How to contact BG Public Schools

Administration: 11104 N.E. 149th St., Brush Prairie WA, (360) 885-5300

Mail address: PO Box 200, Battle Ground WA 98604

District Website: battlegroundps.org

Schools' Websites: "Our Schools" tab on district Website

Community Education: (360) 885-6584

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POSTAL PATRON

Wealth of information in state 'Report Card'

"TMI" is texting shorthand for "Too Much Information."

It's easy to see how parents, with eyes glazed over, might scream "TMI" after checking out school standardized test scores on the state Website. This online "Report Card" offers all kinds of information on demographics and test scores. The scores are important to school administrators, teachers and students — especially high school students whose graduation depends on success in the examinations.

These state tests show where more attention is needed as well as where progress is being made. Scores are helpful to teachers and administrators in choosing curriculum materials, planning lessons and honing teaching techniques and styles under the district's professional development program.

Some test-score highlights

Bruce Kelley, the school district's director of assessment and research, was asked for his "highlights" of the 2011 state report card for Battle Ground schools. He agreed, but first offered this background:

1. State testing occurs in grades 3-8 and high school.
2. Schools can only make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as defined by the federal No Child Left Behind law if each and every subset of students within that school makes satisfactory progress. Those subsets include five racial groups, students from low-income families, special education students, and English language learners.
3. Socio-economic status (SES) is a primary indicator of future success in school. Consequently, it is recommended that SES be considered when comparing test scores of schools or districts. Percentiles listed below compare schools by adjusting for differences in SES. These adjusted percentiles do not appear on the state Website. ***

Kelley's highlights of 2011 tests

1. Yacolt Primary's third and fourth grade students did very well in math and reading in 2011. Yacolt was one of only seven elementary schools in Clark County (out of 59) to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) this year in both subjects.
2. Two middle schools also made AYP in math and reading: Pleasant Valley and Laurin. Only two other middle schools (out of 26) in Clark County achieved this rating. Eighth grade students at Pleasant Valley did especially well, scoring at the 88th, 92nd, and 94th percentiles statewide in reading, math, and science.
3. Following a disappointing performance last year, many of our fifth grade teachers and their students worked hard to improve their science scores, and it showed. District-wide, fifth grade science scores shot up 29% in one year. Students at Amboy and Tukes Valley middle schools averaged a 40% improvement!
4. Our district middle-school students keep improving! Comparing our district averages with those of other districts around the state, our fifth-graders scored at the 60th percentile for all subjects, sixth- graders at the 74th percentile, seventh-graders at the 79th percentile, and eighth graders at the 71st percentile.
5. At Prairie High, more than 90% of sophomores passed the state-required reading and writing tests on the first try, compared to about 84% state-wide. Performance on the reading test was especially impressive: 68% of PHS Falcons scored in the fourth quartile, the highest level.
6. High school students from River HomeLink (RHL) also did well on these tests with 100% of the sophomores passing the reading test and 96% passing writing.
7. This year was the first year for state End-of-Course Exams (EOC) in algebra I and geometry. At Battle Ground High, 93% of the geometry students passed the EOC, compared with 74% state-wide. Our HomeLink students did great on this test, averaging 86% passing.
8. More than 250 of our district students take algebra I a year early, in eighth grade. These students did especially well on the algebra I EOC, with an average 95% passing compared to 64% statewide.

Finally, listed here are additional school results at or above the 90th percentile when compared with results around the state: Amboy, grade 5 science: 90; Amboy grade 6, reading: 93; Amboy grade 7, math: 93; Amboy grade 7, writing: 91; Daybreak grade 7, math: 91; Maple Grove grade 7, reading: 94; Amboy grade 8 science: 94.

