

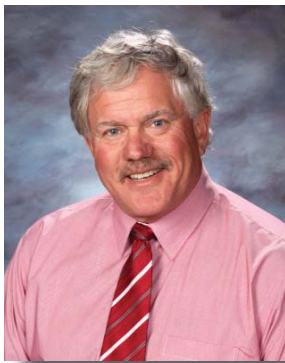
# WEST VALLEY SCHOOLS TOMORROW

8902 Zier Road • Yakima, WA 98908-9299 • (509)972-6000

A NEWSLETTER FOR WEST VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT RESIDENTS

OCTOBER 2011

## *Superintendent's Message*



**Dr. Michael Brophy**

We are off to a great start to what promises to be an outstanding 2011-2012 school year. I have appreciated the opportunity to attend many West Valley School District events, and I must say that I continue to be impressed with the quality of staff throughout the district, as well as with the outstanding attendance of parents at school events. From the open houses early on, to

school events, the level of parent participation is nothing short of outstanding. We are proud of the trust the community has placed in the District and will work to not only maintain, but to build upon the trust you have placed in us.

One area that I would like to highlight is the recent results we have received from the Measures of Student Progress (MSP) and High School Proficiency Exams (HSPE) for the spring of 2011. Our students performed quite admirably, continuing a trend that has been a source of pride for the West Valley School District. This demonstrates aligned curriculum to the standards, focused instruction by our teaching staff, and an ongoing commitment to excellence that shines through from our parents and West Valley community. Specific highlights from our 2011 testing are showcased in another section of this newsletter.

While we take time to celebrate the accomplishments of our students on the MSP and HSPE, I would like to emphasize that we are focusing on four major beliefs that guide a mission of "maximizing the potential of each and every student." These beliefs are Quality Customer Focus, Community Responsibility, Continual Improvement, and maintaining an Instructional Focus.

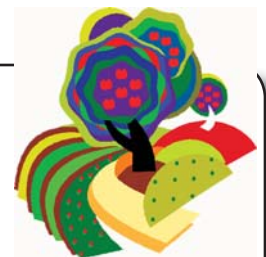
Quality Customer Focus means keeping directly focused on our primary concern - the student. It also means serving our parents as you monitor the progress of your students. This includes providing *prompt feedback* to you as you seek information about your child.

Community Responsibility means that we fully understand the enormous responsibility we face in educating every child in the West Valley School District. It also implies that we must have a reciprocal relationship in service with and to our community. As a school district, we will actively engage in the improvement of the West Valley community.

Continual Improvement is a commitment to never accept the status quo, strive to continue serving our students so that they can graduate and compete with students from any high school. Continual Improvement means monitoring data so that we can make informed decisions and better guide our instructional programs.

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## Superintendent's Message (Continued)

Finally, Instructional Focus is just that, a focus on the improvement of instruction in each and every classroom in the West Valley School District. It is an understanding that we can all improve in what we do, better serving the children who depend on us each and every day. Please let me know if you do not feel as though we are meeting the needs of your child around these four beliefs.

The continuing budget issues in Olympia remain a challenge for all of us in the K-12 arena. With the continued economic condition in Washington State still not improving, an additional \$1.4 billion shortfall

over the next two years has been projected, bringing more challenges to what we have already faced in the past. Regardless of the state financial outlook, you can be sure we will continue to have high expectations for our students and work to do whatever it takes to maximize their potential as learners. In a related issue, we will be recommending to the Board of Directors that they place a Maintenance and Operations Levy on the ballot this February to take the place of the M & O Levy that will expire at the end of 2012. If anyone is interested in learning more about this election, or are interested in serving on an M & O Levy Committee, please call me at my office - 972-6005.

# 2011-2012 Budget

Over the last several of years, the state legislators had a difficult time balancing the State's budget. Several state programs have been either cut or reduced. In most cases, the state reduced school district funding and offset some of their budget cuts with federal stimulus money. Now that the federal stimulus funding is exhausted, the District must rely on levy support, federal programs, and its operating fund balance to maintain programs and activities, which help our students meet state and district academic standards.

