



FERNDALE SCHOOLS

Ferndale, Lummi Island, Custer, Lummi Nation and North Bellingham

Early Spring 2018

Kindergarten and Jump Start

Register now at your neighborhood school

Do you have a child who will be five years old before September 1, 2018? If so, now is the time to enroll your child in Ferndale Schools' kindergarten and Jump Start programs.

Families should contact their neighborhood school to register. For more information about which school your child will attend and registration materials, please call 360.383.9211 or visit our webpage at—

ferndalesd.org/teaching-learning/kindergarten



Safety of staff and students is our top priority

Dear Ferndale Community,

When I first considered the topics I wanted to cover in this letter to you, I was thinking about how I could share all the positive accomplishments our students and staff have achieved this school year. Then the incomprehensible news came of the tragic school shooting in Broward County, Florida. Another school shooting. Another troubled shooter targeting students and staff. Another senseless act of violence.

I decided to use this space to assure you we are working very hard in Ferndale to keep our students and staff safe. Our emergency response efforts have included:

- Formation of a district-wide Safety Committee that has met monthly for five years to update safety procedures regularly based on new information and to provide oversight to building-level safety committees and plans.
- Five years of collaborative training exercises with first responders (police, fire, city officials, medical aid, border patrol,

Lummi Nation) on a variety of emergency response drills, including active shooter drills.

- First aid training for district staff specifically related to stopping bleeding.
- Addition of safety communication devices for key personnel in all of our schools.

Through these efforts, the Ferndale School District has earned a reputation as a leader in the state when it comes to emergency preparedness. However, we recognize that being prepared to respond after a tragedy occurs is not enough. We are also working hard on preventing tragedies like the one that happened in Florida. Our work in this area has included:

- Implementation of various programs aimed at supporting healthy relationships and extinguishing bullying (such as PBIS, Second Step, Natural Helpers and Capturing Kids' Hearts).
- Addition of more school counselors including at the elementary level.

see Superintendent's Message page 4

Left: Ferndale elementary school students spent a morning learning about Ferndale High School's Career & Technical Education program. Led by high school FFA students, the elementary students visited a farm animal petting area, learned how plants grow in the greenhouse, saw fish being raised in the Keith McKay Aquaculture Center and saw a demonstration of two pieces of metal being welded together. This annual event supports our focus on preparing our students for graduation and beyond.

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Members of the Community Bond Task Force

Supports
District
Strategic
Commitments

Bond Task Force Members continue appeal for community input



Five months, eleven official meetings and almost one-thousand individual volunteer hours. That's how much time it has taken the sixty-plus member Ferndale Community Task Force to prepare draft recommendations to the Ferndale School Board.

The Task Force presented draft recommendations to the School Board on February 27th. The Task Force will meet at least one additional time in March before presenting final recommendations to the Board. Ferndale residents are encouraged to continue visiting the Task Force website to provide feedback. The website can be found at <https://fsdbondtaskforce.participate.online/feedback>.

We've done the work. We've lived maintenance schedules, budgets, and architect reports for the last five months, says Task Force Member Joe Lupo. *We want the community to know what options the Task Force is considering at this point, and we want people to continue sending us feedback.*

Fellow Task Force member Wendy Lawrence agrees. *I am passionate about education and the future of Ferndale Schools. Education made it possible for me to live my dreams to the fullest and I want Ferndale kids to have those opportunities as well.* Lawrence goes on to say, *I want the*

best for our kids here in Ferndale, but as a Task Force member I was also laser focused on cost, value and what each recommendation will mean to our community. The Task Force asked the tough questions throughout this process, and we are committed to continuing to engage.

Wendy and Joe are resolute on the point of continuous engagement. *The conclusion of Task Force work does not mean an end to citizen involvement. Transparency and oversight are crucial. We have agreed as a Task Force that those two things are non-negotiable,* says Joe. *Wendy and I spent hours outside of the official Task Force committee researching oversight structures on behalf of the Task Force.*

As they near the end of the Task Force process, members pushed for continued feedback from the community.

