



Howard Happenings

December 2017/January 2018

www.howardelementary.org

School Choice for the 2018-19 School Year

Spread the word to all of your friends that Howard rocks! 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 January. This is a change from the past years when there was also visitations held during February. Howard will host an evening forum on January 23 at 6:00 pm. If you are unable to attend this event or would like to visit during the school day **during the visitation weeks, Jan 8-12 & Jan. 22-26**, please contact the Howard office.

In district transfer requests will be accepted January 1 through January 31 with the lottery being held mid February. 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.

Due Date for Complete School Immunization Records

Wednesday, February 21, 2018 is immunization exclusion day this school year. This means that **your student's school immunization record must be up to date with all required immunizations in order to stay in school. Letters were mailed at start of December if your student is missing immunizations.** Please return these letters with the dates of shots that were given. For questions or a duplicate letter, please leave a message for the health assistant at your child's school.

Do you lack health insurance or financial resources to pay for needed shots? Here are some options to check in with....
Lane County Public Health 541-682-4041
North Eugene Clinic 541-790-4445
Churchill Clinic 541-790-5227

North Eugene Schools Visioning process Share your views, shape your schools

Tuesday, Dec. 5, 5:30–7:30 p.m.
Kelly Middle School, 850 Howard Ave.

One short evening, long-term impact: Help shape the future of 4J schools in the North Eugene area. Families, staff and, other community members are encouraged to take part in the North Region Visioning Process.

Participants will engage in energizing design activities and share input to help guide future decisions. Refreshments and childcare will be provided.

4J is working to support and strengthen all of our schools, starting in the North Eugene region. The aim is to identify and implement a unified vision for North Eugene schools in the coming years. We invite you to join in.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1805273949770157/>

Pause Parking Pick-Up and Drop-Off Reminders

Families are getting better about following the rules of the parking lot for pick-up and drop-off, but we still have to give daily reminders to drivers. Please remember the following rules for the parking lot:

Pause Parking Morning Drop-Off:

- **Drivers must STAY IN CARS AT ALL TIMES.**
- **Students must exit cars on the passenger/sidewalk side.**
- **Drivers must pull out as soon as students exit.**
- **Students should NEVER be dropped off in the driveway lanes.**

Students exiting cars on the driver side stops all traffic and this also puts students in danger. If families want to come into the building, they need to park in a marked parking space at either the Howard parking lot, the Head Start parking lot, at Emerald Park, or park on the street.

Pause Parking Afternoon Pick-Up:

- **Drivers must STAY IN CARS AT ALL TIMES.**
- **Drivers must PULL FORWARD as space becomes available.**
- **Drivers must pull into the pause parking lane at the back of the car line, not swooping into gaps in the line.**
- **Students must get into cars on the passenger/sidewalk side.**
- **Students may NOT be picked up in the driveway.**

Leaving cars unattended in the pause parking lane or picking up student in the driveway stops all traffic when one driver selfishly holds up the entire system for their own convenience. Again, if drivers need to leave their car, use the parking lot at Howard, Head Start, Emerald Park, or park on the street.

Holiday Assistance for Families

See the link on the Howard website and below for the 2017 Holiday Resource Guide, which can provide holiday food boxes, gifts, and other assistance for families. There may be additional resources, so families are encouraged to contact 211 as well (online, phone, text, or email). Some of the deadlines are coming soon!

<https://howard.4j.lane.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/2017-Winter-Holiday-Resource-FINAL.pdf>

AmazonSmile: You shop. Amazon gives.

As the holidays approach don't forget that when ordering gifts online that if you do it through our Amazon Smile account, Howard will receive a portion of your purchase at no additional cost to you. To support Howard, go to <http://smile.amazon.com>, search for "Howard Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization," and connect your account to our school. Now that's an easy way to spread holiday cheer!

Winter Is Coming: Snow Day Decisions and Notifications Plan ahead, sign up now for school closure alert texts

When winter weather arrives, schools may be closed or delayed or buses may use snow routes. These decisions are made districtwide and are the same for every 4J school.

How the decision is made:

Typically, weather-related school schedule decisions are made in the early morning, before school, when current weather conditions can be assessed. We believe students and families are best served when we are open. Our main concern and the reason for any school closure is the safety of our students and staff.

How to find out if there is a change:

If the district decides to make a change to the school schedule or bus routes, it is communicated as quickly as possible in several ways, all well before 6:30 a.m. If schools and buses are on their regular schedule, there will NOT be an announcement.