Some simple facts about the 2011-12 budget:

Budget = \$43 million		Projected Enrollment = 4,721 students	
<b>Budgeted revenues:</b>		<b>Budgeted expenditures:</b>	
Local Taxes	\$ 6,809,316    16%	Certificated Salaries	\$18,470,943    42%
Local Non-Tax	1,374,000    3%	Classified Salaries	6,798,463    16%
State General Purpose	26,062,246    62%	Employee Benefits & Payroll Taxes	9,032,271    21%
State Special Purpose	5,165,858    12%	Teaching Materials & Supplies	4,192,090    10%
Federal Funding	<u>2,928,906</u> 7%	Purchased Services	3,981,846    9%
Total Budgeted Revenues	<b>\$42,340,326    100%</b>	Travel	82,700
		Capital Outlay	<u>917,906</u> 2%
		Total Budgeted Expenditures	<b>\$43,476,219    100%</b>



# Student Assessment Scores

Last spring was the first time that state tests for Algebra and Geometry were administered in Washington State. These tests, called End-of-Course Assessments (EOCs), were a change from the comprehensive math test that was administered in the past. Every student in an Algebra or Geometry class in Washington State was administered the new state test.

Students from West Valley demonstrated outstanding achievement on these new tests. At West Valley Junior High School, 40 students in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade took the Algebra test. Every student--100%--met the state standard on the test!

At the Freshman Campus, 71% of students in Algebra classes met the state standard while 91% of students in Geometry classes met the state standard.

Dr. Peter Finch, Assistant Superintendent for Learning and Teaching, said, "When I first saw the tests, I was little nervous because I thought they looked difficult. To have 100% of our students in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Algebra classes meet the state standard is truly outstanding."

Dr. Finch continued, "Our teachers have worked together to coordinate lesson plans and share best practices. We have focused on math instruction across every school, and we are seeing improvements in student learning."

In other content areas, students from West Valley continue to score above the state average at most grade levels. The state tests for Writing are administered at Grades 4, 7, and 10. Students from West Valley schools scored above the state average at every grade. In the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, 88% of the students in West Valley met the state standard.

Last spring, the state legislature modified graduation requirements. For the Class of 2015 and beyond -- students who are currently in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and younger -- students must meet the state standard on the comprehensive tests for Reading and Writing and the course specific tests, the End-of-Course Assessments, for Algebra, Geometry, and Biology.

Next spring will be the first time that the state End-of-Course Assessment for Biology will be administered. All students in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade in West Valley are enrolled in Biology. Local levy funds have been used to purchase new lab equipment and new textbooks for Biology students to ensure that they have the most up-to-date resources to help them to meet this new graduation requirement. Similar to the work that math teachers have done in the district, biology teachers at the Freshman Campus have used collaboration time to coordinate lesson plans, develop

common assessments and share effective instructional practices.

Opportunities for retakes of the EOCs will be offered twice a year, in January and May. Students from the Class of 2013 and 2014 must meet the state standard on one math test: either Algebra or Geometry. These students -- currently sophomores and juniors at the high school -- will need to meet local credit requirements for science (3.0 credits) but they will not be required to pass the Biology EOC.

Opportunities to retake the High School Proficiency Exams for Reading and Writing will be offered twice a year, in March and August.

Reading		
Percent meeting standard		
	WVSD	State
Grade 3	80	73
Grade 4	76	67
Grade 5	69	68
Grade 6	74	71
Grade 7	60	56
Grade 8	66	69
Grade 10 (HS)	83	83
Math		
Percent meeting standard		
	WVSD	State
Grade 3	63	62
Grade 4	64	59
Grade 5	58	61
Grade 6	57	59
Grade 7	62	57
Grade 8	60	50
Writing		
Percent meeting standard		
	WVSD	State
Grade 4	72	61
Grade 7	81	71
Grade 10 (HS)	88	86
Science		
Percent meeting standard		
	WVSD	State
Grade 5	53	56
Grade 8	65	62
Grade 10 (HS)	54	50
Algebra		
Percent meeting standard		
	WVSD	State
Grade 7	100	95
Grade 8	95	84
Grade 9	71	58
Grade 10	65	62
Grade 11	64	58
Grade 12	43	41
Geometry		
Percent meeting standard		
	WVSD	State
Grade 8	96	98
Grade 9	91	91
Grade 10	77	66
Grade 11	78	44
Grade 12	42	31



