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# Committee evaluates technology

## Review confirms students need digital access

A special committee of parents, students, community members, teachers, staff and school directors completed its work recently to examine Tahoma School District's classroom technology status and its future needs. The conclusion? Technology and ways to adequately support it are essential to the district's Future Ready initiative that prepares students for success in school now and further training, college and careers after high school.

"We've examined the purposes and uses of technology in active pursuit of the most innovative tools that ensure access, sustainability, and equity for all students to support Future Ready Skills, Future Ready Plan, and empowered learning," Lisa Long, Grade 5 teacher, said.

The Technology Model Review Committee has held four full-committee meetings and a few subcommittee meetings since Oct. 4. The committee's work is the first step in a process created by the School Board to assess and plan for Tahoma's classroom technology needs. The School Board created the committee in response to failure of the district's technology levy renewal last February. Before going back to voters with another request for technology support, the School Board wanted to take a fresh look at the role technology plays, or should play, in the district's curriculum and



Committee members cast votes on elements of the final report of their findings that will be presented to the Tahoma School Board at its Feb. 26 meeting. The School Board created the committee to assess classroom technology.

student learning.

Because the district receives only limited support for technology from state funding, the technology levy provided most of the money needed to purchase equipment and software and to pay for technical support staff. As a result of the levy failure, the district has reduced spending for technology and is using reserve funds to maintain existing equipment. Support staffing was reduced for the current school year.

The committee's recommendations will be presented to the School Board and to the Technology Advisory Committee, a standing committee that will craft a new district technology plan. Once the technol-

ogy plan is completed and presented to the school board, discussion will begin on how to fund classroom technology, including a future technology levy.

During the technology model review process, committee members read and discussed research about education technology used in Tahoma and in other school districts.

"We aim to establish a shared culture of technology in the Tahoma School District, founded upon a goal of access to all learners, across all spectrums in an equitable way," Val Paganelli, school director and committee member, said.

They discussed, questioned and reached

consensus on a framework for educational technology that is built on these six core values:

**Empowered Learning:** "Technology is used in authentic ways to design experiences that challenge, engage and empower students to deeper levels of learning and demonstrating that learning."

**Future Ready Skills:** "Students skillfully use digital tools to support and reflect upon their acquisition and demonstration of the Future Ready Skills, both inside and outside of school."

**Future Ready Plan:** "Throughout elementary, middle, and high school, students build a vision for the valued, viable, and successful future – actively exploring, refining and planning their next steps."

**Access:** "Students and staff have the tools, skills, and opportunities to leverage technology to improve learning and productivity."

**Sustainability:** "Technology decisions are made considering identified aspects of sustainability and align to district goals and priorities."

**Equity:** "Efforts ensure that initiatives support the diverse/particular needs of different students, staff members, classrooms, and buildings in an equitable way."

Kimberly Allison, Instructional Technology Coordinator for the District, said: "The core values identified by the committee will help drive collaboration, creativity, and innovation that is aligned with our goals for Future Ready students. We're excited to start working, ensuring that all students have the experiences, skills, and opportunities to use technology to empower their learning."

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# Crafty custodian turns scrap wood into furniture at Tahoma High School

When Fanny King started working for Tahoma High School as a night custodian last fall, she noticed that the wire rack being used for lost and found items wasn't working well for the volume of items that students misplace regularly. So she decided to build a new one, an attractive cedar and pine armoire, even though she hadn't done much wood-working since a ninth-grade shop class many years ago.

The main hallway where the new lost-and-found stands is just past the east entrance of the school and is part of King's assigned area, which stretches from the performing arts center to the auto shop.

"I take pride in it," she said, explaining that the original inadequate and somewhat messy lost and found didn't do justice to the new building. So, King decided to do something about it.

"I'm just kind of self-taught," she said. "I'm not an artist. I just kind of freehand it."

King doesn't draw plans for the pieces she creates -- rather she has a vision in her head and lets the materials take her where they will.

"I love experimenting and doing new things," she added. "I see a need and I do it."

While traveling through the hallway that leads behind the stage to the band and choir classrooms, King noticed that students were frequently sitting on the concrete floor. So, she built them a bench, and adorned it with carved instruments, musical notes, comedy and tragedy masks, and this quote: "The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away."

At age 11, King moved to California from Nicaragua, where she was born. She talks daily with her grandmother, who still lives in Nicaragua, and who taught her about generosity, she says.

"It's better to give than to receive," King says, noting that she enjoys creating pieces for the high school that are both functional and help make it feel more homey. "I just hope I inspire people to be more giving -- to be kinder.



Guitars are safely hung on a custom rack that King built for the high school music program.

