

Press Release



Battle Ground Public Schools

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Watch D.O.G.S. program expanding to Laurin Middle

Thanks to parents such as Jim Fairchild and Nate Berberian and support from principals and teachers, a program to enlist adult males as classroom volunteers is expanding this year from Glenwood Heights Primary to adjacent Laurin Middle School in the Battle Ground School District.

Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students) gets dads, grandfathers and uncles into the world of school volunteerism, where moms have traditionally been most visible. At the direction of classroom teachers, they work with students on various subjects and study skills at least one day a year.

That might not be a huge commitment of time for any one dad, but the number of participants is “phenomenal,” says Principal David Kennedy at Glenwood Heights, where the program started in February 2009.

Last year, dozens of dads, grandfathers or uncles volunteered one or more days at Glenwood Heights Primary, with one or more Watch D.O.G.S. at the school for 75 percent of the available days.

Laurin Middle School Principal JoDee McMillen, as giddy with anticipation about Watch D.O.G.S. coming to her school as a cocker spaniel at feeding time, says, “It’s a great program. We’re really excited about it.”

Principals McMillen and Kennedy credit all volunteers and staffers who helped make the program a success at Glenwood Heights and look forward to its expansion to Laurin Middle School. They have special praise for Fairchild and Berberian, co-chairs of the program who have been involved from the start. Each has two children, one at Glenwood and one now at Laurin.

An orientation and free-pizza-and-soda kickoff party for 2011-12 Watch D.O.G.S. at both Laurin Middle and Glenwood Heights Primary will be from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 12, in the Laurin Middle School gymnasium, 13601 N.E. 97th Ave. That's immediately north of Glenwood Heights Primary at Northeast 97th Avenue and 134th Street. Fairchild praised Papa John's Pizza for providing the pizza at a discount. As many as 450 dads and kids are expected to show up for the kickoff event.

“The goal is to have at least one volunteer in each school every day of the year except early-release days,” says Natalie Fairchild, Jim’s wife. “We’ll have the calendars for both schools there. It’ll be fun to watch them fill up with names.” Berberian was perhaps the most frequent volunteer last year, at a rate of once a month.

Speaking with the enthusiasm of a retriever playing fetch-the-ball, Glenwood Heights Principal Kennedy said, “Watch D.O.G.S. gives dads a real structure for getting involved. They wear Watch D.O.G.S. vests or T shirts and are part of the fabric of our school. The kids get used to seeing them. What’s really neat is hearing from a dad who has volunteered for the first time and says he wants to do it again.”

More information:

www.fathers.com and click Watch D.O.G.S. icon on right.

Laurin Principal JoDee McMillen, (360) 885-5200

Glenwood Heights Principal David Kennedy, (360) 885-5250



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