## West Valley Welcomes New Teachers



### Melody Adams

Moving to Yakima from Seattle, Melody Adams brings 6 years of teaching special education and more than 20 years in general education experience to her new position as Ahtanum Valley preschool teacher. Melody holds a Master's Degree in Teaching and Special Education. "My

focus has been on Autism and Social/Emotional Behaviors, but I am intrigued by the natural curiosities of all children and their unique abilities and views of the world," Adams explained. "For the past four years I have been teaching in an integrated special education classroom with kindergarten to 5th grade children. I believe all children have abilities, all children can learn and that all children develop and grow on their own unique timetables."

Her passion for children to meet their highest potential is evident when she said, "With patience, experience and time, each child will grow to be exceptional in their own right!"

After school hours you can find Melody spending time with her four children and three grandbabies. She loves attending her 12-year-old son's sporting events. She also likes to dabble in the arts, watch movies, read books, go to church and enjoy the great outdoors.

### Jennifer Bellamy

Jennifer Bellamy, WV High School's new Spanish teacher, grew up as an Air Force brat and spent several years living in Germany where her father was stationed. Her family later moved to Spokane where she graduated from Shadle Park High School.

"I have been studying Spanish for approximately ten years now, starting at Shadle Park and continuing at Spokane Falls Community College (Running Start - 2004). I fine-tuned my Spanish while touring and volunteering in Panama as a translator for church groups and medical teams and later as a guest speaker/trainer at several teacher training con-



ventions for an international publishing company."

At the age of 19, Jennifer also lived in Guatemala for several months as a nanny. All of these experiences conditioned her to experience different cultures and ultimately, led her to decide not to become a veterinarian and to proceed with a B.A. in Secondary Spanish Education and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages at Eastern Washington University in 2008. After graduation she moved to Goldendale and where she worked at Goldendale High and Middle Schools to structure the Spanish and ELL departments.

In 2009, Jennifer married a local Goldendalian. The couple welcomed their first child in November 2010.

Jennifer is passionate about teaching Spanish and believes that learning a foreign language is key to the success and development of the whole brain, person and a tool for future work/educational experiences. She feels today's youth can greatly benefit from learning about other cultures from others' perspectives.

"My goal is to teach each of my students the drive and desire to interact with others that are different and to understand that our differences are something to welcome rather than push away."



### Ronald Compton

Ronald Compton, Foundational Robotics teacher, is excited to start this brand new program at West Valley Junior High School.

Ronald attended Perry Technical Institute and in 1996 earned a degree in Instrumentation and Industrial Electronics. This training led him to attend

Central Washington University, where he graduated in 2011 with a B.S. in Industrial Technology Education. Ronald did his practicum with Master Teacher Denise Traplsi in Technology. During this time he has worked for nine years in the fields of instrumentation, biotechnology, pulp and paper and water treatment.

He admits, "I love technology and have to have the latest and greatest of everything!"

Ronald loves spending time with his wife and two children. Coming in second to his family is his love of teaching. "It is the most rewarding career I've ever had!"



**David Herron**

David Herron, West Valley Junior High Pre-engineering Teacher, was born in Bandon, Oregon and raised in Yakima. He became a sheet metal worker thirty years ago and was employed as an account manager for twenty-five years, working with construction companies.



“I invented a “Clip” and had it patented in 2003 ([www.patentstorm.us/patents/6622352.html](http://www.patentstorm.us/patents/6622352.html)).

For the past two years he has taught at Davis High School and is very excited to join West Valley School District.



