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Quincy School District Communicator

Opportunities
Unlimited for All!

Jackrabbit Jumpstart offers pre-schoolers a boost

The school district is building learners, one tiny, four-year-old-sized, sneaker-with-velcro step at a time.

Or rather a hop.

This year, the district offered Jackrabbit Jumpstart, a program aimed at four-year-olds, offering them all-day school in case they did not have the opportunity to attend a preschool.

The Quincy version of the program is called Jackrabbit Jumpstart, but at the state level, it's called transitional kindergarten.

John Boyd, who was superintendent of Quincy schools when the program was first implemented, says what makes Jackrabbit Jumpstart necessary is the fact that many students of that age don't come to schools prepared and ready to go.

"This is not new," Boyd said. "It's not unique to Quincy but our levels of need are greater given that lots of our students have a first language that's not English," Boyd said. "We have higher levels of students living below the poverty line, too."

The impact of the program goes far beyond kindergarten, too.

"When we can get students at a higher readiness to learn when they enter kindergarten," Boyd said, "they succeed at much higher levels when they get to school."

One of the two teachers in charge of Jackrabbit Jumpstart, Pioneer Elementary teacher Sara Hausken, said the goal of the program is to help students be socially and emotionally ready to walk into a kindergarten and

be ready to learn, she said.

"Often a lot of our students haven't had a lot of experience outside of their home," she said. "And when they come to kindergarten they are so overwhelmed by the experience, all of a sudden they are with 20 students in this foreign place with this foreign teacher with foreign supplies, that can be a really hard adjustment for them."

By enrolling in all-day Jackrabbit Jumpstart, these young children will be ready to learn once they arrive in kindergarten.

"They are going to know how to stand in a line, how to hold the pencil, how to be kind to their friends," Hausken said.

Furthermore, Boyd said, research shows that students who have had a formal learning experience to prepare them for kindergarten, are more likely to read at a grade level and do math at grade level and are more likely to graduate.

The school district applied for a state grant in order to fund the startup costs of the Jackrabbit Jumpstart program in Quincy. So far, the district has been able to open two Jackrabbit Jumpstart classes, one at Pioneer and one at Monument Elementary, but serving the entire district, Hausken added. The state provided the grant but it doesn't pay for everything, so the district supplements the grant monies with levy dollars.

Asked if it was a 50-50 split, Boyd said no. Jackrabbit Jumpstart is mainly funded by the state, he added. The



Photos by the Quincy Valley Post-Register

The youngest members of our school district get a chance to get an education boost prior to their K-12 years with Jackrabbit Jumpstart, seen here at Pioneer Elementary.

money from the district goes to pay for, among others, the age-specific equipment that a program aimed at such young children requires, from smaller school supplies and classroom facilities to smaller toilets.

"Gotta make sure we have the furniture and the materials to support their learning," he said.

Boyd said the goal of a program like this is to increase the readiness to learn so that the children start kindergarten at a more advanced stage and that way "achieve Quincy's Promise: So they can read at the third grade, do algebra in middle school, graduate on time and ready to go," Boyd said.

Hausken said another goal of the program is to "provide an opportunity for early learning to students who

otherwise would not have the opportunity to participate in that and help them be prepared for kindergarten."

Since the program is funded through the state Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, there are certain standards and expectations and rules the districts have to follow, which set the program apart from a regular pre-school program.

"Our kids are here and follow basically a kindergarten schedule, as far as what they have access to," Hausken said.

Asked what makes this program necessary, Hausken spoke of a nationwide lack of quality early-childhood learning experiences for students. The programs in place in

See *Jumpstart* on page 2

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Superintendent's Message: A vision and a journey

For my first Communicator message as Superintendent of Quincy School District, I want to thank all of the former and current QSD board members, staff, students, and families for whom I have had the privilege of serving over the years. You have profoundly impacted how I approach my role as an educational leader.

As your new Superintendent, I have come to this position, having spent almost two decades in the Quincy School District. My experience in Quincy includes teaching Multilingual Learners and History at Quincy High School and later being a Dean of Students at Quincy Jr. High.

I then served as Principal at George Elementary before transitioning to Pioneer Elementary. For the past five-and-a-half years, many of you have known me as Assistant Superintendent. However, my greatest experience has been as a parent to four children currently attending school in the district.

This experience has shown me first-hand the importance our role as educators has in the lives of those families living in the Valley.



Superintendent, Dr. Nik Bergman

Even though I am not new to the district, I will approach this new role as a listener, continuing to learn from all the diverse voices who make up our school community, including students, parents, staff, and Quincy community members. With that mindset, I am committed to these key priorities:

- Continue to develop and strengthen the Board/Superintendent relationship and collaborative structures.
- Ensure student and staff safety as the District continues to navigate the impacts of the

pandemic.

- Gain a deeper understanding of the organizational capacity and efficiency in ensuring students are academically, socially and emotionally successful.
- Implement the newly adopted QSD Strategic Plan (scan the QR code to read the plan) and regularly update the community on our progress and collective vision for our student equity and excellence.
- Work with staff, students, and families to improve academic outcomes for all students, particularly students in the multilingual program and students who qualify for special education.
- Develop effective two-way stakeholder communication avenues and opportunities.