*** Lower socio-economic status, as measured by the number of students qualifying for free and reduced-price lunch, is closely correlated to lower school scores on standardized tests. But this should not suggest low-income families are destined to produce low-achieving children in school. Consider:

"The performance advantage among students whose parents read to them in their early school years is evident regardless of the family's socioeconomic background . . . On average, the score point difference in reading that is associated with parental involvement is largest when parents read a book with their child, when they talk about things they have done during the day, and when they tell stories to their children. The score point difference is smallest when parental involvement takes the form of simply playing with their children." — *Program for International Student Assessment as reported by Thomas Friedman, The New York Times, Nov. 19, 2011.*

"In West Virginia, nine schools sought to enhance parents' skills by offering workshops at school entrance at which the adults received learning packets in reading and math and training on how to use them. Students with more highly involved parents made stronger reading and math gains than less involved parents. The finding was apparent across all income levels. In addition, family income had no effect on involvement, as low-income families were just as likely to attend the workshops as higher-income families." — *The Center for Public Education.*

SERIOUS ABOUT MATH: Yacolt Primary teacher Jessica Byrne works with her fourth graders on math, a strong point for the school in state tests last year.

How to find state test results

Go to **www.k12.wa.us** and click the box on right labeled "State Report Card." To compare state averages with Battle Ground, go to the "Summary" window near the top that says "Washington State" and click the down arrow and then on Battle Ground School District and the green "GO" button. To see results for any given school in the district go back to the down arrow and click on the school of your choice.

Cost savings

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Tables, desks, chairs etc. cost no more for the last schools to open than for the first.

- This year the district consolidated its numerous printer contracts into a single five-year, all-in-one deal with Pacific Office Automation. Berecek figures it will save the district about $140,000 a year. Ink, maintenance and repairs are all rolled into the contract and the price will be flat for the next four years.
- Consumables are the "little" things that, collectively, aren't so little. They include paper, pads, pencils, pens, paper clips, glue sticks, etc. In 2009, Berecek negotiated a three-year contract with a firm called School Specialties. Berecek says the district is paying at a rate about 10 percent less than many other districts.

Temperature controls — David Klemetsrud, maintenance supervisor, says the district has been saving money on regular heating and air conditioning for the past two years by establishing an automatic, district-wide temperature control. The heat doesn't come on until the temperature drops below 69 and the air conditioning won't come on unless the temperature exceeds 74.

HVAC filters — Lynn and Klemetsrud this fall negotiated a two-year contract with Camfil Farr Inc. for the purchase and replacement of 2,477 HVAC filters throughout the district three times a year, at an estimated savings of between $7,000 and $10,000.

Save paper. Save money. Save trees. — The district's business office this year converted to electronic billing and payments. In addition to cutting down on paper costs, some of these changes resulted in bank rebates to the district. . . . In another save-paper/save-money move this year we've stopped cranking out thick notebooks filled with details and background documentation that went to school board members and district administrators for every School Board meeting. Now they get the material electronically. This change also saves clerical time.

Expense-reduction contractor — The district has contracted with a private firm, Expense Reduction Analysts (http://expensereduction.com/services), to audit various ongoing expenses in search of waste or better deals elsewhere. Its fee is 50 percent of any savings in the first two years that result from its analysis. There is no fee if it does not find savings.

Fiscal Advisory Committee — Keeping the taxpayer in mind is not just an internal effort. Following voters' approval in 2010 of a three-year maintenance and operations levy, Superintendent Bria said, "There are things we can learn when voters speak." She established a Superintendent's Fiscal Advisory Committee of people from the business community and the non-profit sector to examine school district practices and seek ways to get the most out of taxpayers' dollars.

Battle Ground Public Schools
Since 1909 - Preparing our children to succeed in the next step of their lives

Your Battle Ground PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Report to the Residents of Battle Ground School District • December 2011

NEW THIS YEAR: Maple Grove Primary teacher Sue hill leads her full-day kindergarten class to the cafeteria for lunch. While traditional half-day (no lunch) kindergarten is still offered throughout the district, Maple Grove is piloting two full-day kindergarten classes, taught by Hill and Katie Paulson. The full-day program might be expanded next year.

Maple Grove tests full-day kindergarten

Forty-eight Maple Grove kindergarteners and their teachers are pioneers in the school district's first full-day kindergarten, a tuition-based pilot project that might be expanded to other schools next year.

"We think the students will be socially and academically enriched and prepared to move on to first grade," Principal Barbara Baird said as the year began. Sue Hill and Katie Paulson are the full-day kindergarten teachers, each with about 24 students. Maple Grove also offers half-day kindergarten.

