



Howard Happenings

December 2015/January 2016

www.howardelementary.org



Winter Weather and School Closures

Winter weather is on its way! If there is a change in the school schedule or bus routes due to inclement weather, Eugene School District 4J will announce the change. If school is in session and on regular schedule, the district will NOT make an announcement.

Weather-related school closure decisions normally are made early in the morning and announced via all methods by **6:30 a.m.** This is to ensure the most current weather conditions are assessed. Decisions are made district-wide and are the same for every 4J school.

Parents and students have several ways to learn about weather-related school closures in Eugene: the 4J website, Twitter / text message alerts, KRVM-FM, and other local TV and radio stations.

How To Find Out if there is a change in the school schedule or bus routes:

- A notice will be posted on the 4J website's homepage, www.4j.lane.edu.
- District-run radio station KRVM-FM 91.9 will air school closure information regularly.
- Other local radio and TV stations also will air closure information, although the district cannot guarantee the accuracy of the messages reported on those stations.
- Text-message alerts will be sent to subscribers via Twitter. (If you are interested in receiving these alerts please sign up through the district website.)

Safety Concerns: On any day when inclement weather is a concern and school is in session, families are encouraged to consider road conditions in their areas and make their own decisions based on safety; parents' individual decisions about school attendance will be honored.

School Choice for the 2016-17 School Year

Spread the word to all of your friends that Howard rocks and that we will be in our new building next year! With Howard's focus on technology we are an excellent school and a positive choice in your child's education. With School Choice coming soon, please invite friends and acquaintances to visit Howard and seriously consider joining the Howard family. If you have any friends or neighbors living in the Bethel School District, be sure to let them know that they too can apply to attend Howard, even if they live outside of our school district.

The School visitations will be held the last week of both January and February. In district transfer requests will be accepted January 4 through February 26 with the lottery being held the first week of March. Open Enrollment for students wishing to cross district boundaries will be held March 1st through April 1st, with parents being notified of acceptance by May 1st.

If you have questions please call Lori at 541-790-4900 or visit the 4j website at www.4j.lane.edu > parents > school choice.

Free Lunch Application - Just filling out the application helps Howard serve kids!

Save money on school meals, athletics, enrichment activities and more

In these tough economic times, many families are finding their finances tighter than ever. Many resources are available to help.

Free or reduced-price school meals

Sometimes families hesitate to apply for the school meal program because they don't want to strain their school's resources. Not to worry! The school district receives federal reimbursement for free and reduced-price meals, and individual schools can receive additional federal funding based on how many students qualify for the program. If you fill out a form and qualify, you are helping both your family and your school.

More than 40 percent of 4J students qualify for free or reduced-price school meals. You qualify if your household income is at or below the federal guidelines, or if your family receives food stamps, TANF, or FDPIR—even if your situation is short-term, such as a temporary layoff. The program is confidential, easy, and good for both your budget and your child's school. To learn more and apply online, go to <http://www.4j.lane.edu/nutrition/freelunch>

Other ways to save

The benefits go beyond savings on school meals. Here are just a few of the opportunities available to students and families who qualify for free or reduced-price school meals.

***Reduced fees for sports, activities and summer camps:** Your student can qualify for fee reductions of up to 80 percent on 4J athletics and activity fees. Other organizations that offer reduced registration fees for youth recreation and enrichment programs include Kidsports, Eugene Family YMCA, the City of Eugene, River Road Parks and Recreation District, and many others.

***Low-cost Internet access and computer:** Comcast Internet Essentials offers high-speed Internet service for \$9.95 a month plus tax to households in which at least one child qualifies for the school meal program. Families also can buy a computer when they first enroll for a low price. To learn more, visit www.internetessentials.com or call toll-free 1-855-8-INTERNET (1-855-846-8376).

***Free or low-cost healthcare coverage:** Oregon Healthy Kids provides no-cost health coverage for Oregon children and teens under 19 years of age. Healthy Kids covers all health needs, including doctor visits, dental care, vision, mental or behavioral health services, prescriptions, medical equipment and more. Children will not be turned away due to pre-existing conditions or be put on a waiting list. You do not need to qualify for free or reduced-price school meals to qualify. Cost is based on family income. For example, a family of four can qualify with income up to about \$70,900 per year. To learn more, visit www.oregonhealthykids.gov or call toll-free 1-877-314-5678.

***Free bus passes for high school students:** 4J provides free Lane Transit District bus passes to high school students who qualify for free or reduced-price school meals, live more than 1.5 miles from their school and do not receive school bus transportation. To learn more, contact the finance clerk at your high school.

***Half Price Admission at Amazon, Echo Hollow, and Sheldon City of Eugene Pools:** Any children who use the 4J free or reduced lunch program qualify for half priced admission for recreation swim at the Amazon, Echo Hollow, and Sheldon City of Eugene pools during the school year. For additional information, please see the following information Aquatic Centers Half Price Admission/Scholarship.

