



Tahoma Teaching and Learning Department

Learning Journal

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NOW YOU KNOW!

- Tahoma High School is among the top 1,200 public high schools in the nation for participation in Advanced Placement classes.
- Tahoma School District is the first in King County to attain Level One Green School status, with all eight schools meeting the county's Level One Green Schools standard.

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Sustainability discussion packs 'em in

The room buzzed with excited conversation. High school students, teachers, community members, representatives of local government, state agencies, private organizations and businesses traded questions, challenged each other's ideas and then drew up lists of ways they think students can become more involved in their community as they strive to make the world more sustainable.

The May 20 gathering was a collaborative effort by the Tahoma School District and the City of Maple Valley to begin exploring how students can make active contributions toward identifying and achieving environmental and economic sustainability in their South King County community.

The meeting is an extension of the school district's growing emphasis on environmental sustainability as part of students' regular curriculum. Tahoma has won ac-



Maple Valley-Black Diamond Chamber of Commerce President Kevin Kalberg joins in the discussion with students, teachers and community members.

claim for curriculum it has developed, such as "Sounding Off on the Sound," which focuses on the Puget Sound ecosystem and its influence on the economy and ecology of the Puget Sound region.

Ideas generated during the meeting will help determine next steps and an action plan.

Gilda Wheeler, program

supervisor for Sustainability and Science in the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, participated in the Sustainability Summit and said she is impressed by Tahoma's curriculum and its effort to bring together a variety of community members to discuss sustainability with students.

Welcome to your learning newsletter, Tahoma!

Thank you for reading this first edition of what will be a quarterly publication that focuses on the work all of us are engaged in to bring 21st Century learning to Tahoma students.

We are calling this newsletter the Learning Journal,

which reflects our effort to chronicle at least some of our learning journey.

The Learning Journal will provide us with a way to connect with each other. Tahoma is no longer a sleepy little rural school district. Instead, we have become a dynamic force in education that is earn-

ing growing recognition for its innovative programs and forward-thinking curriculum.

If you are engaged in learning activities that you would like to share with others in our district, please contact Kevin Patterson in the Public Information Office: kpatters@tahomasd.us

CELEBRATIONS!

- Budget reductions curtailed summer school but that doesn't mean students won't be getting some help. The district is sending a series of newsletters and learning materials to parents of students in grades 1-6 during the summer. The first batch was sent on June 15 by e-mail, using the SchoolMessenger system. We immediately were flooded with return e-mail from grateful parents who appreciate help in keeping their kids engaged in learning. A similar program to maintain math skills also is under way.

T&L team profile: Toni Ashley

There is No *Them*, Only *Us*. When we in the Tahoma community talk about “the District” or about “Teaching & Learning,” who exactly are we talking about?

Today, say hello to Toni Ashley. Many of you will have corresponded with Toni by e-mail. The major projects Toni works on include scheduling, distributing, and recovering district core assessment materials and managing the district curriculum hosted on SharePoint. Questions Toni regularly answers include, “When will I get my students’ scores back,” and “how do I post these revisions?”

Have any district curriculum notebooks on your shelves? If they are less than nine years old, chances are, Toni created them.



Toni Ashley, surrounded by her work.

Toni has two children in our system, Nicole is in Ms. Reynoldson’s class at GP and Ryan is in the 8th grade at TJH. Toni’s family is job 1 for her. She loves the flexibility that working in T&L affords her. She also loves working in an environment where everyone is kind, nurturing, and understanding—where people

care about one another. When she’s away from work you’d most likely find Toni playing games or otherwise enjoying time with her family. When she’s at work, most people “find” her using e-mail. But you could also find her by heading into the Teaching and Learning office, turn right, and right again.

Teachers design Digital Citizenship document

Earlier this spring, six 10Tech Teacher Leaders, representing kindergarten through fifth grade, worked to finalize the K-5 Digital Citizenship Scope and Sequence, a process that began last fall.

Early in the school year, all elementary 10Tech Teacher Leaders were asked to identify the key technology skills and concepts that they wanted students to have as they enter their classroom. Using this list, and the state’s recommended technology GLES for each grade level, 10Tech Teacher Leaders worked throughout the win-

ter to draft a scope and sequence that combined and refined both sets of goals.

