



Serving the Communities of Ferndale, Lummi Island, Custer, Lummi Reservation and North Bellingham.

FERNDALE SCHOOLS

Winter 2011-12

Replacement Levy on February ballot

Your dollars and your community

Ferndale School Board has placed a replacement basic education levy issue on the February 14, 2012, ballot. The levy replaces the existing levy which expires at the end of 2012. Voters will have the opportunity to decide how they want to spend their local tax dollars.

Board members decided to run a four year levy in order to facilitate long-range planning and to save election costs. While board members know this is a lot to expect of their community during tough times, they also realize it is the only way they can mitigate, to some degree, the severe

financial reductions our district (and most others) has experienced during the past few years. Even though the district can't make up all of the revenue it stands to lose from the state (and also the federal government), a maximum local levy, if it passes, will help the district maintain quality education for students in Ferndale by preserving more of the jobs of our district educators and support staff.

The members of the board recognize their paramount duty is to ensure the best possible education for the young people of our community.

See more levy info, pgs. 4-5



Cascadia Elementary School third grader students Hailee Leunberger and Meghan Brower (l to r)

District to move sixth grade to middle school, close an elementary school

District enrollment declining, funding decreasing

PUBLIC FORUM

Which district elementary school should be closed? Plan to attend and share your thoughts with the school board.

January 24, 7 p.m.,
Eagleridge Elementary School Cafeteria
2651 Thornton Road, Ferndale

Since receiving recommendations from the Facility Advisory Committee last spring to move sixth grade from the elementary school level to the middle school level, and subsequently closing one of the district's elementary schools, Ferndale School Board has been deliberating on what's best for the students in the district

while also being good stewards of district funds. With district enrollment declining and with depleting dollars for schools' repairs, the status quo cannot continue.

At its November meeting, board members voted unanimously to accept FACs recommendation.

The move of sixth grade creates middle schools consist-

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District's energy conservation results in national ENERGY STAR recognition

Ferndale School District received the prestigious ENERGY STAR Leader recognition from the federal government's ENERGY STAR Program. The district is in the top 25% of all

School District Superintendent Linda Quinn. *Our energy conservation efforts are saving taxpayer dollars while also helping protect our local environment. Since our district began partnering with Energy Education on a serious energy conservation program we have saved \$872,148 and the environmental impact is equal to removing 622 cars from our roads for one year or planting 88,614 trees in our community. We are very proud of our conservation success and honored to be recognized by ENERGY STAR.*

The cost of utilities is the second largest budget line-item for Ferndale School District, and the prices for electricity, natural gas, heating oil and water have been steadily increasing. To combat these rising energy and utility costs, the district entered into a partnership with Energy Education to implement a comprehensive organizational behavior-driven energy conservation program throughout all its buildings and campuses. Energy Education guarantees the conservation program will save taxpayer dollars. Since the program was first implemented,

Ferndale School District has saved 21% on its energy and utility costs.

Our students, staff and teachers embrace the energy conservation program, according to Superintendent Quinn. Each of us can make a difference through energy conservation, because our people are using more energy, our school buildings are using less, Quinn continued. We all play a part in the daily effort to improve the environment and save money district-wide. There are dozens and dozens of changes, large and small, that we have implemented that are saving energy without affecting our comfort or educational goals. We have all gained a real sense of accomplishment from this ENERGY STAR recognition.

For more information: Tony Torretta, Energy Education Manager, 360.383.9347 Mark Deebach, Executive Director for Business & Support Services, 383.9203



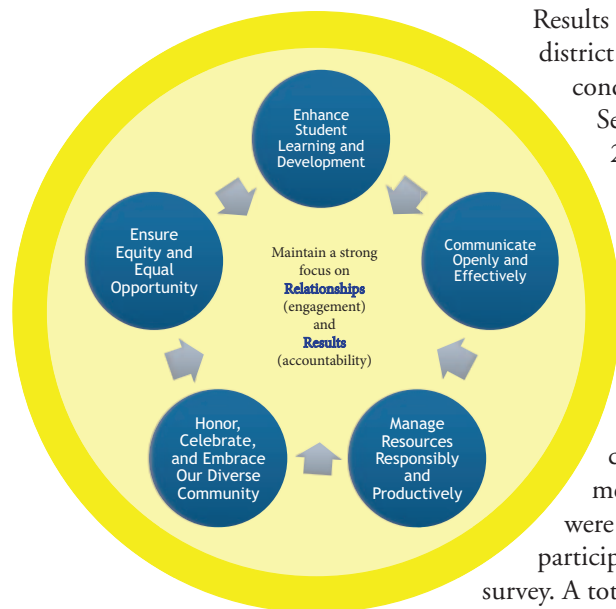
School board receives Energy Star Award. Above seated: School Board Members Kevin Erickson and Hugh Foulke; standing l to r: Superintendent Linda Quinn, School Board Members Lee Anne Riddle, Andrew McLaurin, Stuart McKay; Energy Education Manager Tony Torretta and Energy Education, Inc. Vice President Ed Graff

districts nationwide in energy conservation and therefore is an ENERGY STAR Leader.