My vision for the next five to seven years is to see our school district become a place that has not only recovered academically, socially, and emotionally from the pandemic but is thriving.

To me, thriving looks like a school community where every staff member, student and family feels accepted, safe, seen, heard, and celebrated

in all school spaces. Thriving looks like a school district where outcomes are equitable for all students.

Most importantly, thriving looks like a community where there is a belief that all students can do and be anything.

As I embark on this new journey with you, I would like to thank our past two Superintendents, John Boyd and Dr. Burton Dickerson, for their mentorship. Their guidance has helped prepare me to take over as Superintendent.

Lastly, I want to thank the QSD School Board for selecting me for this position. I am humbled and appreciative of their support and confidence to lead our District.

Dr. Bergman is the Superintendent of the Quincy School District. He can be reached at 509-787-4571 or nbergman@qsd.wednet.edu



Scan to read Strategic Plan

Your Quincy School District Board of Directors

Jack Foglesong, President

Tricia Lubach, Vice-President

Chris Baumgartner

Heather Folks-Lambert

Chad Lower

STUDENT MEMBERS

Brianna Herrera

Emily Wurl

Jumpstart from page 1

Quincy are “phenomenal” she said, but there aren’t enough seats for every one of our district’s students.

In addition, some students have some emotional and social needs that a half-day program just cannot comprehensively tackle in a half-day schedule, Hausken said.

“We are serving 36 students across the district, and the way they qualify differ with each kid,” she said. “There’s no one standard.”

One thing in common is that the students who want to qualify are not allowed to be enrolled or to have been enrolled in a private preschool program.

The Jackrabbit Jumpstart program is slowly gaining in popularity among the school districts in Quincy’s Educational Services District. At least three districts in our vicinity, including Soap Lake have started offering transitional services for that age group.

Moreover, children across the state are showing gaps in their literacy and math skills before they enter kindergarten, so one of the goals of this program is to help bridge that gap among Quincy Valley students before kindergarten instead of having to help them catch up during the kindergarten year.

Classes started Oct. 18, and they run from 8 a.m. to

3 p.m.

To enroll, students had to meet all the following criteria: not being enrolled in any other early learning programs, must be 4 years old, must be expected to attend kindergarten in the fall of 2022, and must live in the district.

Furthermore, they had to meet one of the following criteria: either suffer from a lack of access to a preschool/Inspire type of program, or qualify for free/reduced meals, or must come from a family where a language other than English is spoken at home, or have shown a lack of social/and or academic skills based on administered screening.

The program is free and can accommodate up to 36

students from across QSD.

“We are offering an opportunity to build the whole child,” Hausken said, later adding that they are excited that the response for the first-year program yielded enough children for two classes.

“We are looking forward to getting the word out so more families are able to apply next year,” she said.



Scan to submit an interest form for the 2022-23 school year.

Meet your Quincy School District Board Member: Chad Lower

QSD Communicator:
What is your hometown?
Chad Lower: I grew up in Kirkland, Wash.

QSDC: How long have you been on the school board?
CL: I was elected last November and I've been serving since January

QSDC: How long have you lived in Quincy?
CL: We've lived in Quincy for 3 years

QSDC: What is your favorite hobby?
CL: I love playing with my two daughters Sierra and Lila Belle when I have time at home.



QSDC: What would you be doing if you weren't on the board?

CL: My wife Terra and I moved to Quincy to raise our girls, and we're intent on helping the community in any way we can. If I wasn't on the board I would look for other volunteer opportunities in the community.

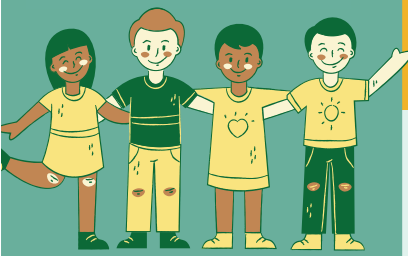
QSDC: What made you want to be a board member?
CL: I want to help represent our community and make sure our values are represented.

QSDC: What are some of the challenges you face being on the board?
CL: Initially learning what powers the board does and does not have to impact change. As a new board member there is a lot to learn about the day to day operations of the district, including current policy and curriculum.

QSDC: What makes being on the board exciting?
CL: I hope we have a positive impact on the next generation of Quincy's citizens. It's great to see the enthusiasm both our educators and community have for our kids. I've really enjoyed some of the challenging conversations I've had with our community members.

Quincy CARES

By the Numbers



The Quincy School District is dedicated to ensuring that our students receive the resources they need to support their health and wellness. This information is just a glimpse of how the district is supporting students through school and mental health counselors, social workers, school nurses and the Student Health and Wellness Center.