- Sign up for text-message alerts — send a text to 40404 that says FOLLOW 4JWEATHER (if you receive extra messages you don't want, reply SET DISCOVER OFF)
- Like Eugene School District 4J on our Facebook page, facebook.com/4Jschools
- Check the 4J website, www.4j.lane.edu
- Tune in to local news media

What does the announcement mean?

School Closure: There is no school for students, although some staff will be at work. The district will make a decision by noon about whether any after-school student activities or community use of buildings may take place.

Two-Hour Delay: School will start two hours late and end at the normal dismissal time for a regular school day. If it would normally have been an early release day, **early release** schedule will be canceled and the schedule for a normal day will be followed. For **Howard**, the day will start at **7:50** and end at **2:05**. Buses will drive cautiously, adjusting to conditions, so pickup and return may be delayed.

Snow Routes: Some school bus routes have alternate "snow routes" that may be used when snow and ice make road conditions hazardous at higher and steeper elevations. This helps limit the need for school closures in harsh weather. When school buses operate on these snow routes, some students will have a different bus stop location and time than on the regular route. More information is at www.4j.lane.edu/transportation/snowroutes.

Parent Choice: When school is in session during wintry weather, families are encouraged to consider the road conditions in their areas, make their own decisions based on safety, and notify the school if their student will be staying home. Parents' decisions about student absences for hazardous weather safety reasons will be honored.

For more information, please see www.4j.lane.edu/weather.

11 Ways to Raise a Compassionate Child

Want a child who really, truly cares about others? Follow this advice on raising compassionate children from experts and parents.

<http://www.parents.com/kids/development/social/raise-a-compassionate-child/>

Attendance Matters - Chronic Absence = Missing two or more days per month

According to multiple studies, missing several days of school significantly reduces the likelihood that students will graduate from high school. With attendance a crucial factor to keeping kids on the right path to graduation, Attendance Works has substantial information on attendance and the impact on student achievement.

Below is some of the research below on why attendance matters.

Start Strong

Absenteeism in the first month of school can predict frequent absences later in the school year. Nearly half of all students that missed more than two days of school in September went on to miss almost a month of school.

Chronic Absences

An estimated 5 to 7.5 million students in the United States miss almost a month of school every year. This adds up to over a year missed by the time of graduation.

Early Absences Lead to Attendance Issues in Later Grades

Absenteeism starts early. One in 10 kindergarteners and first graders are considered to be "chronically absent." Research shows students who miss 10 percent of school, or two days per month, show negative academic progress. In some schools, that adds up to 18 days a school year and is considered to be chronic absence.

Third Grade Reading Level

Poor attendance can keep children from reading proficiently by the end of third grade, which is shown to negatively affect their chances of graduating on time.

Dropout Indicator

By sixth grade, a chronically absent student is shown to have a significantly higher chance of dropping out of high school.

Excused Absences Hurt Too

Excused absences are just as negative as unexcused ones. Suspensions add additional missed time in the classroom, which in turn increases the dropout risk.

At Risk Students are at Risk for Absence

Students from low-income families are four times more likely to be chronically absent. Reasons for this are often out of the student's control, such as unreliable transportation, unstable housing, and a lack of access to quality health care.

Every Minute Matters

If a student is 10 minutes late to school each day, this adds up to missing more than 33 hours of class time. A student with a 90 percent attendance average for Kindergarten through 12th grade will miss over a year of accumulated time in the classroom.

See more research on the importance of attendance here: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/research/>

Family Math Resources

Eugene School District 4J has adopted LearnZillion as the district wide elementary math curriculum. Please visit the 4J website "Elementary Family and Community Math Resources" (<http://www.bit.ly/4jmath>) to find out how to support your young mathematician. Particularly helpful is a handy document on how to "Help Your Child with Productive Struggle." A link to this document and the above website can be found on the Howard website under Parents > Academic Resources.

Library Happenings!

The library has new books! We received a grant this year for multicultural books. This is an exciting way to diversify our school library. We are also receiving books from downtown that were purchased the end of last year by the PTO. Thank you! I have also added books from Scholastic with the help from our book fair. Thank you, parents for supporting our book fairs. This makes it possible to put more books in our kids' hands. I am very excited to share our new books with our students and teachers!

Please help your children keep their library books in a safe place, so that they may be returned each week on their library day. Thank you :)

OBOB News!

