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OLYMPIA CUSD 16 WINTER NEWSLETTER 2020

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FACILITY WORK 2020-2022

- TAX RATE TO REMAIN FLAT -

In response to aging buildings and systems, the District asked Dewberry Architects to conduct a Facility Study. The study involved soliciting input from various stakeholder groups on District needs; suggestions from anyone attending building tours; safety needs from a security audit; lifecycle audits on equipment/systems; structural analysis on buildings; and an overall analysis on whether Olympia was in compliance with new codes. In addition, Dewberry Architects looked at whether the facilities were conducive to the preparation of students for tomorrow's job markets and University expectations.

Although the District has taken excellent care of their buildings, the audits collectively revealed areas where the environment was not optimal for learning; where the facility could not prepare kids for tomorrow's workforce/higher education; where the District was out of code; or where safety-security could be enhanced. In order to keep costs down, the Board has been narrowing the "potential project list" to only the most essential needs. With each passing Board meeting, the list was refined. As of the December 4th Board meeting, the District needed \$12.5 million dollars to complete the work. CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

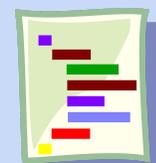
OLYMPIA SCHOOL CALENDAR

The 2020- 2021 school calendar has been Board approved and can be found at <https://5il.co/bxl6>. School will kick off on Thursday, August 20, 2020 with a full day of student attendance. The final day of school is set to be May 27, 2021. Next year, the beginning of the year will vary slightly from years past. Prior to the first day of student attendance, teachers will again have two Teacher Institute days, but that will be followed by a non-student attendance day to give teachers ample time to prepare. We will again use District-wide Early Release Days. They are scheduled for the first Wednesday of each month excluding January. Lastly, spring break is March 22-26, 2021.



OLYMPIA STRATEGIC DASHBOARD

On the Olympia website, there is a dashboard highlighting progress toward reaching the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan. In order to access the Dashboard, go to www.olympia.org, click on **Menu**, and then click on **District Dashboard** (under Quicklinks). Once on the Dashboard, you can click on Indicators to see progress toward Spartan Academic and Activity Success; Staff Growth and Development; Learning Environment; and Community and Communication.



KEY DATES

Spring Dial Dates

District (OWE)	Feb. 5
OSE	May 7
OWE	May 8
ONE	May 10

Computer Science Mtg. Jan. 15

PT Conferences

OHS	Mar. 4 & 5
OMS	Mar. 4 & 5
Elementary	Mar. 3 & 4

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FACILITY WORK 2020-2022 cont.

- TAX RATE TO REMAIN FLAT -

Through the restructuring of bonds, paying off prior bonds, and changes in the upcoming levy, the District is able to obtain a total of \$15.6 million. Of the \$15.6 million, \$12.5 million of bonds will be used to conduct the facility work. The other \$3.1 million will be used to payoff previous bonds and restructure the debt. All this will be accomplished by keeping the tax rate flat at \$5.50. In addition, the Bond Schedule is a shortened schedule, giving the Board of Education options 6 years down the road when half the debt is paid off, and again 12 years down the road when all the debt is paid off.

The method of borrowing selected by the Board requires very little interest to be paid to outside financial intuitions and saves the District money in the long run. It was mentioned that this Bond Issue, much like the one in 2008, is a tax swap. It will not increase your tax rate. It was also mentioned that much like 2008, every school receives enhancements that will improve their learning environments. As shared in previous Board minutes, the largest chunk of the \$12.5 million dollars will go to the oldest building in the District, Olympia South Elementary, to provide adequate learning and activity areas for children. The next largest chunk would go to OHMS to improve security, learning areas, and interior/exterior structural work. What is left would be used on Olympia West to enhance their environment and ensure they have functional AC and heat to all areas of the building. The Board also plans to AC the gym at North.

While \$12.5 million dollars doesn't go very far to improving the District's 5 schools, District Headquarters, and District Grounds, the Board wanted to keep the bonding at an absolute minimum so they could accomplish the work within the existing tax rate, thus keeping the tax rate flat for community members.

Work on the schools would not begin until late 2020, but with the levy being due in December, the bond process had to be started now. The Board and Administration appreciate the community's support of their school buildings and students' education.

