboratively.



Stage two of construction has continued all school year, with foundations and structures taking shape. New instructional spaces to be completed by fall of 2019 include classrooms for math, science, and Career Technical Education, and learning labs for Health Sciences, Engineering, Business Marketing, and Visual Arts pathways. New offices for counseling and other student services and new gym and fitness facilities will also be completed by the fall of 2019. The new gym will include improved locker rooms and wrestling, fitness, and dance facilities. The new gym will also provide increased seating capacity for all-school events and assemblies.

Facilities bond work at all other district buildings has been successfully completed, other than a few 'punch list' items currently being done. District students and staff are thankful for the continuing support of our community.

*Therese Russell*

## **EDUCATION FUNDING IN OREGON'S K-12 SCHOOLS**

The Oregon Quality Education Commission, which district Superintendent Maryalice Russell serves on, creates an in-depth report every two years on the best practices in education and the funding necessary to reach Oregon's education goals. The Commission found that Oregon needs to spend \$11.04 billion in the next biennium to fund a high-quality K-12 system, which is a \$2.84 billion increase from the current funding level.

Currently, the Governor's base budget for K-12 education in the new biennium, is \$9.24 billion. With additional funds from the voter-approved Measure 98 (focused on college and career readiness) and a proposed School Improvement Fund, the budget rises to \$10.37 billion.

Unfortunately, the Legislative Co-Chairs' budget amount, as of March 7th, falls \$100 million short of the governor's budget. School districts begin the budget process in the spring with budget adoption by June 30th of each fiscal year.

## **DOES MORE FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS MEAN BETTER STUDENT OUTCOMES?**

A July 2018 research report from the Learning Policy Institute confirms what other researchers have documented. When it comes to student outcomes, money matters.

Investments in education matter for student outcomes, especially when they are directed to under-resourced districts and to services for students from economically disadvantaged families.

Spending resources in ways that reduce class sizes for young children and those with greater academic needs, as well as improving teacher quality through robust professional development, are the two investments that have the greatest impact on increasing student outcomes.

## **THE TIME IS NOW FOR OREGON TO INVEST IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

Children experience their most profound cognitive, social, and emotional growth in the first eight years of life. Babies are born learners, and their brains produce a million neural connections each second. By the time children reach their third birthday, their brains are 80% developed. The quality of children's early learning experiences set the foundation for all future learning.

Forty-seven percent (47%) of Oregon children, age birth to 5, live at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. That's over 129,000 children. According to a study by the Center for American Progress, Oregon is a childcare 'desert,' with 6.8 infants and toddlers for every licensed, available childcare slot.

Only 8% of 3-year-olds and 12% of 4-year-olds in Oregon participate in publicly-funded preschool, putting Oregon 31st out of the 43 states reporting on public preschool. Early Head Start in Oregon serves only 10% of eligible children, according to research conducted by the Children's Institute.



Educators and families across the state are calling on the Oregon legislature to identify revenue streams that can support expanded early learning statewide. Recognizing the critical impact of early learning, the McMinnville School District has provided pre-K for 4-year-olds for several years as well as the Ready for Kindergarten program for parents of children, birth to five.

## PARENT ALERT REGARDING VAPING AND DABBING: IT HAS BECOME AN EPIDEMIC

School districts across Oregon and across the country are seeing a dramatic rise in vaping and dabbing (e-cigarettes) among teens. They are using hard to detect devices to inhale flavored nicotine and highly concentrated marijuana (THC oil), at home, school, and in the community.

Administrators in the McMinnville School District are alerting parents and the broader community to the hazards of teens vaping and dabbing, the impact of nicotine and marijuana usage on brain development, and the legal and educational consequences for students using these substances.

Secondary school leaders, in conjunction with local law enforcement, held a parent information night on the topic of vaping and dabbing at MHS on March 7th.

A 2018 study by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) found that 1 in 5 students have used electronic cigarettes (to ingest either nicotine or marijuana) in the last 30 days.