When asked what she would say to neighbors in Ferndale, Wendy Lawrence says, *We want your input! We're in the home stretch in terms of Task Force work, and we need people to visit our website and let us know what they think.*

In addition to a Citizen Oversight Committee, recommendations that the Community Bond Task Force is considering are safety and security projects at every building, a new Ferndale High School with a modernization of the existing Performing Arts Center, re-opening North Bellingham elementary, and many critical mechanical, electrical, plumbing and roofing needs. For information regarding the various options currently being considered, please visit the Bond Task Force website at <https://fsdbondtaskforce.participate.online/our-work>



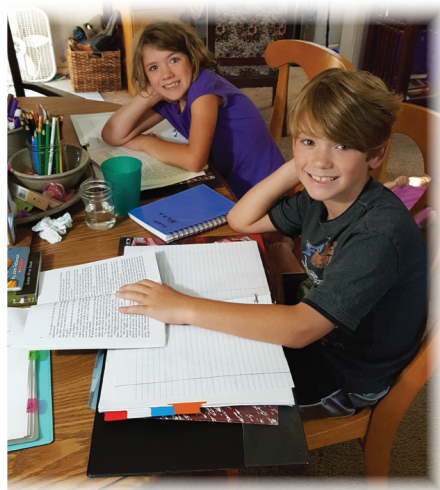
How do I provide feedback directly to the Bond Task Force?

Visit its website at <https://fsdbondtaskforce.participate.online/feedback>

New Parent-led Family Connections Program

Supporting home-based instruction and cooperative learning

Supports
District
Goal 3



Pictured l to r: Evelyn and Koen, members of the Altona family, are looking forward to the first day of classes—April 10

The Ferndale Family Connections Program is student driven, parent directed, and district and community supported.

It is a core belief of the Ferndale Family Connections program that parents are the primary educators of their children, and that the role of the program is to provide supplemental services in support of home learning. This partnership between parent and school creates the best opportunity for children to grow and learn.

Proud Ferndale residents, Christine and Michael Altona

have two children, Koen and Evelyn. Christine has driven Koen and Evelyn to Blaine to participate in the Blaine Home Connection Program for the last two years. Before that, the Altonas worked with the Mount Baker School District. Christine says her dream has been to see a Family Connections Program in the Ferndale School District.

As it turns out, there are other families with that same desire. Hearing from those families prompted Ferndale Schools Superintendent Linda Quinn to put together a team to support a program in Ferndale. *Families are telling us that a Family Connections program is an important option to them. We have the resources to do this really well in Ferndale and*

we look forward to April when we get to formally kick off this important work. The Ferndale School District Team tasked with support of the design phase of the program includes Director of Teaching and Learning Julia Besola and Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Scott Brittain.

Ferndale parents and Ferndale School officials formed a Design Team in November 2017 to begin creating the Ferndale Family Connections program. Our program will be offering both supplemental educational services for CORE, as well as electives, to students in grades K-8. Our Design Team is intent on building into our class schedule community-based courses built around parent and student interest. Starting in the fall of 2018, the district will expand the program to include grades K-10.

All students enrolled in the Ferndale Family Connections Program will have written Student Learning Plans designed collaboratively with parents, students and certificated staff. The plans will be unique to each student, and will reflect what parents understand about their students' learning styles, interests, academic strengths and challenges. The program will meet all Washington State requirements as an Alternative Learning Experience.

To Christine, and fellow Design Team parents, this is exactly the option her family wants from the Ferndale School District. *We thrive on the freedom this program adds to our life. If I want to take my kids to dig for rocks in Eastern Washington for a geology lesson – that's what we do.*

The Design Team will continue to provide input and guidance for the program.

Open enrollment packets are available at the District Administrative Office, 6041 Vista Drive, Ferndale. For more information, contact Lea Morris at 360.383.9200, or lea.morris@ferndalesd.org

Attendance Support Team—helping students stay in school

Supports
District
Goal 1

For students age six to 18, skipping school is illegal. Past practice in holding students accountable was to put kids in jail for not attending school. Research shows this is not effective in resolving the problem of why a student is not attending class.