OLYMPIA GRADUATE NAMED AS GEORGIA SENATOR

Kelly Loeffler, a 1988 Olympia graduate, was recently named by the Georgia governor, to a US Senate seat. While at Olympia, Kelly was involved in athletics (basketball, cross country and track), National Honor Society, Bankboard, German Club and Letterwinners. She graduated from the University of Illinois College of Business in 1992. She worked for Toyota and then completed Master of Business Administration (MBA) in International Finance and Marketing from DePaul University's Graduate School of Business.



Kelly's work experiences have included Toyota, Citibank, William Blair and Company and the Crossroads Group. Kelly has gone on to purchase Bakkt, a subsidiary of the financial service provider Intercontinental Exchange, and she is a co-owner of the Atlanta Dream Women's NBA team. She has also served on multiple Board of Directors for various organizations.

We wish this Spartan the best of luck as she embarks on her political career!

COLLEGE CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES AT OHS

The opportunities to earn college credit while in high school continue to expand for our Olympia High School students. Dual credit courses are Heartland Community College courses that are taught by Olympia teachers. These courses are free of charge to our students. We offer dual credit course in History, English, Communications, Agriculture, Business, and Family & Consumer Science.

Advanced Placement courses require students to earn a certain score on an end of course assessment to earn college graduate. We offer multiple Advanced Placement courses, as well including AP Computer Science Principles, AP Human Geography, AP German/Spanish, AP Calculus and more.

As we continue to focus on College and Career Readiness, these college credit bearing courses are a key to preparing our students for their next steps in life. Our students could earn 15 - 20 college credit hours before they leave Olympia. If you have questions about dual credit or advanced placement courses, please contact the Olympia High School Counseling Office.

STATISTICS

Class of 2019 - 48% (56 out of 116) of graduated students earned college credit or certification prior to graduating high school. Out of the 56 students, a total of 129 college level courses were completed for college level credit (approx. 380 college credits earned).

Approx. \$1.25 Million in scholarships are handed out to Olympia students over their four years in college.

DIAL SCREENING INFORMATION

In an attempt to identify or find all the students in our district that may qualify for our Early Childhood or PreK Programs, we have added DIAL screening dates this year. Our next DIAL screening day is at St. John's United Church of Christ in Minier on February 5th. If your child turns 3 on or before February 5, 2020, they can go through the screening process. Please call Ami Lawson at (309)379-6011 to schedule a screening appointment.

The District will send a newsletter each Winter and Summer to residents. To learn more about all the exciting educational activities happening inside our schools, visit www.olympia.org. You can also follow the news on Facebook and Twitter. Find your building accounts @ bit.ly/ConnectWithOly



The newly formed Spartan Council was created to ensure that barriers are removed so that students can achieve academic success. Our mission aligns with that of the America's Promise Alliance which aims to support all children in their academic endeavors. The America's Promise Alliance believes that all adults in a community need to play a part in helping students to succeed in the classroom, in the community and in life. We are asking the community to sign up to help meet the physical needs of our students (clothes, glasses, food, shelter). If you are interested in being on our 'shout out' list, please visit www.olympia.org - select Links - Our District - Spartan Council or call (309)379-6011. Shout out list members will receive emails when there is an immediate need for one of our students. Please consider adding your email to our 'shout out' list - our students need you! .

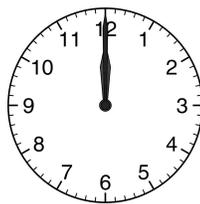
COLLEGE & CAREER PATHWAY DAYS

Pathway Days are a new initiative, started in the 2019-20 school year, that were developed to help students through the college and career planning process. These days include sessions that assist students in accomplishing the College and Career Readiness Standards set forth by the Illinois State Board of Education. Our goal for Pathway Days is to assist students in completing all of the steps required to find a career they are passionate about, and understand the next steps after graduation. During the fall semester, students were exposed to career professionals in our community, visited local colleges, completed career exploration assessments, and more! In addition to the Pathway Day sessions, teachers also incorporate career activities into the courses they are teaching. Pathway days in the spring semester will be held on: January 6th, February 13, March 16th, and May 1st.