Across the nation full-day kindergartens are increasingly popular. U.S. Department of Education studies have shown participation in all-day kindergarten is related positively to subsequent school performance.

Tuition for the full-day kindergarten is $300 per month. Scholarship support was available for students from low-income families.

Taxpayers always 'in mind' in Battle Ground schools

The phrase "Out of sight, out of mind" dates to the 16tth century and remains popular today, as in singer George Strait's 2009 hit song by the same name.

But for Superintendent Shonny Bria and employees throughout the Battle Ground School District, exactly the opposite is true when it comes to taxpayers. They are ***never*** out of our minds.

MaryBeth Lynn, assistant superintendent for finance and operations, says, "I've been told I could squeeze a dime out of a penny. I look at the district's money as if it were my own. I want it spent wisely. What I look for is getting the most out of taxpayers' dollars."

Here are a few examples:

School administrators — Two of our campuses — Pleasant Valley and Tukes Valley — have one assistant principal serving both the primary and middle schools. In addition, Summit View (alternative) High School and River HomeLink share a principal.

Prairie High School sewer rates — Sewers had not yet come to the area around Northeast 119th Street and 117th Avenue (state Highway 503) when Prairie High School opened in 1979. So, it was served by one of the county's largest septic systems until the summer of 2010 when a line to the new Winco store on 119th was installed just west of the campus. Based on Prairie's enrollment and staff size, the Clark Regional Wastewater District calculated the school district's connection fee would be $450,240 and the monthly charge $2,380.

Kevin Jolma, the school district's director of facilities and operations, dug into the subject and this is what he flushed out: The formula used by the sewer district to calculate the amount of waste going down the high school's sinks, toilets and shower drains was based on national studies in the 1960s and '70s. It estimated 20 students would produce waste equivalent to one residential unit (ERU) every day. At Prairie, that meant 70 ERUs times $34 per ERU for a monthly charge of $2,380.

But Jolma challenged the 20-students-per-ERU figure. He cited results of more-recent local studies. The sewer district concurred. Steve Bacon, development planning engineer for the sewer district, says, "The actual water used by the high schools was more in line with what we charge for primary and middle schools at 32 students per ERU."

The connection fee was cut to $284,121 — a savings of $166,118. The monthly charge went from $2,380 to $1,523 — a savings of $856 per month.

Water and lights — New reduced-wattage lights and low-flow bathroom fixtures have been installed in schools and offices throughout the district in recent months. A state conservation grant and Clark Public Utilities incentives are paying more than half the project's cost. Savings estimated at $124,000 a year in electricity and water will make up the rest.

When the state grant was awarded, Superintendent Bria said, "It validates the efforts this district has already made and continues to make in cutting energy costs in bus fuel, electricity, water and natural gas, as well as our plans for doing even more to reduce those costs and conserve energy."

Used vehicles — Twelve years ago, Mary Beth Lynn left her job as a state auditor in the Vancouver office and came to Battle Ground Public Schools as chief number cruncher. One of her first moves was to buy used vehicles from among those surplused by Clark County. She soon broadened the searches.

Example: In August 2011 the district bought a 2002 Ford E350 step van from Kent Truck &Equipment of Kent, WA and a 1995 Chevrolet P30 step van from Pat Moore Quality Cars of Vancouver.

"We're not buying junk," Lynn said. "These vehicles still have a long and useful life ahead of them."

School furniture, printers, etc. — Kathy Berecek, who holds duo roles of warehouse manager and purchasing agent, says, "I look for a reputable company to get the best product at the best price." Here are examples:

- Voters in 2005 approved a bond sale to finance new schools (Daybreak, Amboy, Chief Umtuch and Tukes Valley). "We managed to keep the prices for furniture firm for three years," Berecek said.

'COST SAVINGS' CONTINUED ON BACK

SAVING ENERGY: New energy-saving light fixtures are installed at Maple Grove Middle School library, as they were across the district this year.

Mavis Nickels

Ken Root

Root, Nickels retained

Voters in November elected Ken Root and Mavis Nickels as directors of the Battle Ground School District. Each had been appointed last spring to fill vacancies. Root's and Nickels' new terms will expire in late 2015. The terms of Board members, Steve Pagel, John Idsinga and Monty Anderson expire in late 2013.