We are extremely pleased to receive this recognition from ENERGY STAR, said Ferndale

Fall survey results released

School Board Commitments



Results of the district survey conducted September 27-October 14, 2011, are now available. All district staff, parents and community members were invited to participate in the survey. A total of 1,315

individuals responded to the survey. The survey gathered information about people's thoughts on moving sixth grade to middle school, closing an elementary school, priorities for the district and school board strategic commitments.

Overall, a majority of respondents supported the recommendation to move sixth grade to the middle school and close an elementary school.

In the area of priorities, staff favored smaller class sizes while parents and non-parents were nearly evenly split between a broad range of offerings and

smaller class sizes for students.

Respondents also showed support of the board's five commitments with commitment 1, improving students learning and development, as the most important.

Additional and more detailed information can be found on the district's Facility Advisory Committee webpage at <http://www.ferndale.wednet.edu/drupal/?q=node/1727>.

Paper copies of the survey are available by calling 360.383.9207.

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Teachers garner national certification

This year, two Ferndale School District teachers received their national certifications: Kelly Ulrich, Central Elementary School, and Mike Brown, Horizon Middle School.

Each certified teacher receives an additional yearly stipend from the state in the amount of \$5,000.

In addition, each year the district's community partner ConocoPhillips recognizes newly

certified teachers with \$500 each to be used for the purchase of instructional materials to enhance the curriculum for students in their classrooms.

Ferndale School District has 31 nationally certified teachers.

Certification is a yearlong process in which applicants are required to complete four portfolio entries, three of which are classroom based, including videotaping and examples of

student work. The fourth entry requires teachers to demonstrate their work with students' families, community and professional community. The entire process takes about 350 hours to complete.

For more information:
Ann Fulton, National Teacher Certification Program Coordinator, 360.383.9605

Student quilters *sewing* up the pieces

Waiting list to join Vista's Quilt Club

While meeting one day with a student in her office, Vista Middle School Principal Mary Kanikeberg was asked if she would teach the student to quilt. From there, everything snow-balled. Thus, the Vista Quilt Club was born. In about a couple days' time,

Ms. Kanikeberg had 36 kids signed up for the class.

The first eight-week session of 13 students began October. Students met with Kanikeberg to discuss fabric and theme choices for their quilts. Kits were assembled and students began sewing five inch squares together.

About eleven volunteers, many quilters themselves, helped teach and guide the students. They also donated fabric and supplies. In addition, Vista PTSSO, local community members, local quilt shops and Quality Sewing & Vacuum made considerable contributions to the club.

The story doesn't end there. World-renowned musician and contemporary quiltmaker Ricky Tims contacted Kanikeberg after reading the story about the club published by *The Bellingham Herald*.

Tims and Alex Anderson, quilter, author and television show host, are partners of The Quilt Show and the magazine



Vista Middle School Student Noah Souriall pieces his five inch squares into rows.



Vista Middle School Student Melissa Zehnder completed her quilt which is a gift for her grandmother.

The Quilt Life. For the June 2012 issue of the magazine, Tims is developing a story about student quilt clubs and hopes to include Vista's Quilt Club as part of that article.

For more information
Mary Kanikeberg
Vista Middle School Principal
360.383-9370
mary.kanikeberg@fsd.k12.wa.us



LEVY February 14, 2012, Facts

Levies pay for day-to-day educational programs and operations, and make up the difference between the cost of educating students and the funding received from the state and federal governments

What's on the ballot?

A four-year replacement basic education levy for 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016. The levy replaces the existing levy which expires at the end of 2012. It is not a new tax.

How much will the levy cost?