In May, the small group of six (Beth Mosti, Christine Thurston, Teresa Eccles, Brenda Skeen, Ruth Markert, and Brandon Betlach) further refined the document and began to identify specific details such as when a skill is introduced, developed and finally mastered; where lessons will need to be written to help teachers teach the identified skills; how frequently a student will need to practice the skill during a given school year; which skills can be

embedded in existing curriculum, etc.

Over the summer, lessons will be written by teachers, plans will be made for sharing the document with staff and a plan for implementation support will be developed.

Teachers’ input to this process has been crucial to its success.

At the end of our day of work in May, the group expressed quite a bit of excitement as they looked forward to providing teachers with some guidance and support regarding using technology in their classroom.

T&L sends thanks to Tahoma teacher leaders

The Teaching and Learning department is grateful for the wonderful ideas, commitment, and support that teacher leaders provide as we develop and implement quality curriculum and instruction in the Tahoma School District.

“We want to extend our appreciation to all of the teacher leaders who help in the work of the department and the critical role they play in supporting the members of their teams as we continue our journey to Classroom 10,” Nancy Skerritt, Assistant Superintendent and Director of Teaching and Learning, said. “Some of those dedicated teacher leaders are shown below. To all of them and others who support and assist in the work – THANKS!”

Curriculum Development Lead Teachers 2009-2010

Virgie Warren
Brenda Skeen
Cindi Bennison
Kristin Conklin
David Aaby
Deanna Sund
Renee Stroup
Denise Strom
Tom Dudley
Barb Gholston
Brett Thompson
Rob Morrow, Jr.
Darcie Muller
Lindsay Hatch
Jeff Heil
Kevin Hurt
Felicie Freeman
Michelle Ehring
Dan Nelson
Charisse Braun
Ann Hobson
Brooke Dillon
Jennifer Gosnell

Suzanne Gardner
Kimberly Allison
Chris Feist
Jerry Gaston
Jan Clemesen
Wendy Ward
Kelly Rademacher
Amy Hulme
Lenae Wainscott
Barb Bucy
Renee Denny
Sara Saverud
Gary Conner
Russ Hayden
Barb Bucy
Renee Denny
Lance Fischbach
Tracy Krause
Tom Milligan
Alyssa Hurt
Jeana Haag
Debbie Folkerts
Kyobi Hinami
Paul Sayan
Laurel Toliver
Marianne Sager
Laura Bennett
Cheri Merrill
Joven Bills
Candi Loman
Ethan Smith
Kristin Edlund
Teresa Mjelde
Chris Koehler
Renaе Hanson
Todd Baker
Loretta Baker
Cary Collins

Content Area Facilitators

Barb Gholston
Tom Dudley
Tanya Boynay
Traci Cline
Joven Bills
Erin Hayden
Teresa Mjelde
Chris Koehler
Kristin VanHoomissen
Jerry Papers
Steve Kent
Felicie Freeman
Jeff Heil
Ben Todd

Cary Collins
Malinda Shirley
Dale Lehman
Val Monroe
Lara Lindersmith
Anne Hobson
Suzanne Gardner
Tracy Krause
Stella Patrick
Marcey Anderson
Chris Feist
Rob Morrow jr
Darci Muller
Lindsey Hatch
Mary Sager
Ken Riggs
Sara Saverud

Elementary Math

Renaе Hanson
Sue Baldwin
Kathy Blevins
Parry Kiffer
Karen Roberts
Julie Rodriguez
Melissa Morlock
Anne Marie Zahradnik
Clark Kostohris
Becky Balmores
Melissa Tughan

Tech Summit

Stephanie Hofferber
David Aaby
Tina Newbrey
Callie Greenfield
Rick Haag
Loretta Baker
Erin Hayden
Doug Burnham

10Tech Teacher Leaders

Stacey Benson
Jeanne Lagerquist
Lori Piche
Andrea Garmey
Ruth Markert
Brandon Betlach
Tim Talmadge
Bethany Belmondo
Samantha Watkins
Lorrie McMahon
Brenda Skeen
Melissa Morlock

Rachel Cragar
Tina Newbrey
Tom Dudley
Patty Stillmaker
Kathryn Strojan
Laurie Harrington
Pam McKinney
Mike Jackson
Jennifer Gosnell
Jaclyn Rupert
Nathalie Norris
Alyssa Hurt
Alison Querro
Ryan Walston
Connie Shelters
Jamie Mercer
Carol Bonner
Beth Mosti
Rachelle Rose
Nancy Hash
Lisa Mocquet
Shelly Gaston
Melissa Flatt
Tina McDaniel
Dara Kostohris
Christine Thurston
Teresa Eccles
Virgie Warren
Jessica Cooper
Scott Mitchell
Teresa Eccles
Vasili Andrews
Dale Heimbigner
Sam Atkinson
Laura Bennett
Renee Stroup
Kevin Hurt
Kristen VanHoomissen
Bud Cross
Loretta Baker
Steve Kent
Lora Gillingham
Jami Suhovernik
Bill Weis
Robert Morrow Jr.
Crystal Hess

