

A message from your School Board

Dear Families and Friends of
Ferndale School District,

This Spring I will have the pleasure of handing out diplomas to my son's senior class. This is a group of kids I have watched grow from kindergarten through senioritis. They are a unique and creative bunch. I have learned life lessons from them that are at least as plentiful as the learning we have provided them.

For all we rightly invest in the best curriculum, assessments, materials, etc., students can teach us over and over again that the relationships in their learning environment have a major impact on their school experience. When teachers really know their students, learning is enhanced. When we really know our kids' teachers, learning and life skills are enhanced. I am fortunate to have come to know some of my children's teachers as friends. Sure, some of those relationships might be bumpy, but in the end our kids win when we make the call or walk in the school door. Your school board wants you to know that you are always welcome to walk in the door and be a part of it all.

Thank you for another year of community support for our staff and our most precious possessions.

We want them to be *life long learners*. We have a responsibility to be the same.

Keep in touch,

Mary Jo Durborow
On behalf of the Ferndale School Board



Dr. John Hruby, Director District #1 which is the part of the school district north of the Grandview Road, including Custer. Physician in Ferndale, graduate of Cornell University and University of Washington School of medicine, serves on citizen levy committees; board member since 1987.



Mr. Stuart McKay, Director District #2 which is west of the Ferndale city limits. Lifetime resident of Ferndale, graduate of Western Washington University in geography, married, one daughter, active in Ferndale Heritage Society and Old Settlers' Association, works at BP Cherry Point Refinery in contracted maintenance; board member since 2003.



Mr. Justin McKay, Director District #3 which includes the area south of Mountain View and west of the Nooksack River. Ferndale High School graduate, holds a bachelors' degree in political science from Western Washington University, works for Building Industry Association, member of Portage Bay Shellfish Advisory Committee; board member since 2003.



Ms. Mary Jo Durborow, Director District #4 which is roughly the North Bellingham area. Legislative Rep, member Professional Education Advisory Board at WWU, Steering Committee member for Whatcom County Readiness to Learn Consortium, former chair of Washington State School Directors' Legislative Committee, WSSDA levy equalization task force, full-time mom with experience in elementary music and adult education, human services and community action; board member since 1990.



Mr. Norm Robertson, Director District #5 which consists of the area within the Ferndale city limits. Ferndale High graduate; experience as a commercial fisherman, forester and private contractor; active in community and church affairs; board member since 1974.

Superintendent's Message



Dear Patrons of Ferndale School District,

This is Ferndale School District's Tenth Annual Report. This report is designed to share with you data which, when combined together, reflects our school district. I hope that you will take the time to read through the report and if you have questions or comments please give us a call.

Annually, each school is required to make a report to the district's school board of directors and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. That report, along with other data, is shared with the U.S. Department of Education. Our schools are all engaged in a school improvement process which uses data to guide all of us in our decisions whether it be at the school level or district level.

I am pleased to report that all of our schools made the No Child Left Behind federal requirement of annual yearly progress. As evidenced in the data, some of our schools made very significant gains.

Our citizens' bond committee was hard at work this fall. Although our student population decreased this year, the long-term projections of growth, the building of new homes and other factors, including programmatic needs, clearly indicate we will need additional classrooms. The committee has also looked carefully at our existing facilities and improving what we already have. A critical part of their decision making evolved around health and safety needs such as separating busses, vehicles and students, along with renovating old facilities. As you know, the district has already purchased a future elementary school site and plans to build the new elementary school on that site. We hope to occupy the new elementary school in the fall of 2007. Included in the bond you will vote on is the acquisition of a future secondary school site. We believe the time is right to purchase a future secondary site. I want to take this opportunity to thank the members of the committee for the many, many hours they have given. Their job has not been easy.

As a superintendent I have some growing concerns that I want to share with you. Currently, there is no long-term plan to adequately finance kindergarten through higher education in this state. We know how many students will graduate and we also know that there are not enough seats available for them to go onto higher education institutions.

The funding for basic education needs to be improved, specifically the legislature needs to address the funding of special education and transportation both of which are a part of basic education. To illustrate my point, our school district currently supplements special education with basic education dollars by about \$600,000 and transportation by about \$300,000. That is close to one million dollars that comes out of basic education and goes into those two areas to pay for the lack of funding.

