



# Cultural Bridges

INFORMATION TO HELP FAMILIES NAVIGATE THE ISSAQUAH SCHOOL DISTRICT **ENGLISH**



NUMBER 14 | OCTOBER/NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2019

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Months

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Becoming  
a Leader

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Mean to Be a  
Latino Student  
Today?

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Dear Readers,

I hope you had a wonderful summer, and that the beginning of the school year has been smooth. In this issue we are highlighting the importance of good communication with teachers (pages 5, 15) and school staff (page 6). If you have elementary school kids, don't miss the District's event to help families prepare for successful Parent Conferences (page 12).

In our Cultural Connections section, Issaquah School District students talk about their experiences as Latinos. As a Mexican, I can personally share that when my daughter was in third grade and my son in fifth, the national Presidential elections happened. Although my husband and I never watched the news with them, both of our kids were feeling very anxious. We keep telling them that we were going to be OK, but many times when I picked them up from school they burst into tears. Kids were asking them if we were going to have to leave the country or were somehow going to be in danger.

My daughter became so stressed about this issue that she asked for permission to say that I was from Argentina or Ecuador, although I was born in Mexico and I am an American just like her. Her anxiety has definitely gotten better as time has passed but I can't say that the current administration hasn't affected my kids, as I'm sure it has many other students. If you feel that this is the case with your child, look for a mentor or make sure they have other reassuring adults they can talk to. My daughter is now in middle school but we were very lucky that she found a mentor in her fourth grade teacher with whom she is still in contact with.

When kids are anxious and feel that there is not much that they can do, another idea is to guide them to find their leadership voice. Encourage your children to speak up and take action for issues that are important to them. Schools in our District have Student Councils (page 7) and in our communities there are many other opportunities for children to participate and stand up for themselves and others (page 9).

Our Cultural Bridges team is excited to have the opportunity to share another school year with you and all the families of the Issaquah School District. If you are not getting this magazine from your child's teacher, you can get always pick up a copy at one of the main offices of the 24 schools in the District. We also distribute this magazine in the libraries and community centers of Issaquah, Newcastle, Renton, and Sammamish.

Have a great Fall season!

Alicia Spinner  
Magazine Editor

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Cultural Bridges

is a program of



ISSAQUAH  
SCHOOLS  
FOUNDATION

## CULTURAL BRIDGES

Builds relationships between families from diverse cultures, their children, the Issaquah School District, and the broader Issaquah community.



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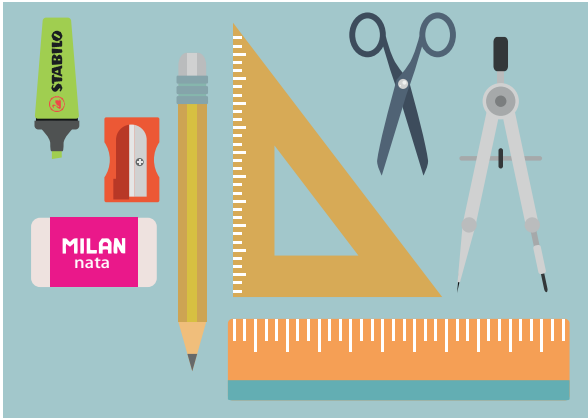


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# After School Assistance Program

By DREW TERRY  
Cougar Ridge Elementary Principal



One moment, one idea, that's how it all started. The After-School Assistance Program, commonly known as ASAP, started with a simple and unexpected personal phone call I received from my son's Principal. She shared with me that little Jack Terry was behind in his reading skills and she was hoping that I would be willing to allow him to receive some additional reading instruction. I quickly agreed, thanked her for the opportunity, and inquired more about the program. I'm happy to share that this intervention was effective, and my son is now a freshman in college.

That principal, Emilie Hard, is currently the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Services for the Issaquah School District. When I learned that Emilie had moved to the Issaquah School District, I called her (literally on her first day of work in our district). I wanted to discuss how we could bring this successful intervention program to Issaquah. Emilie was instrumental in helping me. She worked with me on the curricular materials and helped me organize training for my teachers. For the program to function we needed financial support. With initial support from our school's PTA along with building funds, ASAP, in its primitive and most basic form, was born.

We started in the fall of 2010 with just one grade level and one subject, math. In January, we added reading and in our first year, ASAP was able to provide intense intervention for nearly 50 students! As we planned for year two of ASAP, we realized the program had grown. We now had more teachers willing to stay after school to help support our students. One thing was still missing, sustainable funding. ASAP was far too successful to just let it go, we needed to look elsewhere for support. So, after the first year, I applied for a grant from the Issaquah Schools Foundation.

In applying for a grant, we shared a success story about a girl named Katelen. She had always been a struggling math

student. Her 4th grade Stanford math score fell in the 19th percentile. After the ASAP program, she scored in the 91st percentile. There are lots of students out there like Katelen. Those that just need more time to practice their skills in a small group setting. ASAP helped provide the support necessary for her to learn and apply these skills.

With continued success of ASAP at Briarwood, we really wanted to expand the program. So, I started to share our success with my colleagues and encourage them to provide the program to their students. Soon, more schools jumped on board and ASAP began to flourish.

Today, I'm thrilled to share that for the very first time in our district, ASAP is no longer just an inspiring innovation. It's not just an idea, it's a reality.

**ASAP is functioning at all 15 of our elementary schools serving hundreds of students that have needs in building foundational skills in reading and math!**

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It took one phone call, one idea, and one amazing Foundation that believed in the concept of the After School Assistance Program. Thanks to the Issaquah Schools Foundation for their continued support of this program that has blossomed into a successful district wide intervention. All our students deserve the very best education and thanks to the Foundation and amazing donors like you, we can continue to provide students the extra support they not only need, but deserve. Visit the Foundation's website to learn how you can help: <http://isfdn.org/donate/>.

*Text taken from Drew Terry's speech, given at the Nourish Every Mind 21st Annual Luncheon, May, 2019.*

## ART & CULTURE

We are excited to announce that the Issaquah Schools Foundation recently hired the artist Amaranta Sandys to create Art Lessons including more of a Latinx Culture and Heritage for the PTA Art Docent program! We can't wait to see the activities she will develop for the students.

Amaranta Sandys has been the Creative Director of Mobile Art School since 2013. She graduated from Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes in Mexico City in Ceramics. She is now a Mixed Media Artist and a Teaching Artist.



# At home in the community.

It's more than hospitals and clinics. It's knowing what your family needs.  
And your first name. It's getting kids to be active, and young adults through college.  
Making it easier to live well. It's creating healthier communities, together.

## **SWEDISH ISSAQUAH**

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[www.swedish.org/issaquah-kids](http://www.swedish.org/issaquah-kids)



**SWEDISH**

Issaquah

# Communicating with Your Child's Teacher and School

By LORNA GILMOUR  
Equity and Family Partnerships Specialist

Growing up as a child, my mom never called or talked to my teachers. In India, it was not part of school culture to call or contact a teacher, especially when it was parent-initiated. While in many countries, it may be the norm that parents do not initiate or contact teachers directly, in the United States, it is essential that parents have open lines of communication with the school.

Schools invite parent-teacher communication at several planned events such as Parent-Teacher Conferences and Curriculum Night. In addition, parents can also initiate parent-teacher meetings outside those events if they have questions or concerns regarding their child's academic, social or emotional wellbeing.

During those meeting and conversations, clarity and openness about the child's academic progress are essential. Parents should ask questions regarding their child's progress and what they can do to better support their child academically, socially or emotionally. It is the expectation in the US that parents are active participants in the conversation not just the recipients of information. Sometimes, families need to speak out or advocate on behalf of their child in the conversation with the school staff. It is not enough to just attend and listen.

Schools can use an on-the-phone interpreter service such as Language Line to communicate in about 240 languages.