For information about the Board, including meeting schedule, minutes, etc., see battlegroundps.org and click "School Board" on the right. Board members are:

Steve Pagel, president
pagel.steve@battlegroundps.org
(360) 573-7758

Ken Root
root.ken@battlegroundps.org
(360) 666-9575

Monty Anderson
anderson.monty@battlegroundps.org
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John Idsinga, vice president
idsinga.john@battlegroundps.org
(360) 852-4960

Mavis Nickels
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(360) 573-9785

BG Public Schools ...by the numbers

12,724	Total Enrollment (Nov. 1, 2011)
84.7%	White enrollment
7.3%	Hispanic enrollment
38.0 %	Qualify for free and reduced-price meals
12.3%	Special education (May 2011)
5.1%	Transitional bilingual
271	Square miles in Battle Ground School District
43.0%	Portion of Clark County covered by BG district
10,170	Miles traveled daily by BG school buses on regular routes
1909-1910	First year of operation for what today is Battle Ground School District, established with merger of Maple Grove and Dublin schools
54	Number of school districts folded into BG district over the years, most recently Yacolt in 1975.

IMPROVEMENT PLANS FOCUS ON TEACHING & LEARNING

The pilot project for full-day kindergarten at Maple Grove Primary School (Story on Page 1) is just one of the ways Battle Ground schools are working this year to improve teaching and learning. Here are excerpts from the 2011-12 'School Improvement Plans' (SIPs), which were written in most cases by the respective school principals. They can be seen in their full context and entirety at *battlegroundps.org* under 'Key Links.'

Capt. Strong Primary

Last year we began work in RTII (Response to Instruction and Intervention) in math and began math assistance outside of the regular school day, with a morning or afternoon choice for 3rd and 4th graders. We believe this effort resulted in the 4.7% increase in our 4th grade math scores and the 11.4% increase in our 3rd grade scores.

Daybreak Primary

Daybreak is a collaborative school directed by a School-Wide Improvement Planning (SWIP) team of 20 members representing staff and parents. Members of our SWIP Team collected and analyzed data in the areas of student achievement, curriculum and instruction, professional development and family and community involvement. This data was used to inform and support school improvement decisions.

Glenwood Heights Primary

See "green house" story on facing page.

Maple Grove Primary

See Page 1 story about full-day kindergarten.

Pleasant Valley Primary

All-school writing activity focuses on specific genres, wherein teachers instruct, assess and plan additional instruction, exposing students to the comprehensive writing vocabulary and process. Teachers collaborate with the district literacy specialist to enhance instructional practices.

Tukes Valley Primary

Tukes Valley Primary is participating in a pilot program to implement RTII, which is a paradigm shift in thinking about how to provide the strongest possible learning environment for students. The focus for RTII this year is reading improvement.

Yacolt Primary

Reading intervention programs are a focus (as we) work to ensure struggling students receive early remediation. We have a variety of activities for families, including the Parent Education Resource Center (PERC), which is open after school on Wednesdays for parents and children.

Amboy Middle

The building counselor has developed a school etiquette behavioral program. A half-time building counselor also meets with a 5th — 8th grade study group focused on academic study skills.

Chief Umtuch Middle

We have adopted the mantra "Reading is the most important thing we do." We believe in educating the whole child and thus believe that offerings in the arts and technology and health and fitness, as well intramural offerings and special events such as Math Olympiad and Relay for Life carry vital importance along with our efforts in the core subject areas.

Daybreak Middle

Recently, we have made access to tools in our media center easily accessible for both students and families through a collection of online resources, many of which are available through our school website.

Laurin Middle

In daily collaboration teachers focus on aligning lessons to the learning targets, analyzing results and adjusting instruction to meet student needs. Additional support (is available) in "academy" (three days a week during the school day) and in opportunities before and after school.

Maple Grove Middle

We have worked to reduce the number of failing grades among older students, not by lowering expectations, but by making consistent our expectations for what students should know, understand and be able to do and by putting in place more supports to help students. For example, those failing one or more core classes are required to stay after school in our Academic Recovery Program.