This year, Ferndale School District launched its Attendance Support Team to help families recognize inappropriate behavior and then correct that behavior through consequences and support.

The support team consists of school administrators, support staff, community members and a district administrator. Instead of being referred to the juvenile court system, assigned students and their parents/guardians attend a hearing before the team to discuss the issues affecting attendance. Students share their concerns and beliefs about why they are not going to school. Some students have said they don't go to school because they do not understand the information taught in class or they report that they are so far behind in classes that they cannot catch up. Another reason why they don't attend school is access to transportation.

In collaboration with parents and student, members of the Attendance Support Team create a plan to support the student's attendance at

school. Positive adult to student relationships connect students to school. A staff member at the student's school becomes a positive role model for the student. This staff member meets with the student frequently and discusses attendance and needed supports.

The Attendance Support Team receives regular updates on student progress. Those students making progress and regularly attending school do not return to court. If a student is unsuccessful, the Attendance Support Team will request Whatcom County Juvenile Court to assume jurisdiction. The student and parent/guardian will return to court to face consequences from a judge.

We are giving families the needed resources and providing an opportunity for students to return to school, said Dr. Paul Douglas, facilitator of the attendance support hearings. *Our purpose is to provide help for students and their families. Student success starts with attendance. This team shows that as a community we will do what it takes to help our families.*

For more information and support, contact Dr. Douglas at 360.383.9206 or paul.douglas@ferndalesd.org.

WINDWARD HIGH SCHOOL

Changes for Windward High School

For the past 14 years, Windward High School has provided an excellent educational experience to the students who have chosen it. Windward has always been a school of choice.

During the past few years, fewer students have chosen the Windward option. Currently, there are fewer than 70 students enrolled, and 25 of them are seniors who will be graduating. Last spring only seven freshmen chose to attend Windward and two of them have left or are planning to leave. This tells us that we need to develop new options.

The current School Board and the district administration have always supported Windward. However, when this year's senior class graduates, there simply will not be enough students left to sustain the school.

We discovered last spring that we cannot recruit ourselves out of this situation. The staff and administration put more effort into recruiting than ever and fewer students than ever signed up. Therefore, we have made the difficult decision to close the school at the end of the 2017-2018 school year.

The School Board and district administration are still deeply committed to providing a variety of options for students. They know one size does not fit all. To this end, they have begun to develop several new options which might be offered beginning in 2018-2019 if students let us know they are *the right options* by choosing them. Such options include: 1) a small evening high school; 2) a virtual academy; 3) a blended learning school-within-a-school with some digital courses and some traditional courses; and 4) a partnership program with Bellingham Technical College that could lead to a technical degree or certificate. This is neither a guaranteed list of options nor a comprehensive list, just the beginning of our planning process which we intend to continue with input from students, families and staff.

The Windward staff, supported by the School Board and district administration, pledges to work with each individual Windward student to ensure he/she makes as soft a landing as possible into a new option next year.

The Windward staff are highly valued members of the Ferndale School District team. Their continued employment in the district is guaranteed. Just as we work to find the best possible next placement for each student, we will be conferring with each staff about a future assignment that fits their needs and desires.

Supports
District
Goal 3

High school options available next year

The Soar Program: a small school within-a-school program at Ferndale High school, an option for students to obtain a Ferndale School District diploma by earning Washington State's required 24 credits

Ferndale Virtual Academy: a personalized, flexible approach for students who want either a blended or fully online, anywhere, any-time learning; coursework will be provided through the well-established and accredited Spokane Virtual Learning System

IMPACT!: served by Bellingham Technical College on the BTC campus, a flexible route offering core academic subjects, student support for college and career readiness skills and accessing campus and community resources.

Running Start: an option for 11th and 12th grade students to get an early start on their college careers by attending all or some classes at Whatcom Community College or Bellingham Technical College

The district continues to work with families on other options.