It's kind of a sad world sometimes."

Collecting wood is part of what she loves about her hobby, particularly if it is repurposed, such as the wood pallets that she loves to dismantle and reuse. She donates her time and the materials to the school.

Before working for the school district, King was a general contractor and also owned her own cleaning business. When the position with the district opened up, King's daughter, who attends Tahoma, told her she should apply.

Now, she works from 5 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. and goes home for a short rest. Then she gets up at 6 to see her daughter off to school and typically heads out to her workshop to tackle her current project. In addition to the lost and found and the bench for the performing arts hallway, King has built a long table for a staff workroom on an upper floor, a guitar rack for the band room, frames for the Student of the Quarter and National Board Certified teacher displays, wood-encased cooler boxes, tables for several staff areas and other benches.



King stands alongside the THS lost-and-found rack that she created.

"One of the many things that makes Fanny so special is her ability to see a need, create a solution and then build a beautiful and special piece," Associate Principal Judy Beliveau said, mentioning the lost and found project and a recent staff recognition program project. "Fanny leaves everything better than she found it, and lives by the motto 'It is better to bless others than to be blessed.' She is definitely a blessing at THS!"



Bill Clausmeyer

## Clausmeyer steps down from School Board March 1

The Tahoma School Board is reviewing applicants to fill a vacancy on the board, following the resignation of longtime director Bill Clausmeyer, who is stepping down on March 1 for personal reasons.

Eight people applied and the School Board will select which applicants to interview. Applicants must be registered voters in the Tahoma School District and must reside in Director District 2. The person selected to fill the vacancy will serve until a new director is elected by Tahoma voters in the November general election.

Clausmeyer in December told the board know that he would be resigning. He has served on the board for 21.5 years and is the longest-serving member of the current School Board.

Mary Jane Glaser has served on the Board for more than 20 years and said Clausmeyer has contributed greatly to the school district.

"Bill has been a steady influence in school board vision, goals, governance and our personal and leadership growth over his 21-plus years of servant leadership. We will miss him but wish him all our best in his next chapter. Thank you, Bill."

In a letter to the School Board, Clausmeyer explained that he is

leaving to devote more time to his wife, Pam, who has Multiple Sclerosis.

"Seven years or so ago, the challenges of her condition and my duties as her caregiver started to increasingly impinge on my available time. I am most grateful to all of my colleagues who have been most generous in making accommodations for my needs.

"Just shy of two years ago, Pam's path took a serious downward spiral; 18 months ago her condition became such that she had to move to a nursing home. I had thought that knowing she would be safe and in caring hands, my time would be freer. While I don't worry as much as I once did about her care needs, I find her emotional needs to be even more demanding. She so looks forward to my daily visits and is distressed when I am unable to make it. Like everyone else, I have to work to pay the bills. I go see Pam immediately afterwards. Every night I am in District fulfilling a Board obligation, is a day I am unable to visit Pam."

"I have come to the difficult decision that is time for me to give up this work," Clausmeyer said.



# Listening sessions yield ideas to build on success

As the superintendent for Tahoma School District, I am honored to have the opportunity to serve our great community. Since July, I have been very busy connecting with our families, staff, and community. This has enabled me to build relationships and learn about our district.

I would like to share some information from the Superintendent Listening Tour sessions as well as a few thoughts on my vision for our students and District.

The 22 Superintendent Listening Tour events from August-November included every school, each District department, PTA/PTO, and community. Approximately 900 participants discussed what's working well, what's working but needs improvement, and what's not working well. As a result, it is apparent that some of Tahoma's greatest assets include our dedicated staff, a positive climate and culture, and a deep commitment to our Future Ready Vision.

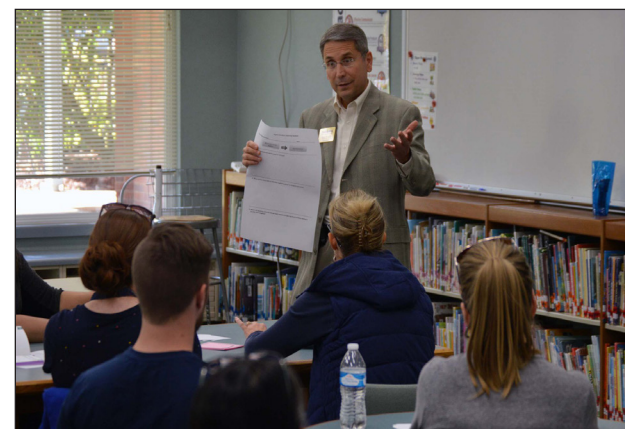
Some areas highlighted for improvement include strategies for dealing with enrollment growth, transparency and communication, and technology. All feedback was shared with the School Board in December and our leadership team has been diligently analyzing the information.