The students of Washington State have moved from the middle of the pack to near the top ten percent nationally in improved learning. That did not happen by accident. It happened because of highly trained educators, their focus and the community's support. Higher standards require all of us to improve our skills and knowledge base. Hiring outstanding staff is a must and their professional development is critical if they are going to improve and increase student learning. Retaining and paying teachers more and reducing class size were initiatives the voters previously approved overwhelmingly. In class size, our state ranks 46 out of 50 states.

Data by itself does not tell the whole story of a student's education, nor the student. It is hard to quantify a work of art, the performance of a musical piece or the acting in a drama production. The truth is that more students are engaged in a variety of activities than ever before and they perform with excellence. When you review their grade point averages, the sportsmanship and the artistry, you have to be impressed.

A large segment of our school population are on free and reduced price lunches, without medical care and are struggling. Our Readiness to Learn program and community coordinators, along with counselors, staff, community and various organizations, provide a hand-up for those children. We are all thankful for that assistance.

Thank you for taking the time to review this report, but more importantly thank you for your support and the care you give this district.

Best wishes,

Roger Lehnert

Progress Report

Student Enrollment

GRADE LEVEL	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004
Kindergarten	342	350	393
1-6	2,433	2,437	2,272
7-8	878	899	878
9-12	1,437	1,461	1,487
Running Start	117	90	123
TOTALS	5,207	5,237	5,030



Average Class Size

CATEGORY	CLASS SIZE AVERAGES STUDENT/TEACHER RATIO		
	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004
Kindergarten-4	20.85	21.34	20.7
5-6	23.45	25.60	25.2
7-8	24.60	23.40	23.2
9-12	23.50	22.10	23.5

Student Ethnicity Report

CATEGORY	2001		2002		2003	
	ACTUAL	%	ACTUAL	%	ACTUAL	%
Asian	104	2.08%	120	2.40%	124	2.43%
American Indian	604	12.07%	579	11.57%	599	11.74%
Black	56	1.12%	63	1.26%	68	1.33%
Hispanic	391	7.81%	416	8.31%	436	8.54%
White	3,849	76.92%	3,828	76.47%	3,876	75.96%
TOTAL	5,004	100.00%	5,006	100.00%	5,103	100.00%

Progress Report

District Staffing

CATEGORY	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004
Classified Staff (including para-educators, secretaries, clerical support, bus drivers, food service, custodians, etc.)	178.833	199.395	190.448
Certificated Instructional (includes teachers, counselors, program specialists, etc.)*	321.530	322.471	331.345
Administrators (includes school principals, assistant principals and central office administrators)	18.0	18.4	20.5

*219 hold at least a master's degree and average number of years teaching experience is 10.3



Average Expenditure per Student

CATEGORY	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003
Ferndale	\$6,583.29	\$7,047.66	\$7,399.49
State Average	\$6,946.04	\$7,224.85	7,436.15
Difference	\$ 362.75	\$ 177.19	\$ 36.66

*Reported for most current year available per OSPI



Graduation Rate

	2002	2003	2004
GRADUATES	89%	68%*	69.3%*

*This rate is calculated using new rules from OSPI. Percentage of seniors who began school in 1999-2000 and graduated with their cohort (class) in 2003.

Drop Out Rate

	2002	2003	2004
DROP OUTS	2%	6.3*	5.3*

*This rate is calculated using new rules from OSPI. Percentage includes students who do not graduate and do not transfer to another school, leave the state or leave the country.

No Child Left Behind Goals

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation requires school districts across the nation to set goals to ensure all students reach 100% in reading and mathematics by 2014. These goals are measured by the WASL at grades four, seven and ten in Washington State. The results of student assessments are looked at according to subgroups of students representing differing poverty levels, race, gender, ethnicity, disabilities and limited English language skills. All students in all nine subgroups must make *Adequate Yearly Progress* toward the 100% proficiency goals. A complete report of Ferndale's student achievement as represented by the subgroups can be found at <http://www.k12.wa.us>. Once on the OSPI web site click on *School Report Card*, then select Ferndale or simply type in the name of your school. A complete analysis of student performance is provided in extensive detail. Hard copies of this information are available to all citizens upon request.