**Carl Iverson**

Carl Iverson, West Valley Junior High science teacher, comes to the District with 19 years of teaching experience under his belt. Born in Othello and raised in Royal City, Carl was the youngest of seven children. Athletic, he played football, basketball and baseball in high school and was named to the 1985 All-State team.

After high school, he played basketball at YVCC, before taking a break to go on a two-year Mormon Mission in London, England. After returning home, he earned his Associates Degree from YVCC, a Bachelor of Science Degree from Central Washington University and a Master’s Degree from Heritage University.

Carl’s teaching career has taken him to Mabton (2 years), Royal City (3 years), Oroville (8 years), and Franklin Middle School in Yakima (6 years). Besides science, he has taught math and reading, as well as, coached basketball, football, baseball, fast-pitch and soccer. He has been named coach of the year seven times.

A family man, Carl is married to Karra and has four children. Isaac, the oldest, is currently on his Mormon mission to Brazil. Preston just graduated from high school. Cole is at WV High School, and

*Pursuant to Chapter 42.17 RCW, parents and other members of the public have the right to inspect and copy public records retained by the District, including records pertaining to employee discipline, unless the records are exempt from public disclosure under state law.*

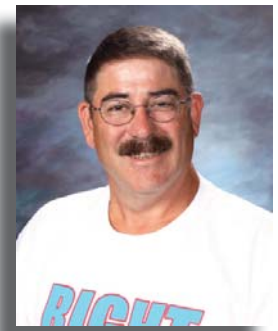
**School Board Meetings**

- October 10\* Wide Hollow Library
- October 24\*\* WVHS, Room 1245
- November 14\* WV Junior High Library
- November 28\*\* WVHS, Room 1245
- December 12\* Mountainview Library

\*Meetings Begin at 6:30 p.m.  
\*\*Meetings Begin at 7:00 p.m.

**Jeff LaBissoniere**

Jeff LaBissoniere comes to his Wood Tech teaching position at the high school with 30 years of experience in the woodworking industry. A Yakima native, he graduated from Eisenhower High School in 1978.



“I hope to share my knowledge of the trade to show students that woodworking can be an excellent lifelong hobby, as well as, a viable career path,” Jeff said.

Jeff has been married to his high school sweetheart, Leanne, for 31 years. She works as the Public Relations Director for Perry Technical Institute. “We have three grown daughters: Laura, a University of Washington graduate who works for a public relations agency in Seattle; Mary, a University of Washington graduate who works as an actuary for Liberty Mutual in Seattle; and Carmen, a student at Seattle Central Community College.”

Jeff enjoys golf, woodworking projects and traveling with his family to new and familiar places. As a side-note he said, “Interesting fact: My Dad, Buck, was a well-respected math teacher, coach and basketball official. I hope to carry on his tradition of teaching fundamental skills in a firm, fair and fun fashion.”



### Megan Mauch

Cottonwood Elementary School's new Speech Language Pathologist Megan Mauch, hails from Minnesota. She graduated with a Master's of Science Degree from Minnesota State University at Moorhead, Minn.

In 2001 she moved to the Yakima Valley and has worked in the Highland and Yakima School Districts, as well as local nursing homes.

For the past four years Megan has worked at Children's Village.

Married to her husband Brian for eight years, she notes that her house is full with their three boys. Her step-son Chase is currently a student at Perry Technical Institute. The couple's son Andrew just started kindergarten at Summitview Elementary School and their three-year-old is attending Mt. Olive's Sunshine child care.

Obviously keeping up with her family keeps her on the run and she's excited to attempt her first half marathon in October!

### Shelly Nagle

West Valley alumni, Shelly Nagle, spent fifteen years working as a registered/certified Dietitian/Diabetes Educator at Yakima Regional and Central Washington Endocrine Center, before taking on her new job as WV Junior High science teacher. She comes to West Valley from Eisenhower HS, where she taught biology and Physical science for four years. "I'm excited to be teaching in the WV District!" she said.