Between 2011 and 2018, the number of students who started vaping increased from 1.5% to 20.8%, according to the CDC.

In fact, the rate of youth vaping more than doubled last year. Vaping among high school students increased 78% from 2017 to 2018, nationwide. Vaping among middle school students increased four-fold during the same time frame.

Vaping and dabbing devices look like pens, small flashlights, or computer flash drives. Because the devices are 'stealth-like,' parents often don't know that their student is vaping. Vaping usually doesn't leave a smell, since there's no smoke residue. The immediate smell of the vapor is usually fruity, making it easier to disguise.

Vaping is one of the biggest concerns that every high school and middle school in America is dealing with right now. Educators across the country are reporting that students are vaping and dabbing in school.

It is important for parents and teens to understand the impact cannabis and/or nicotine use can have on child development. Equally important, students and parents should understand the consequences vaping can have on educational outcomes, especially if a student is caught doing so at school or is in possession of vaping or dabbing materials while on the school campus.

Students can be expelled from school for vaping or dabbing or possessing paraphernalia associated with vaping or dabbing. District policy on vaping and dabbing can be found at the following link or in the student handbook: [http://policy.osba.org/mcminn/J/JFCG\\_JFCH\\_JFCI%20D1.PDF](http://policy.osba.org/mcminn/J/JFCG_JFCH_JFCI%20D1.PDF)

### THE TAKEAWAY

- Vaping, dabbing, or possessing vaping materials is strictly **PROHIBITED** at school. Violations can result in **EXPULSION**.
- It is **ILLEGAL** in Oregon for anyone under the age of 18 to purchase, possess, or use vaping or dabbing products.
- Vaping and dabbing devices look similar to pens, flash drives, small flash lights, and other small, handheld devices.
- The only difference between dabbing and vaping is that vaping uses conductive heat (creating vapor when exhaled) and dabbing uses convective heat (creating no vapor or aerosol when exhaled).
- Vaping devices create the feeling of smoking by heating a liquid to generate an aerosol, commonly called a 'vapor,' that users inhale.

## THE IMPACT OF VAPING AND DABBING ON HEALTH, CHILD DEVELOPMENT, AND EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Vaping has long-lasting and permanent effects on the developing adolescent brain, according to research conducted by the Center for Disease Control. Negative effects include:

- Rapid heartbeat, blackouts, psychosis, paranoia, hallucinations, and accidents and falls caused by the impact of the rapid delivery system of vaping/dabbing on the central nervous system.
- Difficulty with critical thinking skills, such as attention span, problem solving, and memory.
- Impaired reaction time and coordination, especially as it relates to driving and physical movement.
- Decline in school performance due to decreased engagement in teaching and learning.
- Increased chronic absenteeism associated with cannabis vaping.
- Increased risk of mental health issues including depression and anxiety.

Currently, in Oregon, the minimum age for purchasing, possessing, or using vaping products is 18.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE CONCERNED YOUR CHILD MAY BE VAPING OR DABBING

Vaping/dabbing can be difficult to detect as there is no smoke and minimal odor. Teens often will display bloodshot eyes, dry mouth and thirst, increased appetite, and shifts in behavior and mood. Sometimes, there is a noticeable change in friends/social group and a decrease in activities that were once enjoyed.

Parents may also find vaping paraphernalia such as devices that look like flash drives, gel jars, pods, or cartridges that contain THC oil. If you are concerned your child may be vaping:

- **Have conversations often.** Share facts with your child about the impact of nicotine and marijuana on their development and the consequences (expulsion) of being caught doing so at school.
- **Try to listen rather than lecture.** Open-ended questions can be a great way to get your child's perspective. "I understand that some kids are vaping pot. What are your thoughts about it?" Or, if you know they are vaping, "What does vaping THC oil do for you?"
- **Set clear expectation.** Express your awareness of the risks, but also your understanding of why a person might want to vape. Share why you don't want him/her vaping. Avoid scare tactics. Be honest.
- **Teach refusal skills.** It's likely that your teen will be introduced to vaping nicotine or marijuana by a friend or older sibling. It's helpful to rehearse what he/she will say if that happens.
- **Have your child talk to a teacher, family member, or another trusted adult who can reinforce your message.** Sometimes, messages coming from a trusted teacher, counselor, school principal, etc. can be more impactful.
- **Model healthy behaviors.** When you come home from work and discuss what a tough day it's been, show your child healthy ways of dealing with stress, such as walking the dog, going for a run, or going to the gym. It's something adults can model and also do together to build stronger relationships.