Progress Report

Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)*

CATEGORY	Grade 3				Grade 6			
	District		State		District		State	
	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004
Total Reading	56	53	58	58	58	62	55	55
Total Math	66	67	67	67	64	67	58	58

*Compared to national norm of 50. Percent of students meeting or exceeding the standard.

Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL)*

CATEGORY	2002		2003		2004	
	District	State	District	State	District	State
4th Grade						
Math	47.4	51.8	53.8	55.2	61.7	59.9
Reading	63.8	65.6	65.4	66.7	67.0	74.4
Writing	44.7	49.5	44.8	53.6	47.5	55.8
Listening	67.3	66.6	65.4	65.8	N/A	N/A
5th Grade Science	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	23.5	28.2
7th Grade						
Math	30.5	30.4	36.7	36.8	49.5	46.4
Reading	48.2	44.5	50.0	47.9	66.8	60.5
Writing	64.8	53.0	56.2	54.7	65.7	58.0
Listening	90.3	83.6	87.4	87.0	N/A	N/A
8th Grade Science	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	44.5	39.4
10th Grade						
Math	29.9	37.3	34.5	39.4	46.3	44.0
Reading	56.9	59.2	51.2	60.0	50.7	64.6
Writing	53.4	54.3	46.1	60.5	60.3	65.4
Listening	89.0	81.8	67.7	75.9	N/A	N/A
Science	N/A	N/A	25.2	31.8	34.2	32.3

*Reflects assessment of different groups of students each year

Iowa Test of Educational Development (ITED)

CATEGORY	2004	
	District	State
9th Grade		
Reading	50	53
Quantitative Thinking	58	59

Standardized Achievement Test (SAT)*

CATEGORY	2004		
	District	State	National
High School Students**			
Verbal	540	528	508
Math	543	531	518

*Generally, the SAT is taken for college admissions

**Approximately Eighty-five (85) students of the district were tested



General Fund Budget

General Fund Revenues

Fiscal year 2003-2004 General Fund Revenues totaled \$38,194,608. The majority of our revenue (55.8%) comes directly from the State of Washington. The other significant source of revenue comes from our Maintenance & Operations Levy (15.1%). We are very appreciative of the strong local support provided by our citizens as it is vital to the continuing success of the district.

General Fund Expenditures

Fiscal year 2003-2004 General Fund Expenditures totaled \$38,917,967. Over 80% of the district's expenditures are devoted to salaries and benefits for the district's 600 plus employees. The purchased service expenditures (11.8%) are comprised of electricity, natural gas, water, sewer, insurance, payments for the Running Start program, and facility maintenance. Supply and instructional resources expenditures (5.3%) consist primarily of general classroom supplies, books and bus fuel. The district continues to provide quality educational programs for students while, at the same time, spending less per pupil than the statewide average of other school districts.

Using I-728 Funds to Promote Student Learning

During the 2003-04 school year, I-728 funds were used for class size reduction, extended learning opportunities for kindergarten students and professional development for educators. The district focused its funding to pay for 12.6 FTE elementary teachers, 4.5 FTE middle school teachers and 5.5 FTE high school teachers to reduce class sizes in the district. Funds spent in each category were: Grades K-4—\$312,084; Grades 5-12—\$630,699.

Staff members attended training to improve their skills in instruction. Teachers and administrators participated as a member of instructional teams at each school to align strategies for continuous improvement of student achievement related to the math and reading improvement plans.