News from PTO

On Saturday, December 5th we will be hosting our Howard PTO Holiday Bazaar. With our wide variety of vendors our bazaar is perfect for all of your quintessential shopping needs. You are sure to find what you are looking for with our mix of boutique-style items to hand crafted goods. We have many popular brand representatives as well. There will be face painting, hot coffee, great food and yummy treats! This will also be a part of the Holiday Bazaar Circuit, six bazaars within a short distance are coming together to cross promote each-others events. We will be providing maps to the other five bazaars for your convenience.

This PTO fundraiser is done in to increase funds without adding another fundraiser for families to participate in. One way you can help us increase our earnings and help the local vendors selling their wares is by sharing the event on Facebook. We would be very grateful for your support. Find our event at <https://www.facebook.com/events/867102643404066/permalink/876225669158430/>

Mark your calendars for these dates:

December 15th – PTO meeting 6 pm, in the Library*

January 19th – PTO meeting 6 pm, in the Library*

January 22nd – Movie night, 1 free bag of popcorn per child!

*Childcare is always provided free of charge during PTO meetings.

Bricks 4 Kidz Lego Class

Bricks 4 Kidz is now offering after school enrichment classes at Howard on Thursdays. At Bricks 4 Kidz, we believe that kids learn best through activities that engage their curiosity and creativity. Our classes provide an extraordinary learning atmosphere for children where they learn, they build, they play... with LEGO® bricks. Our six week programs are built around our special model plans designed by engineers and architects with exciting themes such as space, construction, and amusement parks. The class starting in January will be Ticket to Ride! Your child will build amusement park rides and learn about physics and engineering topics such as momentum, gears, and calculating the circumference of a merry go round. Every class is a fun, enriching experience for your child. Sign up at <http://www.bricks4kidz.com/oregon-eugene/> and click the "View Classes" button at the top.

OBOB News!

We will be making our final teams around the second week of December, with books talks ending just before winter break. In January we will start really studying our questions and memorizing author names and book titles. However, students could get a head start. Teachers have some materials already. Practice battles will be held the end of January. If you have any questions please feel free to email me at hopkins_j@4j.lane.edu

Hour of Code

During the week of December 7th, many classrooms at Howard will be participating in The Hour of Code. This is a global movement reaching tens of millions of students in 180+ countries and exposing kids to the wonders of writing computer code. Learn more at <https://hourofcode.com/us>

Community Holiday Gift Programs

First Christian Church - Helping Hand Room

1166 Oak St., Eugene

541-344-1425

Provides gift bags for children during Christmas. Call beginning December 2nd, Monday - Friday 9 am - 4 pm to find out when to pick up a gift bag. Eligibility: Low income

Salvation Army in Eugene and Springfield "Tree of Joy" Program

You may only access this program OR Toys for Tots, not both. Bring ID for all family in home (birth certificates, immunization records, or WIC cards); proof of address (electric bill, phone bill); proof of income (check stub, SSI, disability); and something with your children's birthdates. Program is for kids in Eugene ages 15 and younger and in Springfield 12 and under. Food boxes also provided.

Eugene

640 W 7th St

(541)343-3328

M/W/TH 8:30-11:55 am & 1-3:25 pm, TU 8:30-11:55 am & 2-3:25 pm, FR 8:30am-12:25pm.

Walk-ins accepted until November 27th or until they assist 325 families.

Toys for Tots

Toys for children up to age of 13. Lane County Toys for Tots

Hotline:(541)607-4307 or visit the website

www.toysfortots.org select "Request a Toy" *Line-Up Tickets are issued to minimize wait times but are not required.

Eugene/Springfield:

Line Up tickets issued on Fri. December 11th from 3-8 p.m. Toy distribution on December 12 or 13, 8 am-8 pm the 12th and 8 am-6 pm the 13th as assigned at U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Center at 3106 Pierce Parkway, Springfield

Information required: Adults: Picture ID (examples include: driver's license, ID card, Passport, etc.) In lieu of photo ID, 2 pieces of documentation showing residency in Lane County (examples include utility bills, Oregon Medical Plan documents, etc) Documentation for children: Birth certificate or social security card and one of the following: The first sheet of a medical card showing both the parents' and child's names, WIC card, DHS paperwork that includes both the parents' and child's names(s), any other legal document that includes both the parents' and child's name(s) and date of birth(s). PLEASE DO NOT BRING CHILDREN ON DISTRIBUTION DATE.

Upcoming Events

12/2 – Wacky Wednesday – Crazy Socks Day

12/5 - PTO Holiday Bazaar 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

12/15 – PTO Meeting, Library 6:00 p.m.

12/18 – Birthday Lunches with Mr. Chinn

12/21 – First Day of Winter Break

1/4 - Furlough Day-No School

1/5 – Professional Development Day – No School

1/6 – Wacky Wednesday – Career Dress up

1/15 – Birthday Lunches with Mr. Chinn

1/18 – MLK Day – No School

1/19 – PTO Meeting, Library 6:00 p.m.

1/25 – Site Council, 2:30 p.m.

1/29 – Grading Day – No School

2/3 – Wacky Wednesday – Favorite Character Day