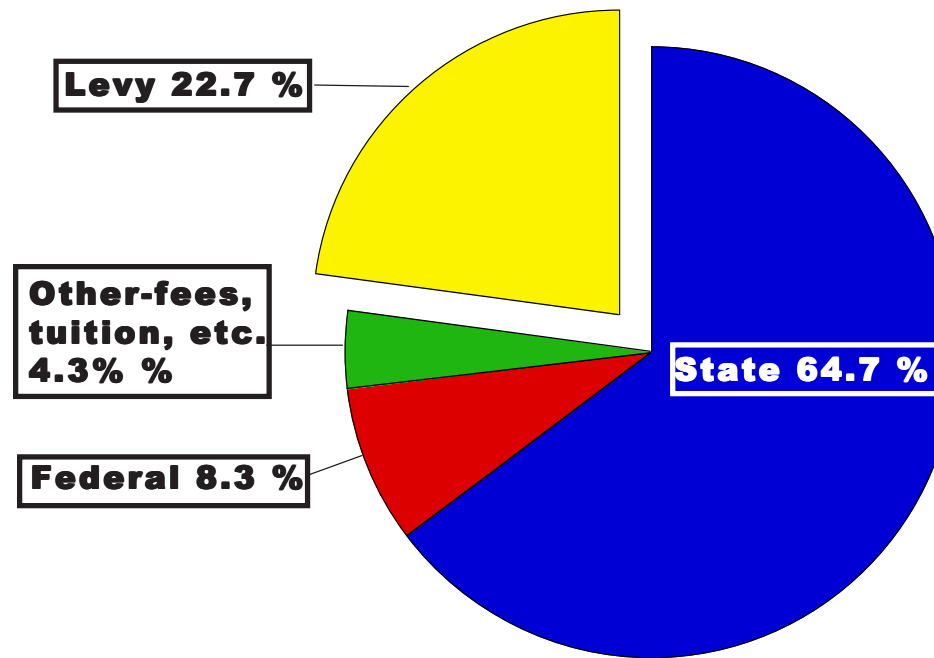
Current Levy Amount	\$11,280,000
Proposed 2013	\$13,000,000
Proposed 2014	\$13,500,000
Proposed 2015	\$14,500,000
Proposed 2016	\$15,500,000

How will the levy affect the school tax rate?

Projected tax rates are based on the total assessed value of the property in the district. When property values increase, the tax rate goes down. When property values decrease, the tax rate goes up. Estimates are reflected in the projected tax rate below. Rate is per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

Projected 2013 Rate	\$3.52	For example, a home valued at \$200,000 would see an estimated increase in total school taxes of \$80.93 per year or \$6.74 per month or 22 cents per day.
Projected 2014 Rate	\$3.45	
Projected 2015 Rate	\$3.43	
Projected 2016 Rate	\$3.53	

Nearly one dollar in four for educating our students comes from the levy.



Don't schools receive more money when property taxes increase?

No. Once voters approve the bond or levy amount, the amount becomes fixed. Taxes collected by the school district do not increase after they are set in place, regardless of changes in assessed property value.

What programs does the levy support?

The levy pays for essential learning services not covered by the state and federal education dollars: staff (teachers, counselors, nurses, secretaries, classroom assistants), textbooks and learning materials, athletics and activities, transportation, and much more.

In order to maintain programs, voters must approve renewal of the expiring levy. If not approved, the annual operating budget would be reduced by about \$11,500,000 (or 23%), resulting in fewer teachers, larger class sizes and/or reduction or elimination of educational programs. The levy equates to 33.5 teaching staff and 82 support staff.

Reductions in state and federal funding for schools expected.

State and federal dollars do not fully pay for the day to day operations of Ferndale schools. To fund the gap, the district relies on local taxpayer support through levies to meet the educational needs of our students. With voter approval of the levy, Ferndale School District currently receives state "levy equalization" funding which reduces the amount collected from local taxpayers.

State lawmakers are facing a budget deficit. This will result in funding reductions for K-12 education. Although the level of reductions is unknown, the district is anticipating the loss of:

- Local Effort Assistance (\$500,000)
- I-728 (\$2.4 million)
- K-4 Enhancement (\$470,000)
- Salary Reduction (\$370,000)
- Other Reductions (unknown)



Who can vote and how to vote?

Persons eligible to vote are citizens of the United States, at least 18 years old by election day, and legal residents of Washington State.

Voting is done on an ALL MAIL-IN BALLOT. Ballots will be sent from the Whatcom County Auditor's office the week of January 23. Ballots must be postmarked by 8:00 p.m. on election day, Tuesday, February 14.

Ballots may also be dropped off at Ferndale City Hall, 2222 Main Street, and Whatcom County Courthouse, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham.