For more information and to give input about options for high school students, call 360.383.9210

continued from page one—Superintendent's Message



Superintendent Linda Quinn

- Stronger partnerships between the district, mental health professionals, other youth service providers, and local pastors through the Ferndale Community Coalition, a group that meets monthly.

- Installation of various means for people to share safety concerns (online portal, secure line for text messages, etc.).

We are committed to doing everything possible to keep our students and staff safe while they are in the learning/work environment. If you see something or hear something that seems suspicious, please let us know either by calling directly or using the tip line available on our website.

With the support of a great staff, our Ferndale students continue to accomplish great things, despite other concerning events occurring in our society. Some of those accomplishments are highlighted in this newsletter. More of them are catalogued on our district website and Facebook pages.

We never forget that our public schools belong to you. We are stronger and safer when we work together. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Dr. Linda Quinn, Superintendent

REPORT A TIP OR EVENT—

Online portal: ferndale-wa.safeschoolsalert.com/

Call or Text: 911 or 360.383.5353 • **Email:** 1150@alert1.us



Student and staff accomplishments

Each day in Ferndale Schools, our students and staff do amazing things. There are so many, that we can't possibly provide an inclusive list here, but we do want to highlight a few achievements from the past few months. To learn more about our accomplishments, please visit our website at ferndalesd.org.

Ford and Pringle receive the Mayor's Award

City of Ferndale Mayor Jon Mutchler presented the Second Annual Mayor's Award for Outstanding Citizenship to Crissy Ford and Rachel Pringle. The award honors the many years of service that Ford and Pringle have given, and continue to give, to Ferndale children and the arts community.

Ford and Pringle have served as theater directors for many Ferndale theater productions: Summer Youth Theater, Ferndale High School musicals, Vista Middle and Horizon Middle school musicals and the Ferndale's Got Talent fundraiser, to name a few.

Pictured in photo 1 (l to r): Mayor Jon Mutchler, Crissy Ford and Rachel Pringle

Over 190 Compete in Math Olympiad

Over 190 students and 54 teams from grades 4-8 participated in the district's 26th Math Olympiad. Student mathletes competed across a broad spectrum of higher level mathematics, ranging from algebra to probability.

Thank you to Ferndale Haggen, Ferndale McDonald's and Ferndale Little Caesars for their continued support of this event. *Thank you* to teacher Sarah Wickham who organized this year's event. Last, but certainly not least, *thank you* to our parents and team coaches who put in countless hours supporting our students!

Pictured in photo 2: Student Jaiveer Bains was part of Cascadia Elementary School's winning fourth grade team

Students commit to colleges to pursue academics and athletics

On National Signing Day, February 7, four Ferndale High School college-bound seniors signed their letters of intent. Pictured in photo 3 (l to r): Three of the four seniors will attend Central Washington University in Ellensburg next fall—Alex Cleary will play rugby, James Hinson will play football, and Paige Devine will be part of the soccer team. Alex McBeth plans to attend Skagit Valley College in Mount Vernon to add her expertise to its soccer team.

David Lange writes winning essay

Ferndale High School Senior David Lange won at the district level in the VFW's Voice of Democracy essay contest. Established in 1947, the Voice of Democracy program provides high school students with an opportunity to express their thoughts on a democratic topic. David focused his essay on the American Dream summarized in one overused cliché, *Pull yourself up by the bootstraps*. Read his essay at ferndalesd.org/news. Also, David is a member of the FHS Bowling Team, the FHS Swim Team, the FHS Chess Team and FHS Orchestra.

Pictured in photo 4: David Lange (r) with Bowling Team Coach Jim Stack



Thank You, School Board

During January, Ferndale students and staff celebrated School Board Appreciation Month by honoring the seven volunteers who donate their time and energy to leading our school district. The work of the Ferndale School Board has also been recognized at the state level. Five of the last six years they have been awarded the Washington State School Directors Association's Board of Distinction Award, and they are past recipients of both the Board of the Year Award and the Celebrating Diversity Award.