Our students are amazing! They are really doing an amazing job reading their OBOB books. Please continue to encourage your child to read and memorize book titles and their authors. This is an important part of the program. Our games will begin the end of January, so keep reading! Encourage your kids to use the study questions in their classroom. The wonderful thing about this program is the improvement we see in the students' reading skills and their increased desire to read. Thank you for all your support at home!

Have a safe and happy holiday season, put your feet up, relax and read a good book. :) Mrs. Hopkins

Memos from Mr. Matt

Time is funny when you are a kid. It moves so SLOW. What is it about being an adult that makes time fly by? Schedules? Deadlines? Maybe that's why I wish I were a kid again. I feel like I was just ringing in the New Year when Prince's 1999 song was actually applicable and now 2018 is here. Whatever happened to all the years leading up to it? I am sure you are thinking the same thing! I'm not big on New Year's resolutions since I have let myself down time and time again, but this coming year, I am going to challenge not only you but also myself to be present with what's in front of me. If how quickly time has been flying is any indication as to how fast the future will come and go, I want to hold onto what's important to me a bit tighter and longer. This year let us be more present with our family and loved ones. We need to put down the cell phone and enjoy the very moments we have with each other that we care about and love. We need to clear our calendars and make time to enjoy and nurture our family and friends. We need to hire a babysitter or dog sitter and spend time holding hands while on a stroll at a park. We need to be present with those we love. If we don't take the time to do this, next year will come and go; then the next and then the next. Deadlines and Facebook statuses will always be there, but the time we have with those we love will not. So with this, I challenge you and myself to not let another moment slip by that we could be spending on the things that are actually meaningful and make the life we were given worthwhile. Do this for your family, do this for your friendships, do this for your marriages, and do this for you. Challenge accepted.

News from PTO

Upcoming PTO Dates:
Popcorn Friday 25 cents a bag every Friday
December 2nd Holiday Bazaar

Thank you to all who attended the Howard Elementary PTO family night! There were so many families who came out to watch "Cars 3" and everyone had a great time!! Stay tuned for the next family night coming up in

The PTO Annual Holiday Bazaar is right around the corner, December 2nd. The bazaar vendor tables will be located in the gym and cafeteria. We have advertised at all the local event sites and are hanging posters around town. If you know of anyone who would like to purchase a table to sell goods at this event please have them email PTO and we will send them the necessary information to get signed up.

PTO wants to use \$5,000 of the funds they raised last year to do a special project for this year. We are currently taking ideas from parents, teachers and students. If you have an idea that could better the school, you can email PTO or write on the Facebook page. Some current suggestions include tables for courtyards, more books for the library, mural painted in library, sidewalks painted out front and a special projector for the gym. PTO will be voting on this special project at the January PTO meeting.

Thank you for everyone who brought in food for teachers during parent/teacher conferences! Teachers were so appreciative of the food during their busy two days of conferences!!

The PTO has board and officer positions still open. Howard Elementary could not be the great place it is without all of the outstanding family and community members we have. If you are interested in helping, please consider applying for one of these positions. The descriptions of these positions are available in our bylaws posted on the PTO website. You may also email us if you would like to receive a copy.

PTO Officers still needed:
Volunteer Coordinator Fundraiser Coordinator Staff/PTO Liaison
Communications Manager

If interested email the PTO at howardelementarypto@gmail.com
The PTO would like to ask all families to try and contact the PTO through email, phone, or Facebook messenger with any questions PTO related. The office staff at Howard will usually not have an answer to those questions and it's much easier and faster for us if you we know directly. Thank You!

Upcoming Events

12/5 – North Region Visioning Community Engagement Event, 5:30
12/13 – Wacky Wednesday – Mismatched Clothes Day
12/18 – First Day of Winter Break
1/2 – Professional Development Day-No School
1/3 – Classes Resume
1/8-1/12 – School Visitation Week #1
1/11 – Wacky Wednesday – School Colors Day
1/12 – PTO Spaghetti Feed, 6:00 pm
1/15 – MLK Day – No School
1/16 – PTO Meeting, Library 6:00 p.m.
1/22-1/26 – School Visitation Week #2
1/22 – Site Council, 2:30 p.m.
2/2 – Grading Day – No School
2/14 – Wacky Wednesday – Favorite Character Day
2/19 – President's Day – No School
2/20 – PTO Meeting, Library 6:00 p.m.
2/26 – 3/1 – Book Fair
3/2 – Howard Professional Day - No School