Accomplishments

Ferndale School District is recognized for its strong educational programs. Highlights for 2003-04 are as follows:

- ▶ Staff awards have been received statewide and nationally.
- ▶ Teacher Carolyn Jonson received the Golden Apple Award sponsored by the *Record-Journal*.
- ▶ Three students qualified to participate in the National History Day Competition held in Washington, D.C.
- ▶ Through a grant made possible by the United States State Department, Central Elementary School Teacher Judy Thomas visited and taught classes in Niamey, Niger, in Africa. Thomas was the partner school-to-school representative for Ferndale at the American School of Niamey (ASN).
- ▶ Skyline Elementary School First Grade Teacher Tiffany MacSllarrow participated in the Fulbright Memorial Fund (FMF) Teacher Program. She was among 200 recipients in the entire United States to be selected for the program. As a recipient of the Fulbright Memorial Fund Grant, MacSllarrow participated in a three-week program in Japan featuring orientation to Japan followed by visits to primary and secondary schools, teacher training colleges, cultural sites and industrial sites.
- ▶ Long-range planning continued for facilities in order to ensure the district's readiness to meet facility needs resulting from the continued growth of our region. Pre-planning occurred for the district's citizen bond committee to meet fall 2004.
- ▶ The Summer Academic Program continued for students in grades six, seven and eight providing valuable assistance to students in need of academic improvement.



Students completed research projects on Japan in Ms. MacSllarrow's class at Skyline Elementary School.



Teacher Carolyn Jonson (left) receives the Golden Apple Award plaque from Record-Journal reporter Gloria Dawn Irwin

- ▶ A Summer Enrichment program was held with students in grades 3-8 attending a wonderful variety of classes ranging from sculpting with clay to creating digital movies.
- ▶ Students participated in a variety of after school and enrichment programs: Math Olympiad, History Day, FFA, FBLA, DARE, music events, drama events, athletic events, book fairs, food drives, assemblies, field trips, student council, peer tutoring, and science and cultural fairs.
- ▶ Planning began for implementation of a computerized student information management system called WESPAC. Implementation is targeted to be November 2004.
- ▶ Ferndale School District's third high school opened in February. Windward High School, based on the high tech high model school in San Diego, California, started classes with approximately 75 ninth and tenth grade students in the district.

Accomplishments

▶ Central Elementary School was the grand prize winner in Pizza Huts BOOK IT!® Challenge Sweepstakes for Principals. This entitled the school to \$15,000 for the school library or media center, a \$300 gift certificate to Amazon.com, \$50 gift certificates to Amazon.com for each classroom teacher, the school librarian and the school secretary, and a school-wide pizza party.

▶ Automated external defibrillators (AEDs) were purchased and installed in all Ferndale School District schools and work sites. AEDs are small, portable, easy-to-use devices that deliver an electric shock to the heart to halt rapid and chaotic heart activity and restore a normal heart rhythm.

▶ Eight Ferndale High School students qualified for the American Invitational Math Exam (AIME) after taking the American Math Contest (AMC). This test is given to challenge students academically and to raise interest in mathematics. More than 200,000 students at over 4,000 schools in the United States and Canada participated in the contest.

▶ Essay winners in the VFW and Elk's writing contests.

▶ Ferndale High School received its accreditation status by the Northwest Association of Schools and of Colleges and Universities Commission on Schools. Ferndale High School was first accredited with the association in 1926. Ferndale High School is one of 1,656 in the region and one of over 36,000 schools nationwide to maintain regional accreditation.

▶ Ferndale High School students received multiple scholarships to attend two-year, four-year, technical, business and art colleges.

▶ Programs in counseling, preschool, kindergarten, Reading Recovery®, cross-age and peer tutoring opportunities, Aiming High and enrichment were provided.

▶ Horizon Middle School continued its three-year school improvement process in conducting its own staff development using building experts and applying learning directly to the classroom in the literacy area. Funding was provided by the Gates' Foundation.

▶ Our community stayed involved with their schools. Over 145,000 hours of volunteer time was provided to schools this year.



Central Elementary School was the Pizza Hut Grand Prize winner in the Book-It Program.

District Mission & Goals

Ferndale School District, in partnership with families and the larger community, will educate each student to develop the knowledge, skills and character necessary to lead a self-reliant, socially responsible life.

The Board of Directors adopted this mission in July 1999. Also, to support the mission, the board identified nine core beliefs (not prioritized). The mission statement continues to be a work in progress.

