

Press Release



Battle Ground Public Schools

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Oct. 13, 2011

They've let the DOGS out at Glenwood Heights, Laurin



It's not a bargain-basement sale or a give-away. It's registration for the Watch D.O.G.S. volunteer mentoring and tutoring program at Glenwood Heights Primary and Laurin Middle schools.

About 75 fathers and twice that many children enjoyed free pizza and soda pop Wednesday, Oct. 12, as they ushered in a new era in the Watch D.O.G.S. tutoring/mentoring program in Battle Ground Public Schools.

What's new? Middle school.

Begun in February 2009 at Glenwood Heights Primary (grades K-4), the program has expanded this year into adjacent Laurin Middle School (grades 5-8). Watch D.O.G.S. ("Dads of Great Students") is affiliated with the National Center for

Fathering (www.fathers.com). It aims to put more male adults in schools, where moms traditionally have been more prominent as volunteer helpers in classrooms, offices and playgrounds.

The Glenwood Heights and Laurin programs are co-chaired by dads Jim Fairchild and Nate Berberian. They were leaders in starting the program at Glenwood Heights in February 2009; this year each has a child in both schools. Wednesday night's registration and pizza feed were in the cafeteria at Laurin. The pizza was provided by Papa John's at a discount.

The goal of Watch D.O.G.S. at the two schools is to have at least one father, grandfather, uncle or other adult male volunteer in each school every day except early-release days.

"It has been said that raising a child takes seven influential people in that child's life," Fairchild said, suggesting Watch D.O.G.S. can be one of those positive influences. "We are asking each volunteer for one day a year," he said, noting that some volunteer several times a year.

Laurin teacher B.J. Rush said, "We'll take all the help we can get. We want to see parents here all year, not just at awards ceremonies at the end of each semester."

Glenwood Heights Principal David Kennedy says he looks forward to working with dads again and was delighted that many first-time Watch D.O.G.S. last year told him they had fun and intend to continue as Watch D.O.G.S.

Laurin Principal JoDee McMillen welcomed the fathers and advised them not to think middle school youngsters are embarrassed about having their parents at school. "Your kids might say they don't want you in school, but it's not true," she said. "They don't really mean it."

As Fairchild said, it is too soon to know how successful the program will be at the middle school. But at Glenwood Heights primary the dads, in their Watch D.O.G.S. vests, "are rock stars" who are extremely popular in classrooms and on the playground. He predicted more of the same at the Laurin.



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