**To learn more about the vaping trend among teens, go to: <https://drugfree.org/parent-blog/the-teen-vaping-trend-what-parents-need-to-know/>**

## STUDENTS LEARN CODING

Coding basically runs the world as we know it, but the vast majority of people aren't even aware of what coding is. In the simplest terms, coding is the basic act of writing—in a computer programming language—a script that a computer or other device can understand. The script tells the computer, app, website, toy, appliance, etc. to behave in a certain way, to do a certain thing, and to perform the actions you want it to.

While it might be difficult to imagine a young student learning something so seemingly complex, learning to code is like learning how to speak and write in a particular language, a computer's language.

Currently, over 2.4 million highly paid STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) jobs go unfilled. About 71% of STEAM jobs are in computing, but only 8% of STEAM-related degrees are in Computer Science.

Coding helps student develop creativity, problem solving, collaboration, communication, and other valued skills. Here are nine reasons for students to learn to code:

- 1) Programmers are in high demand. Learning to code increases a student's odds of securing a lucrative STEAM career, and computing jobs are growing at twice the rate of other careers. Students earning a Computer Science degree earn 40% more than the average college graduate.
- 2) Coding provides a competitive advantage when applying to colleges, internships, and jobs.
- 3) With programming knowledge, students better understand the world around them. Basic programming knowledge can change the way we interact with the technologies we use daily.
- 4) Coding is fun and satisfying. It's both logic-based and creative.
- 5) Coding develops skills that have broad applications. Coding empowers students to not only consume digital media and technology, but to create it.
- 6) Coding improves problem solving. When students code, they take complex problems and break them

down to smaller parts. Students learn what it's like to approach a problem the way a software engineer does, with logical, computational thinking.



- 7) Coding improves persistence. Learning to code, like any new discipline, is a challenge. Coding teaches the valuable skill of persistence in the face of such challenges. Learning how to problem solve and look for solutions through research and collaboration builds this highly desirable skill.
- 8) Coding improves collaboration. Students learn coding with and alongside other students who come together around a common interest in technology.
- 9) Coding improves communication, an absolutely essential skill throughout school, work, and life. People who can clearly communicate complex ideas in simple terms tend to be successful in different industries and walks of life. Coding teaches students how to break down complex ideas and arrange them in a way that computers can understand.

District-wide, students at all grade levels participated in the annual Hour of Code on December 6th. Over 700 million students around the world, from Oregon to Afghanistan, participated in the 2018 Hour of Code.

Most district schools offer a coding club in the afterschool program. At the secondary level, coding is part of the middle school elective rotation and Computer Sciences is one of the Career Pathways offered at MHS.

Code.org offers a fun introduction for parents and students to explore coding.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Oregon, Washington, and Alaska are the states that have the highest rates of chronically absent students in the nation.

**ATTENDANCE MATTERS: ALL DAY, EVERY DAY!**

## **KEEPING SCHOOL SAFE: SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING**

The facilities bond approved by voters enabled the district to upgrade security at all district facilities. All buildings have a single point of entry that is locked, so that visitors must be buzzed in by front office staff.

District-wide security staff includes two School Resource Officers. Staff and students regularly practice safety drills, including school lock-down drills, Run, Hide, Fight strategies (secondary students only), and earthquake and fire drills.

Students are taught and encouraged to report suspicious activity or threats they learn about at school, in the community, or on social media.



Jack Crabtree, the district safety manager, works closely with local law enforcement, including holding drills that enable law enforcement to better train for an unusual event.