- All students can learn.
- Instruction and curriculum will be consistent with the Washington Essential Learning requirements.
- Clearly communicated high expectations are essential for students to learn.
- Our methods of instruction will strive to recognize and respond to individual learning styles.
- Both children and adults need an environment that is safe, physically and emotionally, to be able to learn and work.
- We provide an environment for all staff that encourages growth and professional responsibility.
- Education is also about knowing truth, beauty and goodness.
- The values that we live and teach include caring for others, honesty, fairness, responsibility, value of work and respect for self and others.
- We value our diverse community as we work toward common goals.

Nine major goals have been identified for districtwide improvement. These goals encompass the following areas:

- Clear and Shared Focus
- High Standards and Expectations
- Effective School Leadership
- Supportive Learning Environment
- Focused Professional Development
- High Level of Community and Parent Involvement
- High Level of Collaboration and Communication
- Frequent Monitoring of Teaching and Learning
- Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Aligned with Standards

These goals incorporate elements schools can do to ensure high student performance for all students. They form the basis of the school improvement planning efforts and staff development activities.

Since Washington State has common goals for which students and educators are held accountable, Ferndale School District is able to align its efforts in developing higher academic standards. The three basic tenets which guide the district's work include:

- Expect more, get more;
- Teach and learn the basics—plus; and
- Partnerships of parents, teachers, students, businesses and communities working together.

In addition to finding more effective ways to measure whether schools are preparing students to meet these effective practices, the district continues to carefully identify and implement best practices and develop successful programs for our students. Based on district goals and structured by district policy, long-range planning combined with site-based decision making enable our schools to develop programs and implement innovative classroom practices to meet the needs of all students.

District Mission & Goals

2002-2005 Goals

The Board of Directors has developed a planning document incorporating statewide goals for educational improvement. Major topics included in the document completed last year include:

Goal 1 Clear and Shared Focus—Everybody knows where they are going and why. The vision is shared—everybody is involved. The vision is developed from common beliefs and values, creating a consistent focus.

Goal 2 High Standards and Expectations—Teachers and staff are committed to ensuring that all students can reach mastery levels. There is recognition of barriers for some students to overcome, but the barriers are not insurmountable. Students become engaged in an ambitious and rigorous course of study.

Goal 3 Effective School Leadership—Effective leadership is required to implement change processes within the school. This leadership takes many forms. Principals often play this role, but so do teachers and other staff, including those in the district office. Effective leaders advocate, nurture, and sustain a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

Goal 4 Supportive Learning Environment—The school has a safe, civil, healthy and intellectually stimulating learning environment. Students feel respected and connected with the staff and are engaged in learning. Instruction is personalized and small learning environments increase student contact with teachers.

Goal 5 High Level of Community and Parent Involvement—There is a sense that all educational stakeholders have a responsibility to educate students, not just the teachers and staff in schools. Parents, as well as businesses, social service agencies and community colleges/universities all play a vital role in this effort.

Goal 6 High Levels of Collaboration and Communication—There is constant collaboration and communication between and among teachers of all grades. Everybody is involved and connected, including parents and members of the community, to solve problems and create solutions.

Goal 7 Frequent Monitoring of Teaching and Learning—Teaching and learning are continually adjusted based on frequent monitoring of student progress and needs. A variety of assessment procedures are used. The results of the assessment are used to improve student performances and also to improve the instructional program.

Goal 8 Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Aligned with Standards—Curriculum is aligned with the state Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs). Research-based materials and teaching and learning strategies are implemented. There is a clear understanding of the assessment system—what is measured in various assessments and how it is measured.

Goal 9 Focused Professional Development—Professional development for all educators is aligned with the school's and district's common focus, objectives and high expectations. It is ongoing and based on high need areas.

Business Partnerships

Business partnerships with Ferndale School District provide valuable services to students in the district in a variety of ways. Students receive up-to-date information about the expectations and requirements of the business world and business executives provide essential information regarding the latest advances in technology and the world of work.

Twenty-five to thirty businesses participate in the annual career fair at Ferndale High School. Students attending Ferndale High School are afforded opportunities as job shadows and training is offered through community programs such as Health Care Services.

Important business contributions have included the sponsorship of local school district competitions. Businesses such as Chemco, McDonalds and Cost Cutter Foods have provided support to help defray the cost of preparing students to demonstrate their higher level math skills in local, regional and state competition.