Pleasant Valley Middle

This year we have developed the STAT (Student Teacher Access Time) program to provide extra time with students who are not mastering state standards.

Tukes Valley Middle

Our staff will continue to: teach lessons aligned with the state standards; identify and implement best practices in writing and align writing instruction to the state standards; monitor the reading progress of our special education students, and reflect student understanding of standards in our grade books.

CAM Jr.-Sr. High

Our teachers work with parents to nurture students to meet and exceed state standards. CAM's academic program is selected and delivered with the expectation that all of our students are prepared to attend post-high school education.

Battle Ground High

It is often difficult for students to get help from their teachers before or after school because of transportation issues. Some ways we help are with Lunch Study Hall and Wednesday Tutorials/Homeroom, our Wednesday Club/Activity/Homeroom time and our STRIPES mentor program (Students Trying to Reach Incoming Peers Experiencing School).

HomeLink Battle Ground

We offer a broad range of programs and classes that have been developed through parent, staff and district teamwork. Presently, HomeLink offers five distinct programs from which individualized instructional programs for students can be developed.

Prairie High

New this year is POW! (Parent Orientation Workshop). This evening conference gave parents information to empower them to help their students. Parents learned about the teenage brain relative to learning, discipline procedures, college preparedness and more.

River HomeLink

Reading and writing scores are improving, with 100% of the high school students meeting or exceeding proficiency on the spring 2011 state test.

Summit View High

Summit View is an alternative for those students whose past academic experience, legal complications, treatment schedule, need/desire to spend more time in the workplace, family obligations or life situations require a different way to earn a diploma. Goals for 2011-12 include an increased percentage of students passing the state reading exam from 72% to 75% and passing the state math exam from 20% to 23%.

WatchDOGS: Helping kids and teachers

DADS OF GREAT STUDENTS: Fathers at Glenwood Heights Primary and adjacent Laurin Middle School registered in October as 2011-12 WatchDOGS (Dads of Great Students). They are almost daily fixtures in the classrooms as tutors, mentors and just plain friends to the youngsters. All Battle Ground schools welcome volunteers.

Improving performance by later start to school day

With numerous studies concluding American teenagers need more sleep at night if they are to be successful learners in the morning, Battle Ground schools are starting and ending the day 20 to 30 minutes later this year.

"All the research is clear and overwhelming," Superintendent Shonny Bria said last summer. "Much of the population of middle and high school students is sleep-deprived. We would rather have them sleeping at home than in school."

Among those who have studied sleep habits of teens is Cornell University psychologist James B. Maas, Ph.D. "Almost all teen-agers, as they reach puberty, become walking zombies because they are getting far too little sleep," Maas said. ". . . Early in the morning or right after lunch, when they're at their sleepiest, the overwhelming drive to sleep replaces any chance of alertness, cognition, memory or understanding."

It's not just a matter of insisting teens go to bed earlier say scientists such as Kyla Wahlstrom, director of the Center for Applied Research and Education Improvement in St. Paul, Minn.

"From the onset of puberty until late teen years, the brain chemical melatonin, which is responsible for sleepiness, is secreted from approximately 11 p.m. to 8 a.m.," Wahlstrom says. "This secretion is based on human circadian rhythms and is rather fixed. In other words, typical youth are not able to fall asleep much before 11 p.m. and their brains will remain in sleep mode until about 8 a.m., regardless of what time they go to bed."

The safety of older students driving to school was also a factor. A half-hour later should leave morning drivers more alert and responsive.

In order to hold down busing costs, the later start is in effect at all schools – primary, middle and high.

CULTIVATING THE MATH GARDEN: Glenwood Heights Primary teachers Brooke Butigan, foreground, and Kathy Bruner in "Green house" training session.

Glenwood Heights goes 'Green House'

In the shorthand of Battle Ground Public Schools, GHP stands for *Glenwood Heights Primary*. But the school's role in improving the teaching and learning of math at all grade levels in the district could give that school a different and unofficial name: *Green House Primary*.

In the fertile soil that is Glenwood Heights Primary they are nurturing and growing a better way for students to learn – indeed, to truly comprehend – mathematics. GHP teachers this fall had four days of "best practices" training under the tutelage of Carolyn Choi of Teachers Development Group in West Linn, Ore.