Is there a tax exemption for senior citizens and persons with disabilities?

Qualifying senior citizens and persons with disabilities may be exempt. For more information, call the Whatcom County Assessor's Office at 676-6790.

How many votes are needed?

Passage of the levy issue requires a 50.1% voter approval rate by those who vote in the election.

For additional bond and levy information, please go to www.ferndale.wednet.edu or call the Executive Director of Business and Support services at 360.383.9203

The district encourages members of the community to vote in all elections.

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School board changes Two returning incumbents, two new members take office

As a result of the November 8 elections, Kevin Erickson and Stuart McKay continue their service on the school board for the next four years. Also, Hugh Foulke was elected and replaces Mr. Tim Ballew in District No. 3.

Erickson, McKay and Foulke were sworn into office December 6.

Foulke is new to the board. He is a retired Ferndale School District teacher who taught at the high school level. Mr. Foulke is a private consultant.

Joining them is Andrew McLaurin who was appointed by the board in October to fill the unexpired term of Troy Clark who resigned his position in late August. Mr. McLaurin will serve until November 2013 at which time he would need to seek reelection. McLaurin previously served on the board from 2008 to 2010. McLaurin and his family relocated to Ferndale ten years ago from the state of North Carolina. He has five

children who attended or are attending Ferndale schools. McLaurin served on the district bond and levy committees. Mr. McLaurin works in the health care industry.

January is School Board Appreciation Month so board members will be recognized for their service at their January 26 meeting.



Superintendent Quinn swears into office Andrew McLaurin as director of district no. 5.



Superintendent Linda Quinn swears into office school board members Hugh Foulke, Stuart McKay and Kevin Erickson (l to r).

Cooperative agreement renewed with Lummi Nation

Since 1998, Ferndale School District and Lummi Nation have cooperatively worked together to support the education for all students in the district.

This year, representatives from the district and nation met to review and make necessary updates to the agreement to make sure it reflected current practices.

At the board meeting held September 29, the two parties formally renewed the agreement.

At the signing was an original member of the board when the cooperative agreement was initially implemented, Mr. Bernie Thomas. Thomas was a member of the board in 1998. He is currently the Lummi Nation Schools Education Director.

The district and Lummi Nation will continue their relationship to provide essential programs for all students.



Pictured above (l to r): Lummi Nation Education Board Chair Jana Finkbonner, Lummi Indian Business Council Chairman Clifford Cultee and Ferndale School Board President Lee Anne Riddle sign the cooperative agreement between the district and Lummi Nation.



Pictured left (l to r): Lummi Indian Business Council Chairman Clifford Cultee, Lummi Nation Schools Education Director Bernie Thomas, Lummi Nation Education Board Chair Jana Finkbonner, Ferndale School District Superintendent Linda Quinn and Ferndale School Board President Lee Anne Riddle

Kindergarten registration set for Ferndale schools

Register during the week of March 5-9

Parents with children who are planning to enter kindergarten in Ferndale School District

in the fall of 2012 are to register during the week of March 5-9. Registration hours are 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. daily.

Parents should register children at the school

they will be attending. If unsure of which school that is, please call 360/383-9207 or 383-9236.

For planning purposes, it is important that students register during the March 5th week. Placement of students in their neighborhood school in kindergarten is on a first come, first serve basis.

To be eligible to register for kindergarten, a child must be five years of age prior to midnight on August 31, 2012. The child's birth date will be verified at the time of enrollment by birth certificate, baptismal certificate or a

hospital birth registration. A record of immunizations, as required by state law will also be verified prior to the first day of school attendance.

If you have any questions regarding registration, you may call the school your child will be attending:

Beach Elementary, 383-9440
Cascadia Elementary, 383-2300
Central Elementary, 383-9600
Custer Elementary, 383-9500
Eagleridge Elementary, 383-9700
Mountain View Elementary, 383-9650
Skyline Elementary, 383-9450

2011-12 School Year Calendar at a Glance

February

1	Semester Work Day No School
17-20	Presidents' Day Weekend No School
29	K-12 Early Release

March

9	K-6 Early Release
21	K-6 Early Release
22-23	K-12 Early Release
28	K-12 Early Release

April

2-6	Spring Break, No School
25	K-12 Early Release

May

9	K-12 Early Release
25	K-12 Early Release
28	Memorial Day, No School
30-31	FHS Early Release

June

1	K-6 Early Release
6	K-12 Early Release
9	FHS Graduation
18	Last day of school
19-22	Possible Inclement Weather Make-up Days

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Superintendent's message

children we serve. It is our responsibility to focus on the quality of the outcomes that result from our decisions and efforts.