For families not familiar or fully able to speak English, language support is available. Schools can use an on-the-phone interpreter service such as Language Line to communicate in about 240 languages. The interpretation is at no cost to the families. It is quick to access at the school or over the phone and is confidential. Other students or children, family members or friends do not have to be available to ensure effective communication. Parents can ask for an interpreter if language is a barrier to effectively communicating with the school.

For parent meetings at the school that are pre-arranged, parents can also request an in-person interpreter especially for meetings where important information will be discussed regarding your child's academics, behavior, attendance or discipline concerns. If you want more information regarding how to access language support via a phone or in-person interpreter, please contact one of the Issaquah School District's Family Partnership Liaisons: <https://www.issaquah.wednet.edu/family/cultural-and-family-partnerships/FPL>.

## Attendance Calls Update



The ISD is using a new system to send out attendance calls to families when a student is absent from class.

This year, both a phone call and an email will be sent according to the primary contact information in Family Access.



Phone calls will simply alert families of an unexcused absence. The emails will contain information regarding class periods missed for students in secondary grade levels.

## The First Months

During these first months back to school, students will be getting to know their teachers, and all the other members of the school staff. In order to understand what your child is doing every day, it is important for you to get to know all the educators that are contributing to your kid's school experience. Every school website has a list of their staff, check it out with your child so he/she can tell you who he/she is getting to know.

Ask your child about the librarian, counselor, music, and PE teacher. Your child might also be working with some of the specialists, such as the Reading Club, SAGE or the ELL teacher. Make sure you are checking your email frequently because this is the way most teachers communicate.

The Support Staff is also very important to the well-being of your child. By the end of the school year you will be surprised how many of them know your child by their first name: the custodians, the kitchen workers, the technology specialist, and the para professionals as well. And of course, everyone in the office: the principal, assistant principal, secretary, registrar, and the nurse. It is an army of people who works every day to try to make a school a welcoming, supportive environment for the kids to flourish. And the best way for you to get to know all these important people in your kid's life is by volunteering.

There are many opportunities to volunteer. How do you choose what is best for your family? If you work during the day, the afternoon events are a great option. Look for opportunities on the PTA/PTSA website of your school. If you prefer to volunteer during the day, you can help in your child's classroom or with programs run by the PTA/PTSA during the school day. Getting involved in your children's education is a proven way to improve their school performance.



### TEACHER TO PARENT

**What can we do to help our Kindergarteners in their first months of school?**

*"All of us Kindergarten teachers really want parents to understand that we have a very strong focus on social-emotional skills. A lot of parents get worried about academic success but a key part of Kindergarten is learning how to identify one's emotions and then regulate them, as well as learning how to be a friend, get along with others and be part of a community!"*

*It's also very important to learn the nuts and bolts of school, like eating lunch in a cafeteria. We are going to ask parents to practice eating lunch at home, just like they would at school. To have their child open their lunch box and every container inside by, and to put everything back again with the lids/caps on tight, all by themselves!"*

Paradise Stewart  
Sunset Elementary Kindergarten Teacher

### PARENT TO PARENT

**What was one thing you wish you knew when your child started Kindergarten?**

*"Every kid learns at a different pace and that's ok. I remember my son could not use scissors properly the first months of Kindergarten and I could not sleep for weeks!"*

*"I wish I had known about all the help that the District offers, like the section 504. I was very nervous thinking that the vision condition that my daughter has was going to prevent her from being successful at school. But the teacher helped her to get special accommodations such as books with large font and tests without multiple choices. She did great!"*

*"How to be involved. Now that my son is in High School, I wish there were opportunities like the ones parents have in Kindergarten and Elementary!"*

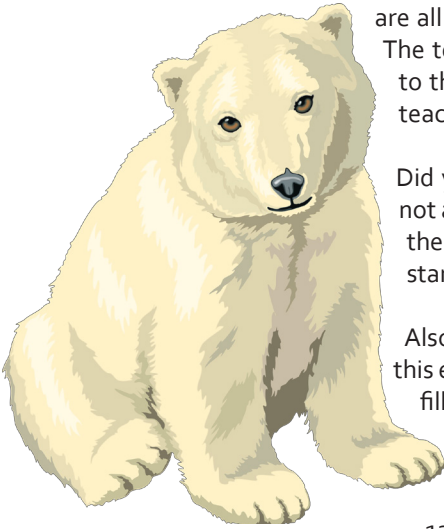
*"That the PTSA is making a BIG difference in the school, and it's fun to be part of it."*

*"That it would go by so fast!"*

## Book Fairs

Don't be afraid if you see polar bears, penguins and other arctic animals in the library of your school. Most of the elementary schools (and middle schools) in our district will be hosting a Book Fair this fall and the theme is the Arctic.

The PTA/PTSAs of each school, work together with the publishing company Scholastic to offer this event to schools' communities. The idea is to have a store in the library of the school so parents can shop for books for their children, and also for their children's classrooms. You will be surprised by the great selection of books. They are all kid-approved and the prices are great too, you can pay with cash or credit card. The teachers make wish lists so parents get the opportunity to donate books directly to their child's classrooms. For children, it is very special to dedicate a book to their teacher's classroom library and leave it there for years to come.



Did you know that all the books that are in the classrooms are from the teacher and not are not provided by the school? Teachers get those books, so these book fairs help them upgrade their libraries. This is especially important for teachers that are just starting their careers.

Also, the proceeds of this event go to support the school libraries. Every year, after this event is done, the librarians get cash and Scholastics Dollars to order new books to fill their shelves with lots of fun new stories and interesting non fiction books. Many parents use this event to get books as gifts for the upcoming winter holidays.

Don't miss the opportunity to escape into the adventure of reading. Join the school community and explore the newest books. Check the calendar on page 12 to learn when your school's PTA/PTSA is planning their book fair. And if this event is scheduled after January in your school, then you will find tigers and elephants in your library instead of polar bears and penguins as the theme changes every season to keep the event fun and exciting for the kids.

## Student Council

The elementary schools in our district have a Student Council; a group of elected students that work together with a teacher advisory board. These students represent the voice of the student body. This group also plans events that contribute to school spirit and overall morale such as kindness week. Some also organize community service activities.

Some schools choose to have roles for the kids, like President, Vice-President, Secretary, etc. Students are voted in to their roles or assigned by the teacher. Other schools only have members and all work together with the advisory teacher, without allocating positions. Children are told that as leaders of their school they have to be respectful, on time, and set a good example for others. The rules and expectations vary from school to school but all of them are given the opportunity to develop leadership skills.

PTSAs sponsor the Student Council in certain schools, but if your child is interested in leadership, event planning, or just wants to be more involved in his/her school, contact your teacher and ask how your child can be part of the Student Council. Involvement in these kinds of activities promote confidence, and self-esteem.

## Things to Know About School Lunchtime

- Students sit with their class in the school cafeteria.
- Classmates are not allowed to share lunch.
- Lunchtime is 20 minutes long.
- If you choose to send a lunch from home, make sure your children know how to open all the containers.
- Many kids bring lunch from home but buy milk at the cafeteria. The milk cost \$.50.
- Lunch costs \$3.75 in all elementary schools, and all lunches include milk and a trip through the salad bar.
- School menus are available online: <https://www.issaquah.wednet.edu/family/lunch>.
- Every student has a lunch number to purchase food: <https://www.issaquah.wednet.edu/family/MySchoolBucks>.
- Financial Assistance is available online at any time during the school year: <https://www.issaquah.wednet.edu/district/departments/operations/foodservice>.

# Study Skills

By CAROLINE FREIDENFELT  
Pacific Cascade Middle School Teacher

Parents always want to know how to support their students at home. Here are my favorite tips I've learned from teaching Study Skills at Pacific Cascade the past ten years.