Giurato

Last year, the School Board made a commitment to our community to improve community engagement. I am pleased to announce that this spring, we will be implementing our new "Engage Tahoma" community engagement model. The topics for the first two sessions will include Finance 101 and Technology. We will also be developing a collaborative process for community and staff to help us develop a 10-year plan for enrollment growth. Watch for more information soon!

As we continue creating opportunities for parents and community to engage in our district, we will stay focused on putting students first and honoring the educators who support them. My continued commitment is to build on our successes and lead our district to the next level. It is my vision to transition students successfully into adulthood through a creating a culture in our schools and our community where failure to launch is not an option.



Tony Giurato conducted listening sessions with TSD staff, students, parents and community members.

Our dedicated staff and I will continue our efforts to fully implement our Future Ready Vision through attaining at least one year of academic growth for each student and enhancing our teaching of Future Ready Skills.

*Tony Giurato is Tahoma School District superintendent.*

## Tahoma seeks improved ways to measure student progress

### Different analysis, not more tests, provides more complete picture

From that first day of kindergarten to the final walk across the stage to collect a high school diploma, Tahoma School District students build knowledge and skills that are designed to help them prepare for the rest of their lives. Along that education path, teachers are constantly evaluating students' progress to ensure they meet learning goals designed to move them to the next level, while also instilling an appreciation and love of learning.

Finding the best way to evaluate student progress is a challenge faced by generations of teachers. In Tahoma, work is underway to identify how best to use existing data to help students, teachers and parents understand where students are on their learning journey.

In a recent report to the Tahoma School Board, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning Dawn Wakeley described the district's ongoing effort to measure student achievement, through a variety of assessments, and student growth over time – such as across learning units or the school year. The need for evaluating both growth and achievement speaks to the district's commitment to ensuring each student is treated as an individual whose



Teaching and Learning Executive Director Dawn Wakeley said the district strives to use multiple measures to determine each student's academic growth.

progress is best measured by using a variety of tools instead of a single measurement.

"We want to take advantage of understanding what's happening with both growth and achievement along the way," Wakeley said. "That's the place where we make things happen for kids."

Tahoma currently is using four different measures to understand student growth. Two of the measures, Student Growth

Percentiles and Gain Scores, use the state Smarter Balanced Assessments. Student Growth Percentiles are useful to indicate how a student performed in comparison to other students. Gain scores indicate students' progress toward meeting standard. But that is only part of what Tahoma teachers want to know. Two other measures are used to provide a more complete picture of each student.

Tahoma is beginning to use a measure

called "growth rate" to look at each student's performance in core content, such as math, by using both state assessments and district testing. In addition, Tahoma uses actual student work compared to learning progressions to gain more understanding of where each student is at and their next steps.

By using data that already exists, Tahoma teachers can get the kind of information they need to help students progress within the district's Future Ready learning structure.

"We don't need more tests," Wakeley said. "We want to take advantage of the data points we have. Then we want to ask ourselves a very important question: Are those different measures telling the same story or a different story of how a student is doing? If they are not all telling the same story, then we want to really look more closely at what's happening for a student."

Wakeley said the evaluation methods that Tahoma is using hold great promise but are still evolving. Parents can look forward to new ways that the school system will share progress students are making in both growth and achievement.

"There are limitations on every measure of growth, which is why we want to have multiple measures to give us a better understanding of each student," she said. "Kids aren't one-dimensional, so our measures shouldn't be one-dimensional or only one method."



## Grad Night organizers seek scholarship donations

Every year, the Tahoma High School PTA puts on a Grad Night celebration immediately following the THS graduation ceremony.

The graduates leave White River Amphitheater after the ceremony, and are whisked away to two different venues where they are fed dinner, breakfast and snacks. There are raffles and many activities to keep the graduates busy celebrating all night long. In years past, the committee has taken them to Lucky Strike, Family Fun Center, Trinity Night Club and the EMP. Other activities have included casino tables, inflatables, a DJ, henna artists, an espresso cart and photo booths. Graduates return to the high school the next morning by 6 a.m.

"Grad Night is a great way for seniors to celebrate graduation in a safe, drug and alcohol-free environment, full of great activities, good food and friends to celebrate this huge milestone," said Kristan Reed, Grad Night Committee co-chair. "We have an

average of 325 graduates that attend this party every year."

"The Grad Night committee needs your help. The committee is collecting donations for prizes and raffles from local businesses especially gift cards," Reed said.