She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree from Central Washington University and a Master's in teaching from Heritage University.

Married to John Nagle, also a WV Alumni, the couple have three children, who currently attend West Valley Schools.

Outside of school, she loves skiing, Zumba, traveling, biking, and watching her children play a variety of sports including soccer, basketball, drill team, golf, baseball, etc. She enjoys volunteering for the Sun City Soccer Club, and Elks Junior Golf program.



### Jan Schafer

West Valley High School is fortunate to have this retire/rehire teacher, Jan Schafer, to lend her years of experience to the special education resource room at the high school. "I am looking forward to this school year and the challenges of mastering algebra with my students."

Embarking on her 36th year of teaching, Jan said, "I started out eons ago in Moses Lake and then moved to Selah School District where I taught for 28 years. My assignments have included grades 1-5, general, special education and high school level special education. After retiring from Selah, I spent the next 4 years at Toppenish, working in their high school special education department in math and acting as a special education specialist for the district."

Jan finds becoming a Ram again very familiar, since in high school the mascot for Ingraham High in Seattle was also a Ram. "I love the fact that West Valley has so many spirit t-shirts! It makes deciding what to wear a snap on Fridays!"

When not teaching or writing IEP's, Jan loves to go crabbing, fishing and riding her four-wheeler in the woods. GO RAMS!



**West Valley School District #208**  
8902 Zier Road • Yakima WA 98908  
(509)972-6000

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**West Valley Schools TOMORROW**  
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## Christopher Thomas

Chris Thomas has joined the West Valley High School music department this fall. He has a busy schedule with teaching jazz band II, percussion ensemble, concert band and guitar 1 at the Freshman Campus. Additionally, he teaches two sections of 5th grade

beginning band at WV Middle School. No stranger to West Valley, he did his student teaching at the high school in 2007 and over the years has worked with the Ram bands as a marching band instructor.

Christopher earned his Bachelor's Degree in Broad Area Music Education from Central Washington University in 2007. After teaching high school band for a year in Sedro-Woolley, WA, he returned to school, earning a Master's Degree in Music Education as a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Montana in Missoula, MT. He also taught middle school bands in Bellingham, WA, during the 2010-11 school year.

"As a musician, I have performed in the 2004 IAJE National Community College All-Star Big Band, The Missoula Symphony Orchestra, The Seattle Cascades Drum and Bugle Corps, The Barry Donahue Jazz Orchestra and numerous premier collegiate ensembles," Christopher said.

An accomplished musician, Christopher has been the co-conductor and president of the board for the Whatcom Wind Ensemble during their inaugural concert season in 2008. He also hosted the SJMEA Junior High Solo and Ensemble Contest in Bellingham.

Christopher has studied trumpet with Pete Kirkman, Jim Sisco, John Harbaugh, Dr. James Smart and Dr. Brendan McGlynn and has served as a brass instructor for the Cascades Drum and Bugle Corps for three years.

Besides his passion for music, Christopher finds time for hiking, biking and trying out new restaurants with friends. "I'm very happy enjoying my first fall teaching in the West Valley School District.

## Fall Concert Schedule

### West Valley Middle School Fall Choir Concert

Tuesday, October 25, 2011  
West Valley Junior High Auditorium  
7:00 p.m.  
(student call time 6:30 p.m.)

### West Valley High School Fall Choir Performance of "Trial by Jury"

a one act operetta by Gilbert & Sullivan  
Tuesday, November 1, 2011  
West Valley High School Auditorium  
7:00 p.m.  
(student call time 6:30 p.m.)

### West Valley High School Veteran's Day Assembly Performance

Thursday, November 10, 2011  
West Valley High School Auditorium  
During the day - TBD by Craig Lacy

### West Valley Junior High & West Valley Freshman Campus Fall Choir Performance

Tuesday, November 15, 2011  
West Valley Junior High Auditorium  
7:00 p.m.  
(student call time 6:30 p.m.)