**Find a binder system that works for your student:** My favorite is a binder, no bigger than 1". Have labeled plastic section dividers with pockets for each class. Work to turn in or finish goes in the pocket. It's small, so students have to clean it out weekly and keep the old work in a box at home until the end of the year.

**Find a planner system that works for your student:** This could be the paper planner that the school sells, or it could be electronic. It could be a monthly view or a weekly view. Parents can model theirs at home. It takes two months for something to become a habit. Encourage your student to keep with it because learning to manage due dates is KEY.

**Don't obsess over grades:** Have students check grades online just once a week. Celebrate successes, and help students brainstorm what to do if their grade is slipping. Middle school is the time for students to learn how to advocate for themselves. Encourage students to email teachers themselves or talk to teachers about concerns. Coach them through this process and step in when they need help.

**Celebrate successes,  
and help students  
brainstorm what to do  
if their grade is slipping.**

**Put the phone away:** When it's time to buckle down and study, keep devices in another room. We think we're good at multi-tasking, but research tells us otherwise.

**Study throughout the unit:** Don't wait until the day before the test to study. Students should be constantly checking their understanding of content throughout the unit. If they didn't do well on a quiz or an assignment, they should clear up their understanding along the way so they are ready for the test. Use the study guides and materials the teacher provides.

**Ask your teachers for help:** Our favorite part of the job is helping students succeed. We really want to help, so encourage your student to seek help. Teachers can provide excellent study resources, quiz students to find gaps in knowledge, break down projects if they seem overwhelming, offer retakes on tests and quizzes, etc.



**Utilize school resources:** Schools have supplies, guidance counselors, mental health counselors, VOICE Mentors, peer tutors, etc.

**Show up:** It's much harder to keep up with six classes when you're absent. If you must stay home, students should check teacher websites and make sure they get when they missed the very next day. When students are in class, be present. Ask questions and use class time well.

We want all students to succeed!



# Becoming a Leader

Did you know that our students have many leadership opportunities in our communities? The activities that these groups organize are not only fun and a good way to meet kids from other schools, but with these activities, students can fulfill their community service hours, and make their college resumes look good!

Here is a list of great options:

## City of Issaquah Youth Advisory Board

The City of Issaquah believes that youth are not only the future leaders of tomorrow, but should also be active civic contributors of today. This board exists to create and encourage youth leadership service opportunities, to develop leadership skills, highlight youth ideas and opinions and unite the students of the Issaquah School District. Email Lisa Echert for more information: [IYAB@issaquahwa.gov](mailto:IYAB@issaquahwa.gov).

## Newcastle Youth Community Engagement

Wednesdays: Oct 16, Nov 20 and Dec 18. Attention middle and high school students! Help the Newcastle Library and the City of Newcastle create the programs, services and events you want to see. Munch on snacks while you make a difference! Meetings will be held at the library: 12901 Newcastle Way.

## Sammamish Youth Board

The mission of the Sammamish Youth Board (SYB) is to unite youth, adults and government to form a relationship that promotes equality and mutual respect, as well as to create integral activities that lead to a stronger community. Local middle and high school students are welcomed and encouraged to attend meetings and SYB sponsored events. SYB meets monthly during the school year. Meetings are typically at 6:30 p.m. the third Wednesday of the month at Sammamish City Hall.

## Issaquah Schools Foundation Student Trustee

The Issaquah Schools Foundation Trustees represent the student voice on the Foundation Board. Their role is to help determine policies, procedures and regulations to accomplish the mission and operating objectives of the organization; to raise awareness among high school peers about the work of the Foundation and to continue to be a connection between the Foundation and their graduating class after high school. For more information send an email to: [info@isfdn.org](mailto:info@isfdn.org).

## Alianza Youth Leadership Program

This is a youth-led movement of collective voices connecting leaders to unlock their leadership potential and bring change to their communities. Through community organizing and training, Alianza aims to build the leadership of Latinx youth by providing them with a platform and resources to do so. If you are between the ages of 16-25 years old, we want you! Meet other young leaders engaged in their communities through community and civic engagement projects on the most pressing issues affecting our Latino community in Washington State, including environmental and climate justice. Contact Salvador Salazar, Civic Engagement & Advocacy Coordinator, at [salvador@latinocommunityfund.org](mailto:salvador@latinocommunityfund.org).

## Highlands Youth Advisory Board

The mission of the Highlands Youth Advisory Board (HY Board) is to unify Issaquah Highlands youth through meaningful and fun social experiences creating lasting memories and building pride in our community. Mark your calendar to apply for a HY Board position in 2020. Applications will be available in April with deadline of May 1, 2020. For more information, contact them at 425-507-1107.



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## Alternatives to the Traditional Four-Year College

The Great Careers Conference, held in partnership with the Issaquah Chamber of Commerce, introduces students to secondary education options outside the typical four-year college path.

The goal of the conference is to educate 10th-12th grade students about careers they can pursue through a certificate or two-year degree program through breakout sessions, speakers who work in the fields and a college campus visit.

Last year, over 170 high school students from Issaquah, Skyline, Liberty and Gibson EK participated in this event. Students met with 20 professionals from Issaquah and neighboring areas who spoke with them about different career paths that require less than four years of degree work or certifications. Additionally, the students met with 15 different local colleges offering degrees and certifications in under four years as well as the standard four-year classes.

This event greatly impacted the high school students. Kaitlin from Gibson Ek High School shared "It was super cool to learn more about careers that I want to pursue. Thank you for hosting this event." The Great Careers Conference will be held on December 13th at Bellevue College. Make sure your student saves the date for this event this year!

### CLOTHING CLOSETS

Do you know that each high school can provide students with new or gently used articles of clothing? Talk to your student's counselor or ask about it at the front office.

The Issaquah Food and Clothing Bank also provides clothing for students: <https://issaquahfoodbank.org/>.

### IN CRISIS? TEXT HELLO TO 741741

A simple resource for a massive problem!  
The Problem: 65 million Americans suffer from mental illness each year. They quietly struggle with depression, anxiety, eating disorders, bullying, suicidal thoughts, and more.

Crisis Text Line provides free, 24/7 support for people in crisis, via text. [www.crisistextline.org](http://www.crisistextline.org).



235 First Avenue SE  
Downtown Issaquah  
[kaylee@issaquahteencafe.org](mailto:kaylee@issaquahteencafe.org)

Hours: 3:00 to 7:00 p.m.  
Monday through Friday  
9th—12th graders ONLY  
(proof of age required)

The Garage, A Teen Cafe is thrilled to celebrate their one year anniversary! Over the past 12 months, The Garage has welcomed close to 400 individual students. Two of them have the following to say about The Garage:

*"Every student deserves to feel like they have a place to go where they can feel safe and accepted. That's what The Garage is. I never have to worry about not being accepted, no matter my gender, sexual orientation, or any other identity. The Garage feels like home!"*

M. Haynes, student at Gibson Ek High School

*"I personally like the Garage because it provides a safe, community-oriented space for teens to hang out as well as receive resources that they may otherwise not have access to."*

Medha Vadlamudi, student at Issaquah High School

Why come to The Garage?

- To find friends and to hang out with the ones you already have.
- For free coffee and maybe some homework help.
- To play video games or some cool board games.
- To learn about community resources while enjoying some music.
- To create or join a club, and to celebrate something special.

Remember, if your children are 9th—12th grade students in the Issaquah School District, The Garage is for them to enjoy!

# ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

## ALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Oct. 14: Teacher Work Day, No School  
 Nov. 11: Veterans Day Observance, No School  
 Nov. 28-29: Thanksgiving holiday, No School  
 Dec. 4-5: Elementary parent-teacher conferences (meetings)  
 Dec. 23-Jan 3: First Winter Break, No School

## Apollo

Oct. 2-15: Rocket Fuel Fundraiser  
 Oct. 21: Missoula Children's Theater Auditions  
 Oct. 21: M. Children's Theater Performance  
 Oct. 28: Reflections Entries Due  
 Nov. 7-8: Vision and Hearing Testing  
 Nov. 15: Reflections Reception  
 Nov. 18 - Dec. 2: Holiday Toy Drive  
 Dec. 9-13: Scholastic Book Fair  
 Dec. 13: Family Dinner & Bingo by Dads  
 Dec. 14: Math in Action Tournament

## Briarwood

Oct. 2: Orange Ruler Turn In  
 Oct. 4, 25: Popcorn Friday  
 Oct. 7: Orange Ruler Fun Run  
 Oct. 17-18: Picture Retakes  
 Oct. 18: Family Movie Night  
 Nov. 8, 22: Popcorn Friday  
 Nov. 18-22: Book Fair  
 Nov. 19: Staff Appreciation Lunch  
 Nov. 22: Pizza Bingo  
 Dec. 6, 20: Popcorn Friday  
 Dec. 12: Book Swap  
 Dec. 13: Skate Night at SnoKing

## Cascade Ridge

Oct. 10: Staff Appreciation Lunch  
 Oct. 11, 9:15a.m.: Talk with Tia (principal)  
 Oct. 11, 6:30p.m.: Family Movie Night  
 Oct. 25, 11a.m.: PTSA Social  
 Nov. 1: Popcorn Day  
 Nov. 5-7: Book Fair  
 Nov. 6, 6p.m.: Reflection Reception  
 Nov. 12-15: Kindness Week  
 Dec. 2-6: Holiday Gift Barn Collection  
 Dec. 6: Popcorn Day  
 Dec. 11: Pick up Arts and Crafts Shop  
 Dec. 13: Staff Holiday Coffee/Tea Bar  
 Dec. 17, 6:30p.m.: 5th Grade Music Concert

## Challenger

Nov. 6: Reflections Reception  
 Nov. 12, 7:00p.m.: PTA General Meeting  
 Nov. 15: Bingo Night

## Clark

Oct. 4: Popcorn Friday  
 Oct. 7: Staff Appreciation Lunch  
 Oct. 18: Recess with Kids  
 Oct. 25: Bingo Night  
 Nov. 1: Popcorn Friday  
 Nov. 12-27: Pickering Barn Drive  
 Nov. 14: Coffee with Christy (principal)  
 Nov. 15: Recess with Kids  
 Nov. 25: Staff Appreciation Lunch  
 Dec. 6: Gingerbread House Night  
 Dec. 20: Recess with Kids

## Cougar Ridge

Oct. 17: Kindergarten Pumpkin Carving Night  
 Oct. 25: Spooky Spaghetti Night  
 Nov. 4-8: Book Fair  
 Nov. 7: Family Movie Night  
 Dec. 3: Family Pizza and Bingo Night

## Creekside

Oct. 4-11: Hawk-a-thon Fundraiser  
 Oct. 25: Halloween Bash  
 Nov. 14: Reflections Award Reception  
 Dec. 2-6: Scholastic Book Fair

## Discovery

Oct. 1-5: School Spirit Week  
 Oct. 14-31: Fall Fundraiser  
 Oct. 23: Spooky Spaghetti  
 Nov. 13: Multicultural Night  
 Nov. 21: Hearing and Vision Screenings

## Endeavor

Oct. 4: Jag-A-Thon  
 Oct. 30: Spooky Spaghetti  
 Oct. 4-6: Book Fair  
 Nov. 5: Hearing and Vision Screening  
 Dec. 4-5: Book Fair

## Grand Ridge

Oct. 2: Grizzly Fun Run  
 Oct. 4: Popcorn Friday  
 Oct. 16, 7:45a.m.: Java with Jill (principal)  
 Oct. 23, 6:00p.m.: Falloween  
 Nov. 1: Popcorn Friday  
 Nov. 4-5: Vision & Hearing Screening  
 Nov. 19: PTSA General Membership Meeting  
 Dec. 3-6: Scholastic Book Fair  
 Dec. 13: Popcorn Friday

## Issaquah Valley

Oct. 9: Fun Run Donations Due  
 Oct. 11: Fun Run Event  
 Oct. 25: Trunk or Treat  
 Nov. 2: Goodwill Fill the Truck  
 Nov. 5-8: Fall Book Fair  
 Nov. 14-15: Vision and Hearing Screening  
 Nov. 14: Reflections/Hands on Art Event  
 Dec. 6: Family Movie Night  
 Dec. 12: Holiday Choir/Cougar Choir

## Maple Hills

Oct. 4, 8:30 a.m.: Donuts with Dad  
 Oct. 10: Author Event  
 Oct. 11: Fall Dance  
 Oct. 25: Popcorn Friday  
 Nov. 8: Veteran's Day Assembly  
 Nov. 14: Eagle Reader  
 Nov. 15: Popcorn Friday  
 Nov. 18-22: Fall Book Fair  
 Dec. 6: Popcorn Friday  
 Dec. 12: Eagle Reader Clubhouse  
 Dec. 20: Holiday Sing-Along

## Newcastle

Oct. 10-11: Vision & Hearing Screenings  
 Oct. 16: Kindergarten Mom's Night Out  
 Nov. 5: Picture Retake Day

## Sunny Hills

Oct. 15: Picture Day  
 Oct. 9-19: Box Tops Fundraiser  
 Oct. 17: Family Night at the Book Fair  
 Oct. 15-19: Scholastic Book Fair  
 Oct. 24: Vision & Hearing Screenings  
 Oct. 24: Spooky Spaghetti  
 Oct. 25-Nov. 18: Thanksgiving Food Drive  
 Nov. 21: Spelling Bee, Class Competition  
 Dec. 3: Ellipsis Math Competition  
 Dec. 11: Spelling Bee, School Competition  
 Dec. 12: Choir Concert

## Sunset

Sep. 30 - Oct. 4: Book Fair  
 Oct. 1: Eager Reader Begins  
 Oct. 4: Parents at Recess  
 Oct. 25: Spooky Spaghetti  
 Oct. 31: Eager Reader Tally Due  
 Nov. 8: Veterans Day Assembly  
 Dec. 6: Parents at Recess

## Don't miss this event! Communicating with teachers at Parent-Teacher Conferences November 6, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

All elementary school families are invited to attend. For location, go to:  
<https://www.issaquah.wednet.edu/family/cultural-and-family-partnerships>.

The Parent Teacher Conference is an important opportunity to discuss your child's progress at school, plans for the student's future and find solutions to academic or behavioral concerns, if needed. This event will provide some suggestions on how to make the most of the conference and provide you with some resources as you prepare for the conference. You will also have an opportunity to sign up or learn how to sign up for the conferences on Family Access.

### Reminders for parents:

- Make an appointment (one per child) on Family Access, when the school or teacher sends you the reminder (around November).
- Conferences are private meetings with the teacher of your child.
- Go to the meeting prepared with a list of question about your child academic, social or emotional wellbeing.
- Ask the teacher questions on how you can help your child at home.
- Request an interpreter if needed to ensure effective communication, remember that schools can provide an interpreter at no cost to the parent.
- Arrive to the meeting on time!

## MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLS

### Beaver Lake Middle School

Oct. 11: Coin Drive  
 Oct. 18: Spirit Day, Wear Pink  
 Oct. 31: Spirit Day, Halloween  
 Nov. 8: Veterans Day Assembly  
 Nov. 19: Fall Band Concert  
 Dec. 2-4: Musical Auditions  
 Dec. 5: Choir Winter Concert  
 Dec.13: Choir Winter Assembly

### Issaquah Middle School

Oct. 17: Chorus Concert  
 Oct. 28: Vision & Hearing Test 7th Grade  
 Nov. 21: Orchestra Concert  
 Nov. 22: Spirit Day  
 Nov. 25: Band Concert  
 Nov. 27: All School Party  
 Dec. 3: Beginning Orchestra/ Band Concert  
 Dec. 5: Chorus Concert  
 Dec. 5: 8th Grade Picture  
 Dec. 20: Spirit Day

### Maywood Middle School

Oct. 11: 7th Grade Ice Skating Night  
 Oct. 24: Staff Appreciation Lunch  
 Oct. 29: Vision and Hearing Screening  
 Nov. 12-15: Fall Book Fair  
 Dec. 4: Band Concert at Liberty  
 Dec.12: Staff Appreciation Cookies

### Pacific Cascade Middle School

Oct. 25: Reflections Entries Due  
 Nov. 7: Bands Fall Concert  
 Nov. 14: Orchestra Concert  
 Dec. 6: Staff Appreciation Lunch  
 Dec. 9: Orchestra/Bands/Choirs Assembly  
 Dec. 9: Advanced Band/Jazz Band Concert

### Pine Lake Middle School

Nov. 8: Orchestra Veteran's Assembly  
 Nov. 21: Orchestra Fall Concert  
 Dec. 3: Choir Winter Concert  
 Dec. 20: Orchestra Winter Assembly

### Skyline High School

Oct. 2, 8:00 a.m.: Coffee with Keith (principal)

### Issaquah High School

Oct. 8: College and Career Night

### Liberty High School

Oct. 12: 2020 class Dinner Auction  
 Oct. 12: Textile Drive Choir Fundraising  
 Oct. 25: Homecoming Football Game  
 Oct .26: Homecoming Dance

### Gibson Ek High School

Oct. 14, 7:00 p.m.: PTA Meeting



October 3rd to 12th, multiple locations

The Seattle Latino Film Festival celebrates the art and culture of Latino film globally, showcasing domestic and international films, as well as selected films from each year's featured country.

For more information, visit: [slff.org](http://slff.org).

## PARENT EDUCATION

Did you miss one of the live ParentWiser parent education talks? If so, don't worry! Our amazing student and parent volunteers have recorded some of the talks and made the replays available for Issaquah School District PTA members. You can find them here:

<https://www.parentwiser.org/watch-online>.

## DENTAL VAN

Are you in need of free dental care? If so, email Rebecca Rice from the Issaquah Food Bank to be added to the waiting list for the next Issaquah dental care van at: [Rebecca@issaquahfoodbank.org](mailto:Rebecca@issaquahfoodbank.org).

## Health

Please be aware that there has been an important change in Washington State Law regarding vaccinations. Effective July 28, 2019 no personal or philosophical exemptions from the Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) vaccination will be available to families. The law applies to all public and private schools and licensed child care facilities in Washington State. If a student has had a personal or philosophical exemption in the past, we must now have documentation of MMR immunization from a health care provider on or before the first day of school on September 4, 2019 as a condition of enrollment. The new law does not affect religious or medical exemptions.

Two doses of MMR are required for all students in grades K-12. The two doses must be given at least 28 days apart. When your child has a first MMR vaccination, please let your school nurse know the date it occurred as well as the date the second dose is administered.

You are also welcome and encouraged to contact your school nurse if you have questions. More information can be found at the WA Department of Health exemption law change web page, including FAQs: [www.doh.wa.gov/mmrexemption](http://www.doh.wa.gov/mmrexemption).

## Theresa Gekeler, Grand Ridge Elementary Librarian



**Cultural Bridges (CB):** Tell me a little about your position and the work you do on a day-to-day basis.

**Theresa Gekeler (TG):** As the school librarian, the majority of my day is spent teaching the classes that come to the library. In our school, Grand Ridge, the 1st and 2nd grade students visit the library for 30 minutes a week. The 3rd through 5th grade students visit for an hour every other week. During those times, I may share a story. Other times, the students learn about the library, Internet safety, databases, research skills, technology, and more. Some of my time is spent planning these lessons.

*I recommend books and help the students browse and check out. I review journals and a variety of sources to determine what items to add to our collection. I communicate with the staff and parents regarding what's new in the library and maintain a library website. I gather materials for staff. I maintain a volunteer schedule and train the volunteers. I plan reading activities and celebrations. And, of course, I read a lot of children's books!*

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**CB: Why did you choose to be a Librarian?**

**TG:** After about 20 years as a classroom teacher, I bumped into an old colleague who told me she had become a teacher librarian in another district. I walked away from that conversation and was so jealous! I had always loved my job as a teacher, but when I was a little girl, I had wanted to be both a teacher and a librarian. That afternoon, I immediately got online to investigate colleges with library media endorsement programs. The following summer, I started the necessary coursework to add a library media endorsement to my teaching certificate. I love teaching and helping students, but as a librarian, I also am able to help staff members. I am able to focus on literature and research skills while sharing my passion for books with our students!

**CB: What advice would you give to a parent who has a student in the Issaquah School District?**

**TG:** The Issaquah School District is a district that supports its libraries. The libraries in our district have wonderful collections. The librarian is a valuable resource to your child and to you. Librarians can assist with book recommendations, online resources and databases. I suggest becoming involved in the school. There are lots of opportunities, maybe even in the library! Yes, volunteering helps the school, but it is also a great way to become informed and get to know others.

**CB: Tell us a little bit about yourself outside school.**

**TG:** When I am off the clock, I enjoy spending time with my husband and my two cats. They keep me entertained along with reading and watching the Seahawks. I also enjoy time with my friends.

*When I am not rushed, I like to cook. I like shopping, walking, and golfing. This summer I grew tomatoes and some beautiful dahlias. I love to travel – I visited my sister and friend in Michigan this summer. I am itching to go somewhere new . . .*



# Get to Know the Teachers!

By GARY ARTHUR  
*Issaquah Education Association President*

Teachers and specialists want your child to have a positive and productive experience in school. Our partnership with parents is critical to this.

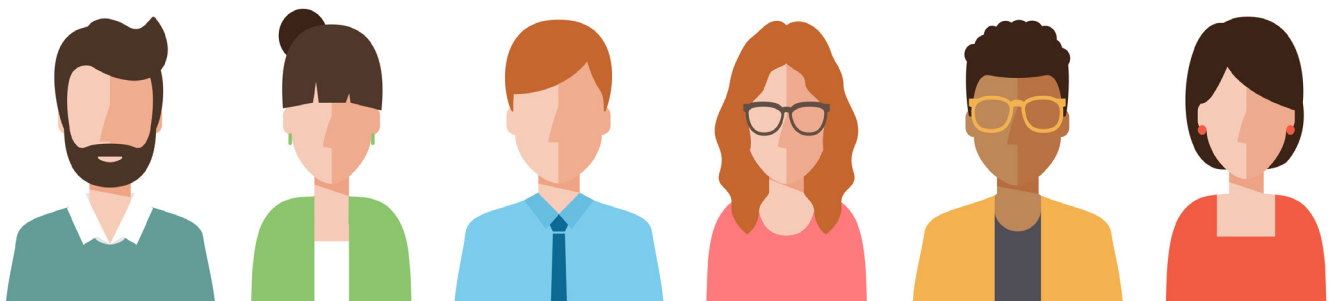
There's an amusing meme that describes a teacher's brain as a web browser with 2,897 tabs open. Your child's teacher's attention is spread across a wide range of student needs, curriculum issues, tasks, and classroom management strategies to keep the students moving forward in a positive environment. Still, communicating directly with you about your child is important to us. Below, I offer some thoughts about how and when to communicate with your child's educators.

Elementary schools have an hour called **Meet the Teacher**, on the morning before school begins. This is a time to introduce your child to his or her new teacher and acquaint yourself with the room, to drop off supplies and to help your child see what the teacher's expectations are. I hope you had the opportunity to assist to this activity, but if you did not, don't worry. There will be other occasions to meet the teacher.