Next, Choi and designated GHP "studio" teachers Jamie Griffith (first grade) and Terri Hays (fourth grade) GHP will map out lesson plans and teaching strategies. Then, in January, the "Studio" phase will begin in the Griffith and Hays classrooms, with Choi's assistance. Other Glenwood Heights teachers will observe, take notes and listen in on students in small groups exploring different ways to do math.

"When we were in school," says GHP principal David Kennedy, "we were taught a specific procedure for solving math problems. We repeated that procedure on our own to get an answer.

"Then we did homework in which we repeated that procedure over and over. The next morning, we proudly turned in that homework. The problem is, we might not have really understood why the procedure actually worked or if there were other ways to solve the problem."

The new approach, Kennedy said, "goes beyond that. It gives students a conceptual understanding of math. They will be asked to explore different ways to solve a problem, discuss those ways with other students and then justify their answers and explain their thinking."

Susan Watson, the instructional support specialist who has been instrumental in developing and guiding the program, said it is "immediately applicable to the classroom. We are cultivating these best practices at Glenwood and will grow them out from there to other buildings."

"It takes learning to a much deeper level," Kennedy said. "At the end of the day, it is the students who will benefit the most."

2010 - 2011 BATTLE GROUND PUBLIC SCHOOLS' REPORT CARD

This report is intended to assist the public in accessing test results for the 2010-2011 school year for the Battle Ground district and each of its schools as they work to meet requirements for having a highly qualified staff and for students' progress toward state and national goals.

Under the federal No Child Left Behind law, all students are expected to meet proficiency standards in reading and math by the year 2014. Schools and school districts are expected to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) annually, based on results of many categories. Washington uses the Measures of Student Progress (MSP) and the High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE) in determining AYP.

The No Child Left Behind law requires all teachers who teach core academic subjects to be highly qualified. By definition, a highly qualified teacher has full certification, a bachelor's degree, and demonstrated competence in subject knowledge and teaching. In 2010-11, more than 99.8% percent of district teachers met or exceeded these standards.

This information, along with demographic information, is accessible in detail at the website of the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. To access this report, go to http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us. Paper copies of the district and school report cards are available at each school and the district office.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a program of the U.S. Department of Education. Commonly called The Nation's Report Card, it is the only test in the United States that allows comparisons of the performance of students in Washington with students nationally. Assessments are conducted periodically in several subjects. For more information about NAEP check http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us and click on "NAEP" or go to http://www.nationsreportcard.gov.

Russian note: Эта статья — о федеральном законе «Ни одного отстающего ребёнка», касающаяся результатов теста от штата для школьного округа Battle Ground и для каждой отдельной школы в округе. Она также объясняет, как найти эти результаты на интернете. Если у Вас возникли вопросы, можете позвонить мне по телефону (360) 885-5433.

Hispanic note: Este articulo habla acerca de la ley de "No Niño Dejado Atrás" y se refiere a las calificaciones de las evaluaciones estatales del Distrito Escolar de Battle Ground y de cada escuela en el distrito. También explica el cómo encontrar esas calificaciones en el internet. Si tiene alguna pregunta acerca de este articulo, me puede llamar al 360-885-5431.

The Battle Ground School District provides equal opportunity in programs and employment and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin/language, creed/religion, sex, sexual orientation-including gender identity, disability, or the use of a service animal by a person with a disability, age, marital status, honorably discharged veteran or military status, HIV/Hepatitis C status and provides equal access to designated youth groups. Marcia Christian, Diana Gilsinger and Jane Mercier have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination. They can be reached as follows: Marcia Christian, Title IX Sexual Harassment Coordinator, 360.885.5415, christian.marcia@bgsd.k12.wa.us; Diana Gilsinger, Deputy Superintendent 360.885.5338, gilsinger.diana@bgsd.k12.wa.us; Jane Mercier, Section 504/ADA Coordinator 360.885.5318, mercier.jane@bgsd.k12.wa.us; or a letter may be submitted to the designated coordinator at the Battle Ground School District, PO Box 200, Battle Ground, WA 98604.