### Statement of Compliance

The West Valley School District #208 complies with all federal and state rules and regulations and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability. This holds true for all students who are interested in participating in educational programs and/or extracurricular school activities, and for district employment and opportunities. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed to the school district's Title IX (RCW 28A.640) Officer and Section 504/ADA Coordinator, John King, 8902 Zier Road, Yakima, WA 98908 (509) 972-6016.



## Dumbledore's Army: West Valley Branch

Believe it or not, West Valley High School has an army of Harry Potter super-fans who have been reading the book series since elementary school and have formed an unofficial Harry Potter club.

“Austen Clement and I had the idea sophomore year to start one in chemistry, and when I asked our advisor what I had to do to form a Harry Potter Club, he flat said no, saying that there isn’t anything academic about it,” Kylie Glover, West Valley senior said. “We had just been assigned a persuasive letter to write for English and I decided to write a letter about how a Harry Potter Club would be so much more academic than, say, a Hacky Sack Club; there’s literature, film, sports and cooking all in one club,” she added.

The friends decided to form an unofficial organization and asked Mrs. Teske to be their advisor. She agreed and provided a storage closet to hold meetings, which was only appropriate since Harry Potter spent most of his early childhood living underneath the stairs at his uncle’s house.

But what truly makes this Dumbledore’s Army remarkable is the impact Harry Potter books has had on the members’ education. “For a long time in my early elementary years I struggled with reading,” Austen Clement admitted. “My mom tells me I would often trip over words as simple as ‘the’. When I was in kindergarten, my parents read parts of the first Harry Potter book to me. Then, in first grade my reading ability took off, and I was encouraged by my teacher to read the Harry Potter books. By the end of second grade I was nearly finished with the fourth book, which is quite a feat given its length for someone so young. I found myself so infatuated with Harry’s world that I wanted to keep reading. By the end of fourth grade, I had a thirteenth grade level in reading,”

Glover agreed and said, “Like most kids in my generation, I started reading the Harry Potter books in first grade, so I literally grew up with them. When you’re reading “Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire,” a book that’s over 600 pages long, in the third grade, you feel pretty great about your reading abilities. For me, that was an enormous confidence boost. I thought that I could read anything, and I did read whatever I thought looked good, even though it may not have been a kid’s book. I kept reading whatever I could get my hands on, and by the time I left elemen-

tary school I had read pretty much the whole school library.”

Grace Schefter, English teacher at the Freshman Campus, is convinced that Harry Potter encouraged a generation of kids to enjoy reading. Like children from other decades might have read series like “Little House on the Prairie” or “The Hardy Boys,” J.K. Rowling’s Harry Potter books really got children hooked on fantasy.

“The books really made us think that the wizarding world was real. I don’t know a single kid who read the books that wasn’t disappointed when they didn’t get their Hogwarts acceptance letter when they turned 11,” Glover said.

Since the release of the first book in 1997, “Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone”, countless children and their parents have been caught up in reading and discussing the seven book series. “My sister was the one who introduced my whole family to the books, and she, my dad and I were totally hooked. Whenever there was a midnight release, my dad had to buy my sister and me, each a copy of the book so there wouldn’t be any fights about who could read it first. He would wait, more or less patiently, until one of us had finished, to start it, and had a few sleepless nights until he could finish it too,” Glover said.

Glover agrees that the challenge of reading the series had a direct effect on her reading levels. “The time it took J.K. Rowling to write the next book was just the right amount of time to let our reading levels catch up... That’s something that is unique to our generation, so that as Rowling’s writing became more sophisticated, so did our ability to read and comprehend. My little sister is reading the books right now, and I can’t help but feel bad that she missed all of that.”

Mary Ann Perri, former WV High School librarian said, “My kids, who were interested in science fiction and fantasy, have turned out to be some of the most creative and intelligent adults around. Science fiction and fantasy doesn’t condescend to kids.”

With most of Dumbledore’s Army entering senior year, the unofficial club may not last beyond graduation, but these West Valley students have certainly already reaped the educational benefits of J.K. Rowling’s magical world of Harry Potter.