All ISD schools will hold a **Curriculum Night**. This is an opportunity for you to get a 10,000-foot level view of the learning targets and each teacher's expectations. It is appropriate to ask questions about the subject matter or general questions about the delivery, but your child's teacher will be unable to spend significant time going into detail or discussing individual needs because the setting is not private. If necessary, use this opportunity to get the instructor's contact information and to let him or her know you may need to set up some time to talk on the phone or in person.

Finally, there are **Parent-Teacher Conferences** for elementary students. This is a designated time to ask questions about your youngster's progress and challenges. It is a private opportunity to talk with the teacher of your children. We recommend that you prepare for this meeting by writing down your questions, prioritizing your concerns, and being open to the teacher's observations. You're the expert about your child, whereas his or her teacher is the expert on teaching students this grade level material. We both come to the table with important perspectives to help your child succeed in school!

Check our individual teacher websites to know our contact information as well as about grading practices, critical dates, and how to get help if needed.



## Issaquah

### Discover the Art of Tai Chi

Sundays, October 6, 13, 20, 27 [4-5 p.m.]  
Issaquah Library: 10 W Sunset Way

Discover Tai Chi for exercise and relaxation with instructor Si Fu Richard. He has been practicing this beautiful art form for decades, since his early teens. Learn the basics of Tai Chi (stances, steps, hand and foot positions, movements, mind and body coordination, etc.). This ancient Chinese martial art exercises the mind and body through slow and fluid movements. Please register online at: [www.kcls.org](http://www.kcls.org) or call 425-392-5430.

### Day of the Dead

November 1 [6:30- 8:30 p.m.]  
Blakely Hall: 2550 NE Park Dr, Issaquah, WA 98029

Celebration to honor your loved ones, pets, or anyone who has passed away – feel free to bring a photo, note or special offering to add to the community altar. We'll have activities for all ages. Event is free; food truck will be available for purchasing dinner.

### Day of the Dead Celebration

November 2 [5:30- 8:30 p.m.]  
Issaquah Depot Museum: 78 1st Ave NE

Enjoy a Family Celebration with crafts, food, music, a big piñata and more! This event is free and open to the public. If you would like to participate, contact us at: [latinoclubofissaquah@gmail.com](mailto:latinoclubofissaquah@gmail.com).



## Sammamish

### Cultural Festival of India, Namaste India

Saturday, October 5 [12-6 p.m.]  
Sammamish Commons Plaza at City Hall: 801 228th Ave SE

A collaboration between the City of Sammamish and Vedic Cultural Center, this festival dives into the rich theme of Indian art and culture, featuring entertainment from local, regional and international talent and showcasing many varieties of classical and folk dance forms. There will be activities for all ages including flower mandala and garland making, face painting, henna and more. Come for the food booths, a free vegetarian food truck and much more! Find more info at [www.facebook.com/VCCFestivals](http://www.facebook.com/VCCFestivals).



## Reading with Rover

Thursdays October 10, November 14, December 12  
[6:30-7:30 p.m.]  
Sammamish Library: 825 228th Ave SE

Build reading skills and confidence by reading aloud to a certified therapy dog in a welcoming environment. Reading with Rover is a community-based literacy program working with schools and libraries throughout the greater Seattle area. Ages 6 and older with adult. No younger siblings please.

## Diwali Bazaars

- Saturday, October 12 [2-8 p.m.]  
North Bellevue Community Center:  
4063 148th Ave NE
- Saturday, October 12 [12-7 p.m.]  
Residence Inn by Marriot Bellevue:  
605 114th Ave SE
- Saturday, October 12 and 13 [11 a.m. – 7 p.m.]  
Courtyard by Marriot Bellevue:  
11010 NE 8th St

## Very Merry Sammamish

Friday, December 6, 2019 [5-7:30 p.m.]  
Sammamish Commons Plaza at City Hall: 801 228th Ave SE

This festive and fun family event is a perfect way to kick off the holiday season. Enjoy a petting zoo, face painting, crafts, live entertainment and treats. The event is free to the public. Food will be available for purchase. Special guests will also be on-site for photo-ops: Santa, Ice Princess, Ice Queen and a Reindeer Truck!



## Create Collage Greeting Cards

Saturday, December 7, [10:30-12 p.m.]  
Newcastle Library: 12901 Newcastle Way

Create unique collage greeting cards using upcycled materials ranging from sheet music, dictionary pages, winter books, magazines and scrapbook paper. You can make up to five greeting cards during the program, and go home with the knowledge of how to make cards from materials you have at home. For ages 10-Adult. Presented by Emily Mallory, artist. 25 spots available. First come, first seated.



## Renton

### We're in Business!:

### Empowering Latino Small Businesses & Entrepreneurs

Saturday, October 12 [12:30-3:30 p.m.]  
Renton Highlands Library: 2801 NE 10th St

Come join us! You'll hear success stories from entrepreneurs in the Latino community, how other Latinos have started and grown their own businesses. You'll get valuable tips and advice on how to start or grow your own business, and you can share information about your products and services.

Children's activities, refreshments, musical entertainment and raffle prizes will be provided. Families welcome. This FREE event is open to the public.

### Create a Sugar Skull with Metal Embossing Workshop

Tuesday, October 22 [4:30- 6 p.m.]  
Renton Library: 100 Mill Ave South

Mexican households commonly feature tin decorative items that celebrate Day of the Dead. Learn to create designs using embossing on different metals such as brass, copper and aluminum. All supplies provided.

### Truck or Treating

Friday, October 25 [6-7:30 p.m.]  
Renton Community Center: 1715 Maple Valley Highway

Girls and boys ages 10 and under will enjoy this spooktacular evening by 'Truck or Treating' at a variety of vehicles like the Stoneway Concrete Cement Mixer, The Seafair Clowns bus, an Antique Fire truck, Police Units, City of Renton's Public Works trucks and more!

New this year, strolling characters will be available for great photo opportunities. This is sure to be a horn honking, clowning around great time!



## Battle of the Gingerbread House Competition

Thursday, December 19 [4:30-5:30 p.m.]  
Renton Library: 100 Mill Ave South

Create and participate in a gingerbread house competition. Food, supplies and prizes are provided. Registration begins at 10 a.m. on Monday, November 18. Register online [www.kcls.org](http://www.kcls.org) or call 425-226-6043. All 3rd-12th graders are welcome.

## Ravishing Women Festival, 2019

November 24 [12-7 p.m.]  
Hyatt, Renton: 1053 Lake Washington Blvd North

An inspiring evening celebrating women with beauty, brains, courage, strength, and talent. Ravishing Women wants to reach women of all demographics, social status and ethnic backgrounds, helping them transform their dreams into reality.

Come and enjoy various cuisines, jewelry suppliers, artifact booths, and many international non-profits with their representatives. Learn about their women leadership awards, networking and have fun at this cultural extravaganza. Tickets available at [Sulekha.com](http://Sulekha.com).

## Seattle

### Diwali Ball

Saturday, October 12 [7:30 p.m.]  
Seattle Art Museum: 1300 1st Ave

A night filled with bountiful food and drink, fortune telling, dance performances, henna, dancing and more!

### Diwali, Lights of India Festival

Saturday, October 26 [12 p.m.]  
Seattle Center: 305 Harrison St

Flower mandala arrangement, henna, sari booth, food, music, and more. This event is free and open to the public.

### Day of the Dead: Community Night Out

November 1 [7-9 p.m.]  
Seattle Art Museum: 1300 1st Ave

Celebrate Day of the Dead by checking out a *tapete*, sand painting installation inspired by Oaxacan traditions. Enjoy a dance performance, art activities, live music, and more.

### Day of the Dead Festival

November 2 and 3  
Seattle Center: 305 Harrison St

The Mexican Day of the Dead celebration honors departed loved ones, traditionally by making altars and bringing special foods, marigolds, toys and other enjoyable items to the cemetery for a festive day of remembrance. This celebration is full of color, sounds and the smell of incense and flowers. Free to the public.