Research has shown that the most powerful tool we have to keep schools safe is to build strong relationships among students and staff, so that every student is visible and known, and to create and sustain a school culture and climate that is

caring and equitable. Relationship building is a priority in all district schools.

### **STATEWIDE SYSTEM FOR REPORTING POTENTIAL THREATS TO SCHOOL SAFETY**

The state of Oregon has set up a statewide system for students and parents to anonymously report a tip.

There are four ways to report a tip:

- Email—[tip@safeoregon.com](mailto:tip@safeoregon.com)
- Call or text—844.472.3367
- Download a mobile reporting app from iTunes or Google Play
- Report a tip on the web portal - <https://app.safeoregon.com/>



**McMinnville High School graduates greet elementary school students during the Parade of Graduates, in which graduating seniors return to the district elementary school they attended.**

## THE IMPACT OF FOOD INSECURITY ON STUDENT LEARNING

Food insecurity and hunger have a significant impact on a student's ability to learn and develop. For the last several years, all students in the McMinnville School District have automatically qualified for free meals under the Community Eligibility Provision. However, due to improvements in community economic conditions,



district secondary school students no longer automatically qualify for free meals (the change does not impact elementary students this year).

Parents of secondary students must submit an application to the district for free or reduced price meals based on family income. All families, regardless of income, are encouraged to submit an application.

Students whose families 'directly certify' for free meals through programs like SNAP and TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) benefits, students who

come from families that qualify as migrant workers, students who are homeless, and students documented to be in state foster care are automatically eligible for free meals and do not need to complete an application.

Students whose family income is above the level that would make them eligible for free or reduced priced meals may purchase meals. Parents may prepay for these meals using the online meal payment system at [myschoolbucks.com](http://myschoolbucks.com) or students may pay with cash or check at the meal service checkout line.

Secondary students who do not have a meal payment account or do not have money to pay for breakfast or lunch at the time of purchase will not be refused a meal. However, parents will be contacted about the debt and, if the debt is not paid, the matter will be forwarded to a collection agency.

The free/reduced meal application can be found at: [http://www.msd.k12.or.us/departments/nutrition\\_services/free\\_and\\_reduced\\_meals\\_fees](http://www.msd.k12.or.us/departments/nutrition_services/free_and_reduced_meals_fees)  
The application is available in English and Spanish.

The public can donate to fund meals for students in need by going to this link: [http://www.msd.k12.or.us/departments/nutrition\\_services/my\\_school\\_bucks](http://www.msd.k12.or.us/departments/nutrition_services/my_school_bucks) and clicking the "DONATE" button.

### FACTS ABOUT FOOD INSECURITY IN AMERICA

- Poverty and food insecurity are social determinants of health and are associated with some of the most serious and costly health problems in the nation.
- 18% of all children in America live in poverty and experience food insecurity.
- The impact of childhood poverty and socio-economic inequalities have health implications that carry through into adulthood.
- Children who live in households that are food insecure are likely to be sick more often, recover from illness more slowly, and be hospitalized more frequently.
- Economically disadvantaged students may eat sufficient calories each day but not receive the nutrition they need because they are eating cheap, fast foods rather than fresh fruits, vegetables, and proteins.
- Lack of healthy nutrition impairs a child's ability to concentrate and perform well in school and is linked to high levels of behavioral and emotional problems from preschool through adolescence.

—American Academy of Pediatrics, 2016

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## APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

In 2017, over 80,000 reports of suspected child abuse/neglect were made in the state of Oregon.

- **IMPORTANT:** Please mark your calendar for a "Child Abuse Prevention March and Rally" **on Wednesday, April 10th at the McMinnville Yamhill County Courthouse steps at 5:15 p.m.** Please join us and feel free to invite others. Families, teachers, students, and other community members are all invited.

La versión en español de este boletín informativo está disponible en el sitio web del distrito [www.msd.k12.or.us](http://www.msd.k12.or.us)

The Latino Resource Fair will be held at Duniway Middle School on April 27th, from 12 to 3. Please join us!