The district and area businesses have worked together to create extended learning opportunities for students through the popular Summer Enrichment Program and a Summer Academic Program which was offered again to students in grades six, seven and eight. A wide variety of learning opportunities are available to students thanks to the contributions of local businesses.

Each year, the Board of Directors publicly recognizes a business that has substantially contributed toward the district's education program. The 2003-04 Business of the Year Award was given to Alcoa Primary Metals for its assistance with: leadership training for administrators, internships for teachers planning to become principals, assistance for teachers on special assignments, assistance for schools participating in school improvement planning and technical, assistance projects, math lab resources, defibrillators, assistance with Ferndale High School's vocational and fine arts programs

The *Record-Journal* annually sponsors the Golden Apple Award which honors outstanding teachers in education. This past year, teacher Carolyn Jonson was the honored recipient of the award.



Ferndale School District Superintendent Roger Lehnert (left) and district Instructional Services Director Jim Gibson (right) present the Business of the Year Award to Alcoa Primary Metals Plant Manager Mike Rousseau.



Mr. Norm Mack, Manager of Ferndale Cost Cutter, (second from right) presents checks to school principals from the Cash Back for Schools Program.

Haggen and community members supported the district through the School Bucks Program. Cost Cutter and community members supported the district through the Cash Back for Schools Program.

The Gates' Foundation was instrumental in assisting the district development of the Early College Program and Windward High School.

Alcoa/Intalco Works made substantial contributions to the district in the areas of administrative and teacher leadership training, school improvement activities, and assistance with curriculum improvement efforts.

We thank each and every business in our community for helping us *Make a Difference* in our students' lives.

Your Safe Schools

Ferndale schools are like all schools in that they represent a cross section of today's society. Students come to schools with a variety of attitudes, values, cultural backgrounds and ideas about responsibility. We are a nation that respects the rights of individuals, including students, to have differing opinions and values. Therefore, when students are mixed together on school campuses, sometimes conflicts do arise.

Student safety is a major concern for all. Because of incidents which have happened at some schools, our federal and state legislators have passed laws prohibiting bullying, dangerous weapons and firearms on school property. In the summer of 2002, your schools' Board of Directors adopted Board Policy No. 3207, Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying. The policy prohibits any intentional written, verbal or physical act that: • physically harms a student or damages the student's property; or • has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education; or • is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or • has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

If a student engages in bullying behavior, it is first investigated by the school principal or his/her designee. If it is determined that bullying did take place, disciplinary consequences will be imposed on the student. If a student, parent, guardian or staff member believes that more extensive investigation is appropriate, that person should put the complaint in writing to the assistant superintendent who will further investigate the complaint. Disciplinary consequences range from contacting parents/guardians to suspension and expulsion and/or referral to juvenile authorities depending upon the severity of the incident.

In the fall of 1993, your Board of Directors adopted Board Policy No. 4315, Regulation of Dangerous Weapons on School Premises. These laws and board policy specifically and clearly state that dangerous weapons and/or firearms will not be allowed on school property. State law says:



1. If a student brings a dangerous weapon to school, he/she may be expelled. Dangerous weapons include, but are not limited to, nun-chu-ka sticks, throwing stars, air guns, physical irritants such as mace or tear gas, sling shots, metal knuckles or knives. This means school administrators have some discretion regarding the discipline imposed on the student who brings such a weapon to school.
2. If a student acts with a desire to harm others and displays an instrument that appears or looks like a firearm on school property, they may be suspended up to one school year.
3. If a student brings a firearm to school, he/she will be expelled for not less than one school year. A firearm is a weapon or device from which a projectile may be fired by an explosive such as gunpowder. Expelled means the student cannot return to a public school in the state during the expulsion period.

4. As explained above, administrators do not have any flexibility regarding discipline for bringing a firearm to school. The law says that the student will be expelled.

In summary, Ferndale School District requests that all parents help their children understand that bullying and possession of a dangerous weapon are behaviors that a person could feel endangered by. Parents, please talk with your children about bullying and not bringing dangerous weapons, look-alike firearms or firearms of any kind to school and help us keep all students safe from harm.