You can find more about our Strategic Commitments and the work we are doing to fulfill them on the Ferndale School District website at www.ferndale.wednet.edu.

It continues to be my honor to serve as superintendent of your school district. Please do not hesitate to contact me if

you have questions or ideas. I value every opportunity to interact with members of the community. Above all, I remain committed to serving the children who attend your schools.

Best wishes for a positive and productive 2012.

Linda B. Quinn, Superintendent

continued from page one

School closure

ing of grades 6, 7 and 8 and elementary schools of K-5 in the district.

A decision about which elementary school will be closed is anticipated to be made by March 2012. The changes will be implemented for the start of the 2013-2014 school year.

During the next 18 months, many things will need to be accomplished to ensure a smooth transition for students,

parents and staff.

The first order of business will be a public forum held January 24. All community members are invited to attend. Information will be provided and discussion will be held about which elementary school to close.

For more information visit www.ferndale.wednet.edudrupal/?q=node/1727



Members sought to serve on Multicultural Advisory Committee

The committee will review how the district honors, celebrates and embraces our diverse community. All staff, parents, high school students and community members are invited to apply.

Applications available online at www.ferndale.wednet.edu, then click on "New Committees Forming" on the left-hand sidebar.

For more information contact Dr. Michael Berres at 360.383.9221



Superintendent Quinn

At the beginning of this school year, members of the Ferndale School Board and I met for an entire day to review the past year, to assess areas of progress and areas of greatest need, and to establish future directions for our school district. We also studied the feedback we had received on the community-wide satisfaction survey we administered last spring.

As a result of our research and dialogue, School Board members revised their previous goals and rephrased them as five commitments. For each of these five commitments, we have identified specific actions we will

undertake during the current school year and also indicators of progress.

Ferndale School Board's five commitments provide direction and help chart the course of all of our work in the school district. They are:

1. To Enhance Student Learning and Development

We recognize that nurturing the development and maximizing the learning of all children entrusted to our care is our highest mission. Therefore, everything we do must be focused on achieving these ends.

2. To Communicate Openly and Effectively

We know that good communication is vital to the success of any organization. For our public school system, regular, transparent, inclusive, two-way communication is critical at all levels – with students, staff, parents and community members.

3. To Manage Resources Responsibly and Productively

We believe the way we allocate resources significantly impacts our ability to serve the growth and learning needs of children. Therefore, we are dedicated to the careful use of all resources — people, time, facilities, and money, along with other less tangible but essential resources like trust, vision, ideas, energy, and hope.

4. To Honor, Celebrate, and Embrace Our Diverse Community

We understand that our public schools belong to our entire community, and our diversity makes us stronger. To capitalize on this strength, we are dedicated to energizing and integrating all aspects of our community in support of our children and their learning.

5. To Safeguard Equity and Equal Opportunity

We believe our district cannot be truly excellent if it is not also equitable. In a democratic society built on values of fairness and justice, the concept of educational excellence must encompass not only high-

quality educational opportunities for all students, but also high-level outcomes for all students.

Also, school board members believe that each of the five commitments must be carried out with two critical ideas always in mind. These two important focus areas, which we strive to put at the center of all of our work, are **Relationships and Results**.

A focus on **Relationships** means we acknowledge the importance of the human dimension in everything we do. We are first and foremost a people business. Every statistic, every test score, every number represents an individual child, a particular teacher, a staff member, and/or the family members who care about them.

A focus on **Results** means that we understand our obligation to use the authority and resources entrusted to us to achieve the best possible education for all of the

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School Board of Directors

Ms. Lee Anne Riddle, President
Mr. Stuart McKay
Dr. Kevin Erickson
Mr. Andrew McLaurin
Mr. Hugh Foulke

Superintendent/Board Secretary

Mrs. Linda Quinn

Editor

Tammy Bengen

FERNDALE SCHOOLS is a newsletter for Ferndale School District community members. Its purpose is to improve understanding of school programs. Questions or comments may be directed to the administration office, P.O. Box 698, 6041 Vista Drive, Ferndale, Washington 98248, 360/383-9207.

Visit the district website at
<http://www.fsd.k12.wa.us>

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Ferndale School District is an equal opportunity employer. The district is committed to providing equal opportunity for all persons without regard to race, color, creed, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, age, or the presence of any non-job related sensory, mental or physical disability.

Our Mission

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.