EARLY OUT DAYS

This year we have added early release days into the school calendar. The purpose of these early release days is for professional development and curriculum work for our staff. This time is essential to ensuring all grade level / department staff members are clear about vision and curriculum. Activities that occur during these days include:

- Training provided for new resources or instructional expectations.
- Departments working on curriculum consistency and creating common assessments for courses.
- Staff collaboration for PBIS and social emotional learning curriculum.



ALTERNATIVE LEARNING DAYS



The State of Illinois has made it possible to utilize Alternative Learning Days (also called E-Learning Days) when bad weather makes it difficult to get to school safely. On an Alternative Learning Day, K-5 students will complete work that has been sent home by teachers. Teachers will communicate expectations to parents and students prior to using an Alternative Learning Day.

OHMS students will be provided work electronically through Google classroom or via teacher email. Assignments will be posted by 8:30 a.m. so that students have ample time to work on the assignments. Teachers will be available via email to answer questions that may surface.

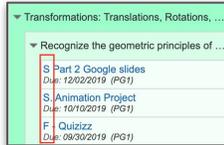
COMPUTER SCIENCE ASSOCIATE DEGREE; Partnership with Heartland Community College & State Farm

Through a partnership with Heartland Community College, Olympia students have the ability to earn an Associate Degree in Computer Science during their four years of high school. This rigorous pathway includes courses on Heartland's campus, as well as dual credit and Advanced Placement courses taught at Olympia. Students will start with pathway specific coursework their freshman year. Therefore, current freshmen and current 8th graders are the first group that have the opportunity to complete this program. Current freshman or current 8th grade families that are interested in hearing more about the Heartland Computer Science program should plan on attending an informational session on **January 15, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. at OHS**. As part of this program, Computer Science students will be assigned a professional mentor from State Farm Insurance. State Farm STEM staff will be present on the 15th as well if parents / students have questions specific to the mentoring component. We hope to see you there!

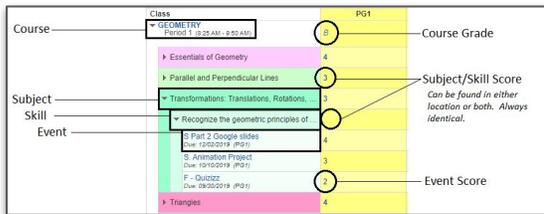
OHS SKYWARD SBG GRADEBOOK TIPS

Interpreting student grades should be a straightforward process. Here are some tips on navigating the OHS Skyward gradebook.

1. Each course contains Subjects, Skills, & Events. There are typically between 4-8 Subjects in each course, and 1 Skill in each Subject. Events are work that students are assessed on throughout the course.
2. You can open and close Courses, Subjects, and Skills by clicking on the arrow next to the item. You can also open and close *all* courses, subjects, or skills by clicking on Display Options and choosing the appropriate option.
3. Formative and Summative events are identified by an "F" or "S" at the beginning of the event name. A Formative event is for practice as the score is not considered in determining grade; summative scores are considered when grades are being determined.



The score for a Subject or Skill (these scores are the same) is determined by the teacher based on evidence throughout the semester. These scores are updated when a new summative event is assessed. The final letter grade for a course is determined by the teacher through evaluation of the Subject/Skill scores. The overarching system used for this grade calculation can be found on the OHS website > Skills Based Reporting.



OHS GRADE DISTRIBUTION OVER TIME

As we continue to work on implementing teaching and learning strategies that emphasize learning and student ownership, we are always evaluating the impact of those changes on our students. See below for one piece of data that we continually reference and analyze.

Grade Distributions - Each year Dr. Jodlowski determines the percentage of students earning various letter grades. See below for that data:

- 2014-15: A - 38%; B - 26%; C - 20%; F - 6%
- 2015-16: A - 44%; B - 26%; C - 17%; F - 5%
- 2016-17: A - 41%; B - 28%; C - 18%; F - 5%
- 2017-18: A - 42%; B - 35%; C - 16%; F - 2%
- 2018-19: A - 43%; B - 30%; C - 18%; F - 3%

Changes in grades earned have been negligible over the past five years even though our reporting system has changed to a skills based system..

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