Social Wellness

Our social workers help families in need by connecting them with:

- resources in the community
 - food
 - clothing
 - shelter
- resources within the schools

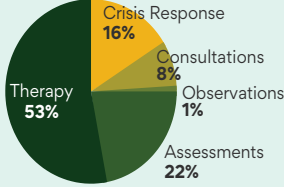
2 # of Social Workers @ QSD

67 # of identified homeless students social workers worked with during the 21-22 school year

150 Estimated # of individuals social workers have connected with resources over the 21-22 school year

Mental Health

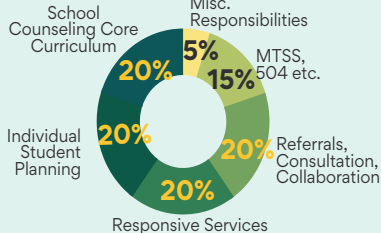
One QSD Mental Health Counselor provided the following Mental Health Services to students for the months of Sept.-March:



102 Total contacts with students made

At the **Elementary level**, counselors make contact with each individual student throughout the school year.

School counselors provide the following services to **1,428** elementary students:



Physical Wellness

Quincy Community Student Health & Wellness Center Visits

From 9/1/21 - 3/31/22

754 Total Patients

1158 Total Visits

2 QSD Nurses & **4** QSD Medical Assistants help keep our students in school

207 # of students on Emergency Care Plans that nurses oversee

575 approx. # of individual counseling visits this school year at **QMS**

QMS counselors meet with all **254** 6th-grade students individually

900 approx. # of individual counseling visits this school year at **QHS**

Students seek counseling for issues ranging from:

- social/emotional concerns (increase related to transition back to in-person learning)
- Graduation progress
- College prep

Grad profile: From the classroom to the farm

For lifelong Quincy resident Chance Downs, his time as a student in the Quincy School District was a big plus. Or rather a big plus sign.

A graduate of the class of 2006, Downs' life turned a major corner in the classroom of Ms. Sue Gregory, many years prior to the day where he tossed the cap in the air.

In the fourth grade, Chance was very frustrated with math and continued to struggle with the plus sign. Until one day, he made a connection....

"It started when we were harvesting sugar beets," recalled Downs. "I was riding with one of the truck drivers. We were talking and I asked, 'What's that number?' and he said 'That's the total weight.' And then I said, 'Well, what's this (other) number?' and he said, 'That's how much the truck weighs with nothing on it.' Then I said, 'Then what's left over must be all this (the beets),' and he said, 'You're right.'"

He had been struggling with math, but that day, he made it a point to be there every Friday and go out for sugar beet harvest, writing down all the truck weight data and showing them to Ms. Gregory the next school day.

"I was like, 'Hey Ms. Gregory, look at this!'" Downs said.

From then on, Downs said, Gregory knew that there was lightning in that little bottle and made sure that the math exercises she gave Downs involved farming scenarios.

"She said, 'I think I just found a way to help you learn all this,'" Downs recalled. "'Do as many of these as you can and bring them to me.' From then on she applied that to all my math lessons."

The lessons learned thanks



to the beet trucks and Ms. Gregory stuck, to the point that Downs not only stayed in Quincy but also works in the family business, as a second-generation hay farmer, growing alfalfa, lavender, silage corn, dry corn, and raising cattle.

A month ago, Downs' mother ran into Ms. Gregory, and said, 'You'll never guess what he's doing on the farm: he develops all our applications for spraying and mixing chemicals and doing the math.' And Ms. Gregory was like, 'I knew he'd figure it out.'"

As he grew up, Downs became more comfortable with the idea of a future in farming, eschewing the chorus of people who insisted he needed a college degree. He wanted to work with his hands doing what he had

seen his father and his grandfather doing for decades.

As he left childhood behind, other teachers took on mentoring roles, with Mike Wallace and his Ag program taking on a prominent role. The skills Wallace taught differed a little from what he learned in grade school.

"He would tell you sometimes, 'You know, you are going to work with other people someday; you gotta to quit being so stubborn and you gotta to be open to listening to other people's ideas.'" It helped, Downs said, that Wallace not only knew him well, but his family as well.

The lessons stayed with him. It's still a challenge for him to delegate duties at the farm, but he has learned that there is more than one way to get things done. His relationship to farm-

ing has changed a lot from the days he rode shotgun on the sugar beet truck. There are days where he is busy all day but ends the day with nary a speck of dust on his clothes, spending his time fixing equipment through his computer.

What has not changed is the strong connection he feels to both farming and math-and-tech, a connection that started those many years ago on that beet truck.

Downs explains that when irrigating his lavender fields, he enters data into a specific computer program that helps conduct the water.

"How we irrigate the lavender, there's a program that you write and upload to the pivot, and then it turns the nozzles on and off. You can rewrite the program every day if you have to."

For years, someone had to stand out near the sprinklers of each circle and turn the nozzles on and off by hand. Times have changed.

"(Now it takes) about half an hour to write the program and upload it," he said. "We used to have someone out there for eight hours a day. It's quite a bit easier."

A married father of three, Downs' children may soon be helping him figure out some of that stuff on the farm, but from a desk, not a sugar beet truck.

"They are on the techie side," he said of his children, ages 12, 10 and 8. Downs' grandpa moved here in the mid-1950s, so it's quite possible that someday there will be 100 years' worth of farming experience in the Valley among the Downs family.