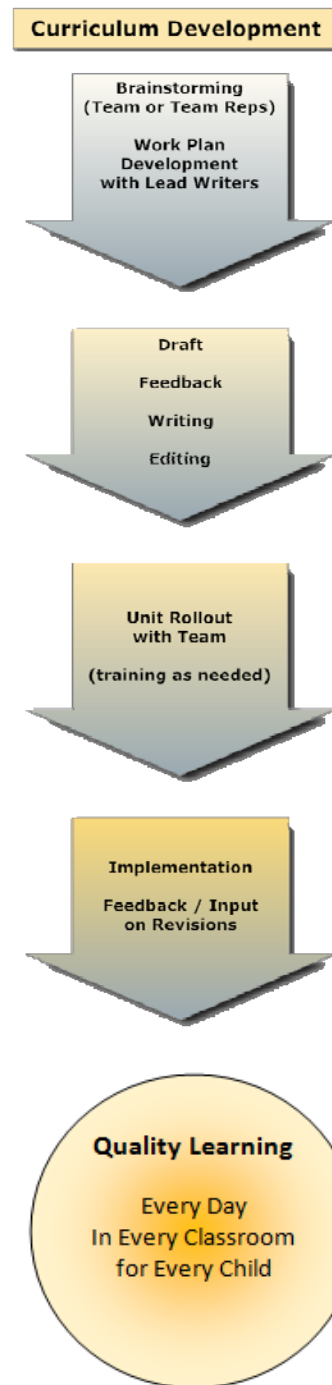
Curriculum development: It's a process

Have you wondered how the Classroom 10 curriculum is developed?

Teachers are actively involved throughout the school system in designing and creating curriculum that embeds the components of Classroom 10 including key concepts, thinking skills, Habits of Mind, and Tahoma School District Outcomes and Indicators. Currently, we are focusing on the documentation of language arts and social studies curriculum at the junior and senior high schools, the K-12 Health and Fitness curriculum, a few elementary units, and several electives at our high school including Drawing and Painting and Alternative Education.

Over the past three years, teachers and administrators have worked to identify core curriculum units, determine key concepts and skills based on the Washington State EALRs and embed the Classroom 10 processes of learning. These include thinking skills, Habits of Mind, district outcomes, technology applications and best instructional practices.

The process begins with conversations with departments, grade levels or representative teachers. Typically, a member of the T&L Department meets with lead teachers to develop a work plan. Units are identified based on present practice and opportunities to make change. Then teachers collaborate with the T&L Department to outline the lessons that will be developed. Depending on the interest of teachers, the leads will draft the units, seek feedback from those that they represent and then make revisions. Sometimes, members of the T&L Department draft the



lessons and then get feedback from the teachers, making revisions as needed.

Units are taught with the assumption that more revisions will

be made based on how the lessons work with the students. Teachers are encouraged to try the lessons as written, knowing that there will be opportunity for changes when the department, grade level, or teacher representatives come together to debrief what worked and what did not work with the kids.

Those of us in the T&L Department want to support the creative ideas of the teachers as we all work collaboratively to develop and implement Classroom 10 lessons and units. We envision common unit expectations and assessments with a variety of activities that can achieve the same goals. The “fixed” components of the lessons are the Classroom 10 elements (key concepts, thinking skills, Habits of Mind, etc.) while the “flexible” parts of the lessons are the specific classroom activities that support the students in learning the lesson goals. We envision an ever growing collection of lessons for our units that include options as the teachers find alternative ways to achieve the same instructional goals.

The lessons and units support teachers in implementing the state EALR’s while also developing the Tahoma School District Outcomes and Indicators. Common checks for understanding and summative assessments help monitor student progress in achieving both the state and district expectations. We write for the specificity needed by a new first year teacher, supporting delivery of a well aligned curriculum to the students in their classroom. Our goal is “Every student, every day, every classroom- Quality learning” and we believe that an aligned and documented curriculum provides high support for this high demand.