Dr. Kevin Erickson, current president of the school board, was born and raised in Ferndale and now works as a local veterinarian. He spends time with state legislators advocating for schools. He actively mentors Ferndale High School (FHS) students interested in veterinary science and has coached several teams to national awards. He is also an avid supporter of the district's music and drama programs. Kevin's two older sons are FHS graduates currently attending Gonzaga University; his third son is a junior at FHS.

Candice Wilson, the newest member of the school board, is a proud member of the Lummi Nation and a Ferndale High graduate. She is a passionate advocate for our Native American students, while at the same time working to ensure all students have opportunities to be successful. She is the recipient of both the Washington State Native American Coalition Against Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Envision Spirit Award and Lummi Victims of Crime Honoring Our Champions Award. She represents the board on the Bond Task Force and also serves on the Washington State Indian Education Association board.

Lee Anne Riddle is the longest standing member of the school board, having served for over 13 years. She is most passionate about issues related to equity, diversity, health & wellness, and parent involvement. A committed lifelong learner, Ms. Riddle often uses vacation time from her paid job with Washington State University Extension to attend professional development programs related to improving education. Her three children graduated from Ferndale Schools. She currently serves on the

board of the Washington State School Directors Association representing Area 1.

Andrew McLaurin, who works in health care administration, has served on the school board for eight years. In 2003, he moved his family, which includes five children, from North Carolina to Ferndale. The last of his five graduated in 2017. Mr. McLaurin is passionate about the need for active community involvement in our schools. He is an advocate for providing high quality educational opportunities to highly capable students, and he is an ardent supporter of the district's award-winning music and drama programs.

Hugh Foulke joined the school board in 2012. An Army veteran and retired Ferndale teacher, he is passionate about improving the district's graduation rate and ensuring students have up-to-date facilities that effectively support their learning. He has served on past bond and levy committees, and he currently represents the board on the Bond Task Force, along with Ms. Wilson. Mr. Foulke is also a member of Ferndale Kiwanis, a community service organization that recognizes and awards scholarships to students in Ferndale.

Mason Waller is the 2017-2018 student school board member from Windward High School, where she participates in Mock Trial and student leadership. She is passionate about encouraging and cultivating student involvement and voice. In addition to Windward, she attends Whatcom Community College as a Running Start student.

Ellie Baader is the 2017-2018 student school board member from Ferndale High School, where she participates in Link Crew and student leadership. With her signature *can-do* attitude, she is passionate about developing positive relationships and working with others to solve problems.

Pictured above group (l to r): Dr. Kevin Erickson, Ms. Candice Wilson, Ms. Lee Anne Riddle, Mr. Andrew McLaurin and Mr. Hugh Foulke; Inset (l to r): Miss Mason Waller, District Superintendent Dr. Linda Quinn, and Miss Ellie Baader



Pictured: Student participating in last year's summer program

NEW TOOLS FOR COMMUNICATION

Ferndale Schools has added three new communication tools to improve communications with staff and community members.

BLOG—We

Are Ferndale blog series featuring stores about people throughout the Ferndale community.

SUPERINTENDENT'S VLOG—Superintendent Linda Quinn answers community questions received throughout the month on video.

E-NEWSLETTER—Sign up for our E-News. This is a great way to receive information about the district directly into your email in-box.

Links to these and more news available at
ferndalesd.org

Information for families

District adds Jump Start spring session

Ferndale Schools has seen such success with its Summer Jump Start Program that it decided to add a spring session of Jump Start.

The session will begin April 9 and will be held at the district's Early Learning Center. Classes will be held five full days per week. Small classes will be taught by qualified kindergarten teachers. This program is designed for students who have had limited exposure to a formal school setting or need English language support.

Registration for the spring 2018 session has closed, but families can still register for the district's summer Jump Start program.

For information, please call 360.383.9210 or visit our website at <http://www.ferndalesd.org/teaching-learning/kindergarten>

Evening English classes for families

Ferndale Schools is offering English classes for adults every Tuesday and Thursday evening beginning March 1 and continuing through May 31. We invite our community to come and learn English with us and—improve your English, learn about your child's education, understand technology, learn about American culture, and learn about career and college readiness.