## Halloween Safety Tips

Watch for little ghosts and goblins on Halloween, as your neighborhood transforms into the haunting grounds for dozens of trick-or-treaters. Drivers need to be extra careful of children dressed in costumes. Many costumes are difficult to see at night, or include masks that limit the wearer's visibility. In the excitement of Halloween, some of our littlest ghouls and goblins may also forget the rules of road. Parents, keep your children safe on Halloween by:

- Dressing them in costumes that fit well and are outfitted with reflective tape.
- Avoid masks that will distort or impede vision.
- Give them a flashlight or glow sticks.
- Remind them that they should always look both ways and cross only at corners or crosswalks.

## Issaquah Santa's Backup: Police Holiday Patrols



With the holidays around the corner, don't end up on the naughty list this season. Issaquah police officers are increasing patrols to avert thefts during the year's busiest shopping days. Think of them as Santa's backup. They're also out to caution shoppers if their vehicles and valuables are left too susceptible to prowlers and other Scrooges. Here are some easy tips you can use to prevent crime from ruining your holiday cheer:

- Lock your vehicle every time you leave, even for a short time.
- Don't leave valuable items in plain view.
- Don't leave your vehicle running unattended.
- If you place items in the trunk, do it discreetly or before you arrive at your destination.
- If you see somebody acting suspicious or looking into vehicles, call: 425-837-3200.
- Use #SantasBackup to find tips and photos from police throughout the season!

## Celebrate Sustainability This Holiday Season

The holiday season is a great time to go green and help preserve the planet. As a bonus, going green can also save money and reduce stress. While we feast, give gifts, and travel this holiday season, we also consume a lot of resources and generate lots of waste. The amount of household garbage in the United States can increase by 25% from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. To help lessen your impact—and your stress level—the City of Issaquah suggests you to follow these tips:

- Give experiences instead of stuff, to help reduce waste from the production and packaging of goods.
- Compost your food scraps and be sure to use and eat all of your leftovers to reduce food waste.
- Donate excess food to food banks and old toys to charities.
- Upgrade to LED efficient holiday lights and recycle the old ones.
- Wrap gifts in recycled or reused paper.
- Make sure you use reusable or compostable plates and utensils when it comes to big celebrations.

## Legal Help

Don't hesitate to contact the Eastside Legal Assistance Program, a non-profit civil legal aid organization that helps people with family law, immigration, bankruptcy, and general law issues, as well as legal aid for domestic violence survivors throughout King County.

**Volunteer attorneys conduct around 30 free legal clinics every month in Bellevue, Redmond, Kirkland, Issaquah, Renton, and Kent.**

Additional clinics meet at other locations throughout King County. ELAP also holds public presentations on various legal issues in public libraries, community centers, and schools. And there is no charge associated with any of the work that ELAP does!

To make an appointment for a free consultation with an attorney, call 425-747-7274 Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. This line is available in both English and Spanish, and through the use of telephonic interpreter services, ELAP is able to accommodate other languages as well.

## Empowering Parents

Are you a frustrated parent trying to get your child to complete their homework and/or chores? Is there a little too much "drama" in your home? Address these issues now when things are not as bad as they could be!

The Parent Project is a nationally recognized program designed for raising children in these challenging times. Many parents have taken advantage of this opportunity to gain more confidence in their parenting skills through this convenient and effective program.

The Parent Project was created specifically for parents with difficult or out-of-control adolescents. Parents learn and practice specific prevention and intervention strategies for destructive behaviors-from truancy, alcohol and other drug use, gangs and other criminal behavior, running away, to violence and suicide.

This program is sponsored by the City of Issaquah and facilitated by two Issaquah Police Community Resource Officers, for parents/caregivers of kids 5th grade through high school. The Fall session starts on October 10th. To register visit, <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-10-week-parent-project-tickets-70787452175>.

## The Gift of Giving

Are you looking for an activity to show your kids the real meaning of the holiday season? Holiday Gift Barn is one of the biggest and most exciting annual events put on by the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank in our community. Thanks to thousands of donors and almost 400 volunteers, over 1,800 children received gifts for the holiday season last year. Pickering Barn turns into a huge department store where parents choose gifts and stocking stuffers for each of their children. They also have a gift wrapping station and offer child care so gifts can remain a surprise until Christmas morning.

### How can you help?

Organize a gift drive with friends from work or school and donate brand new, unwrapped gifts for children ages newborn to 18. Gifts can be dropped off at Pickering Barn on December 2nd and 3rd, between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Most volunteer opportunities are for adults only, although there are a few slots available for responsible high school kids ages 16 and older. For more information on donating or volunteering for Holiday Gift Barn, visit <https://issaquahfoodbank.org/holiday-gift-barn>.

### Interested in registering for Holiday Gift Barn?

Do you need extra help during the holiday season? Check our website for more information and latest updates on this year's Holiday Gift Barn, December 4th and 5th, 2019. Registration for Holiday Gift Barn will open in November for families residing in the Issaquah School District. For those living outside the Issaquah School District, but within our clothing bank service area, holiday shopping will be available for parents at the Issaquah Food & Clothing Bank the second week of December.



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BELLEVUE

ISSAQUAH

KIRKLAND

NEWCASTLE

REDMOND

SAMMAMISH

## What Does it Mean to be a Latino Student Today?

*"It's weird because wherever you go, you feel people saying bad things about you because of your background. Weird at school because kids think they can do anything but whenever you do something, you are always the one getting in trouble and the punishment. Sometimes we feel unsafe at school."*

*"In my school, other students rarely pay attention to what ethnicity you are. Meaning that not being white doesn't stand in the way of your education. But if you are any other demographic other than Caucasian, schools leap at the chance to celebrate the schools' diversity. Being a bi-racial student, though, often does get me mislabeled on a social level. Often times, my peers assume that I am fully white just due to my physical appearance. This is here to show that although most people don't care if you are a minority, they will still make assumptions based on how you look."*

*"My classmates are usually so surprised when I tell them that I'm biracial. They will say things like "Really? You don't look Mexican" or "Wow, I couldn't tell". I feel as though these statements are unfair because they are looking for a certain stereotype to confirm the fact that I'm in the Latina category."*

*"Being a Latino student at my school is no different than being any other ethnicity, meaning that there is no discrimination against the race. I believe that my school has a very open "mind" for all cultures due to the fact that there are so many at my school. Nobody treats me differently because I'm mixed race. I know that other kids aren't as lucky where they go to school due to the some of the stigma against the culture."*

*"One of the coolest things about being a Latino student, and biracial especially, is that we are able to identify with multiple cultures, not only in school but everywhere. Ethnically, I am half white and half Mexican but I feel like I fall more along the lines of the "American" culture. Something that I do notice around school though, is that the other Latino kids not only are ethnically Latino but culturally Latino as well. What I mean by this is that they conform or identify more with Latino culture than American culture. I think that this is amazing because it gives us more diversity and gives other kids, who maybe aren't as familiar with other races, an opportunity to see how different people see the world."*

*"It might seem like it is hard to understand where you belong in the whole spectrum of cultures but I think understanding the fact that you don't have to be entirely one or the other makes a big difference. Being a minority is never treated like a bad thing, at least where I go to school and I believe that that's how everything should be."*

*"We get the same respect from teachers as other kids, except that some students believe in stereotypes. They think that Latinos are different than them when we are really not. We are the same: our parents have good jobs, we have normal houses, we live in amazing neighborhoods, we do fun after school activities, in fact we do everything just like them. Also sometimes people say really bad things about Latinos that are not true. I wish everybody would understand that we are all the same. And I believe that this happens with all kind of races. I like to keep that in mind!"*

*"Being a Latino in this community is just fine, you are not treated differently. Most people get along here, and there is always a friend just around the corner. Also most of my friends think it's cool that I speak Spanish, they always try to learn it and they think it's special that I can speak it, in a good way!"*

*"Being a Latina at school is sometimes difficult. There are students or even teachers who look at you differently. There are many negative things. As a Latino you have less than other persons have. You are given less help. There is barely anyone you can relate to. If there is a problem, and you are involved in it you are usually the one to blame and the one that gets the most punishment because of what you look like or who you are. People are created equal and should have the same rights no matter how you look or your background."*

# A Special Pick-Up Sticks Game

By ALICIA SPINNER  
Cultural Bridges Magazine Editor

This summer I had the opportunity to travel to Asia. While we were in Singapore, we learned the significant meaning of a monument that is two pairs of chopsticks. The design of the four pillars, each resembling a chopstick, symbolizes the four main cultures of Singapore multiracial society. The words inscribed on them are in four languages: English, Mandarin, Malay and Tamil. What struck me the most was that the color of the chopsticks was all white and they were all united at the base, the same way the cultures are integrated in this country's society.