Classes are held from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the Ferndale High School Library, 5830 Golden Eagle Drive. Sessions are open to Ferndale families. Classes are free; no preregistration is required.

Register for the 2018-2019 school year

If you have a student who will attend Ferndale Schools next fall, and he or she is not currently enrolled as a student, visit our webpage at <http://www.ferndalesd.org/teaching-learning/enrollment> to access registration forms.

The district is also accepting registrations for its Summer Jump Start Program.

Now is also a good time to ensure that information related to your students is up to date in our records: change of address, phone number, email address, emergency contacts and free and reduced lunch status. If you have changes, please contact the office staff at your child's school.

Annual Culture Fair coming up May 18— Let's celebrate Ferndale's diversity



Pictured: (back row l to r) Vista Middle School Native American Club Advisor Alex Martinez, Superintendent Dr. Linda Quinn and (front row) students from the club presented woven cedar gifts to the Ferndale School Board in January.

Join us for an evening of community building, culinary samplings, live entertainment, and celebration at our second annual

Culture Fair
May 18
5:00-8:00PM

Ferndale High School Campus
5830 Golden Eagle Drive • Ferndale

This is a FREE family event.
All community members are
welcome to attend!



...Making a Difference

Superintendent

Dr. Linda Quinn

Board of Directors

Dr. Kevin Erickson, President • Lee Anne Riddle
Candice Wilson • Andrew McLaurin
Hugh Foulke • Mason Waller • Ellie Baader

Communications Department

Editor: Tammy Bengen

Circulation: 16,500

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Ferndale, WA 98248 • 360.383.9207

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*****ECRWSS****
POSTAL CUSTOMER



Spotlight on education partners



New Chromebooks Connect Students to the World

Dick Meyer and Marlene Burke love the staff and students of Eagleridge Elementary School. So much so that they recently donated 64 Chromebook computing devices to the school. In addition to the purchase of the devices, Marlene volunteers in Ms. Jamie Darnell's first grade classroom to support and help students in their learning activities.

On the first day of distribution, Ms. Darnell's students went to work tapping on screens and using keyboards to navigate through their lesson. The lesson involved working in the Starfall application which targets learning in the content areas of mathematics and reading. (view a sampling at <http://www.starfall.com/>)

The district cannot begin to thank Mr. Meyer and Ms. Burke enough for their generous contribution to Eagleridge Elementary. And, more importantly, for their care and support of our students. Thank you!

With the addition of the 64 Chromebooks, access to technology doubled for Eagleridge students. The school now has five carts full of computers that travel from classroom to classroom where teachers utilize them as one more tool to connect students to the act of learning.

Picture above: Ms. Marlene Burke assists an Eagleridge Elementary School student with a new Chromebook



Superfeet Pays Off Lunch Debt

We'd like to send out a big THANK YOU to Ferndale-based Superfeet. The 100% employee owned company recently surprised us by settling the large balance of unpaid lunch debt at Central Elementary School. These funds were donated directly from Superfeet's employee-owners, who generously contribute their own dollars each year to support families in our community.

For more than 40 years, Superfeet has been making innovative products that help people experience relief from foot pain. Despite rapid growth, Superfeet remains focused on fulfilling its long-established purpose: to make a positive difference in people's lives. For Superfeet, that purpose goes well beyond simply making quality products. In addition to individual contributions from employee-owners, the company dedicates 1% of annual sales and more than 1000 volunteer hours each year to help others create a strong foundation for a healthy future.

Past contributions from Superfeet include new physical education equipment and financial support for grade five trips to Camp Killoqua.

Picture above: (back row l to r) Assistant Superintendent Mark Deebach, Superfeet representatives Operations Manager Johnathan Koncz, Director of Human Resources Annie Howard and Talent Development & Acquisition Specialist Jeff Ritter; Central Elementary School Principal Georgia Dellinger; (front row l to r) Central Elementary School Cooks Jennifer LaVeille and Martha Torres