I immediately started wondering, how could we do a similar monument to represent the cultures that form our society? To start, I thought, we would need to use many more sticks of many more colors! And unfortunately, since our cultures are not that united in their core, the sticks would probably not be connected at the center, nor would they all be placed straight up. Maybe they would look similar to the ones from the Pick-Up Sticks Game.

**Classes are made up of children of all races, from many cultures. But what are the rules?**

With all the rich diversity that our communities have, sometimes classrooms feel exactly like that. It's as if somebody dropped a bunch of "sticks" onto a tabletop. Classes are made up of children of all races, from many cultures. But what are the rules? I would like to think that just as the game of Pick-Up Sticks, the goal is not to disturb any of the others while raising our own.

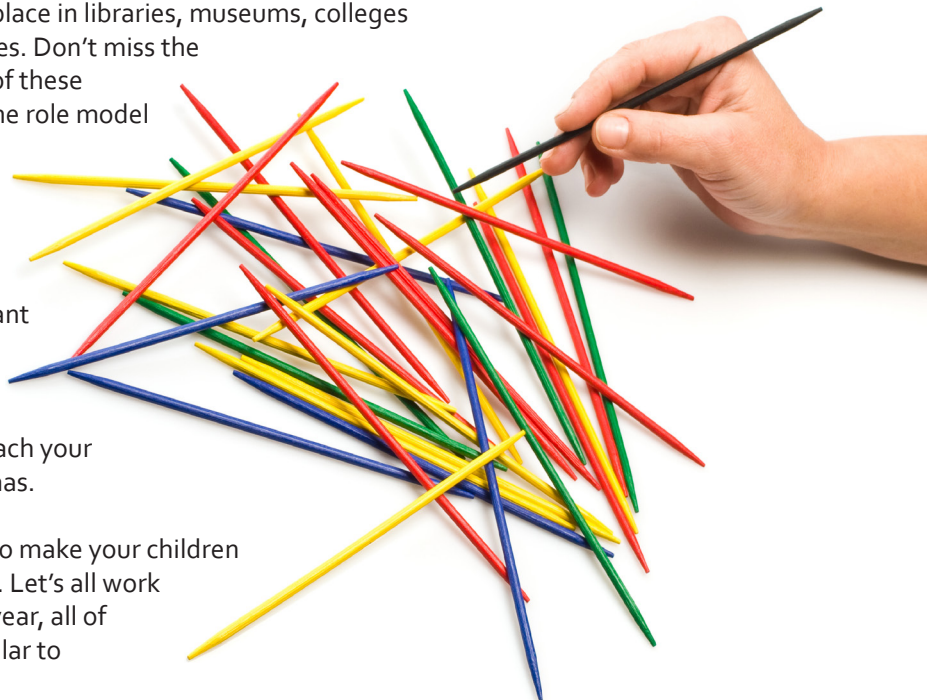
Very early in their elementary school days (and even before), kids become aware of and sometimes intrigued by the difference in the way people look and behave around them. As a parent, I know that children ask the most challenging questions. In my case, it seemed like these questions always occurred when I was driving on the highway with the worst traffic or weather conditions! But, it's very important to use these opportunities to talk openly with our kids and help them learn to respect differences and understand similarities among their classmates and peers.

Children's books and events that celebrate an ethnic group or holiday are wonderful resources. During the month of October, Hispanics will be celebrating their heritage. The month encompasses independence anniversaries for Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, and Chile, as well as the Day of the Dead in November.

There will be plenty of events taking place in libraries, museums, colleges and other community gathering places. Don't miss the opportunity to go as a family to one of these events. No activity is as powerful as the role model of a child's parents. Let your children see that the adults in his/her life are culturally sensitive and respectful.

The Indian community will also be celebrating one of their more significant holidays, Diwali. Many other cultures will celebrate the winter holidays in December, and there are numerous books and events to teach your children about Hanukkah and Christmas.

Take every opportunity that you can to make your children understand their classmates' cultures. Let's all work together so by the end of the school year, all of our "sticks" see themselves more similar to one another and are more united.



# THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS!



**Cultural Bridges** serves Issaquah School District families to increase parent engagement and lead to greater student success.

We provide navigation support, host parent/student events and publish quarterly magazines translated in six languages.

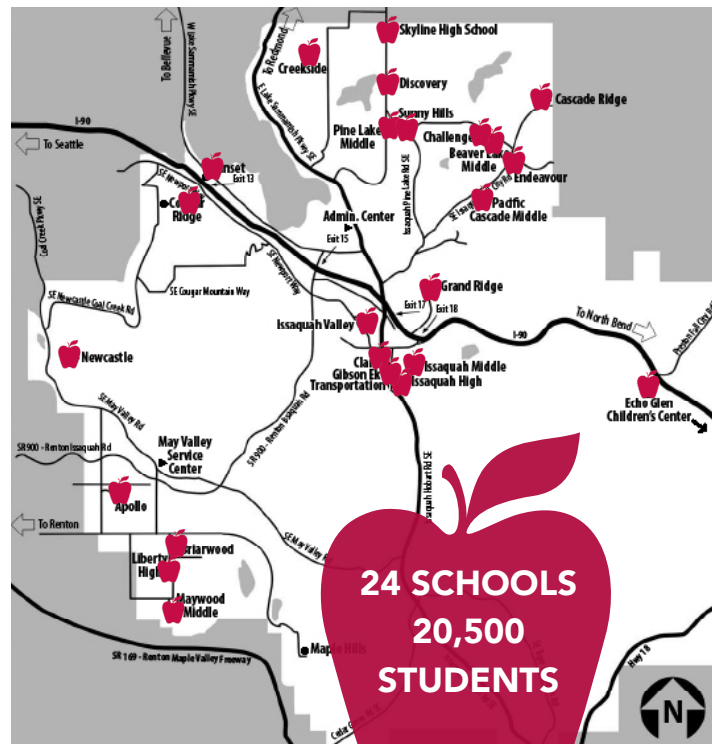


# Fueling Success for Every Student, Every School.

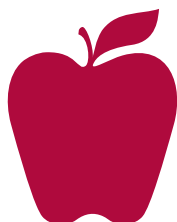
The Issaquah Schools Foundation is a non-profit fundraising and friend-raising organization that supports students in the Issaquah School District which covers a span of 110 square miles and seven municipalities including Issaquah, Sammamish, Bellevue, Newcastle and Renton. We work closely with the Issaquah School District to fund programs like these that open doors to opportunities:

- After School Homework Help
- STEM/Robotics Clubs
- Band, Choir & Artistic Support
- Cultural Bridges Parent & Student Resources
- Art Education & Support
- Backpacks & School Supplies
- Food & Snack Aid
- Parent Education & Teacher Grants

The path to success is unique for every student. Please join us in helping every student succeed in every school.



**Donate Today at [isfdn.org/donate](https://isfdn.org/donate)**



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FOUNDATION



Step Up  
for kids