The committee is also seeking donations toward scholarships to ensure all students can attend regardless of funds. Donations may be dropped off at the main office at Tahoma High School with "Grad Night" on the envelope.

Registration is open now for seniors, with forms available in the main office at THS and on the THS PTA website. Forms can be submitted online; dropped off in the main office; or mailed to THS PTA, PO Box 74, Maple Valley, WA 98038. Make checks out to "THS PTA." Tickets can also be purchased online through Brown Paper Tickets for a limited time. Any questions can be directed to tahomahspta@gmail.com (with "Grad Night" in the subject line).

## Buses easily pass surprise inspection

Washington State Patrol inspectors visited the Tahoma Transportation Department for a surprise inspection in January. The WSP completes one random inspection at every school district each year, examining 25 percent of the fleet (22 buses in Tahoma's case) and also conducts a more lengthy inspection of the full fleet each summer.

Inspectors examined all systems on those 22 vehicles, and determined that each of them were in 100 percent compliance. Getting a perfect score on a random inspection is rare and something for the mechanics to take pride in, said Tom Misfeldt, Director of Operations.

Superintendent Tony Giurado also complimented the department on the inspection report, saying that it's particularly notable in light of Transportation being short-staffed. Giurado happened to be visiting Transportation to learn more about how the



The Washington State Patrol gave Tahoma buses a perfect score.

department operates when the State Patrol inspectors arrived.

Giurado said that the visit helped him better understand the complexities of safely transporting Tahoma students to and from school each day. "That's done in a way to ensure safety but also in a way that our bus

drivers reach out and make connections with kids and build relationships.

"There are many moving parts -- having a bus fleet that is safe and ready to go, able to meet the demands of changing weather conditions; and also scheduling challenges," he said.

## Schools foundation contributes to theater

The Tahoma Schools Foundation in December voted to purchase a rear-screen projector for the Tahoma High School Performing Arts Center, for use by the drama department and other organizations using the PAC.

"The Board's decision to purchase a specific piece of equipment for the PAC, rather than to provide money for general funding for the musical, allows the Foundation to make a tangible investment that can also be used by more than one department or organization within the district for years to come," Board President Dan Neilsen said in a press release. "This is an investment in the PAC and allows students who perform and work onstage and backstage to enhance the quality of their productions and gives them opportunities to work with professional-grade equipment that is being used in the arts throughout the country -- that many students don't have."

The foundation decided to purchase the projector after teacher Melissa Bean requested funding for the spring musical, "Les Miserables." One of the costs that the drama program was hoping for help covering was the rental of several items including a rear-screen projector. Board member and incoming TSF president Josh Lyons suggested purchasing the equipment as an investment instead.

For more information about the schools foundation, visit: <https://tahomaschoolsfoundation.org>

## Father-daughter ball tickets on sale

The Tahoma High School PTA is now selling tickets to the annual father-daughter ball, which will be from 6-9 p.m. on Saturday, March 23 at Tahoma High School. The theme is "Love you to the moon and back," and the event includes dancing, a photograph, keepsake and light snacks.

For those who pre-register, tickets are \$40 for one parent/guardian with one

daughter, and \$15 for each additional daughter. The cost at the door will be \$50 for one parent/guardian with one daughter, and \$15 for each additional daughter.

To pre-register, visit <https://thspta.fdb.brownpapertickets.com> or mail checks to THS PTA, P.O. Box 74, Maple Valley, WA, 98038. Proceeds from the ball benefit the THS PTA Scholarship Fund.

## High school and beyond night set for March 5 at THS

Students and parents are invited to the second "High School & Beyond" Night from 6-9 p.m. on Tuesday, March 5 at Tahoma High School. The event will include a principal's welcome, career and college

fair and 30-minute seminars on a variety of topics.

For more details about the fair and the seminars, visit: <http://bit.ly/TSDhigh-SchoolBeyond2019>



Tahoma Community Report is produced by the Tahoma School District Communication Office and mailed to all school district residents four times a year. Contact the Communication Office by calling 425-413-3409 or by email to Kevin Patterson, communication director, at: [kpatters@tahomasd.us](mailto:kpatters@tahomasd.us)

The Tahoma School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

The following employees are designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination:

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25720 Maple Valley Highway  
Maple Valley, WA 98038  
425-413-3400  
[TitleIX@tahomasd.us](mailto:TitleIX@tahomasd.us)

### ADA Coordinator

Director of Human Resources  
25720 Maple Valley Highway  
Maple Valley, WA 98038  
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[ADA@tahomasd.us](mailto:ADA@tahomasd.us)

### Section 504 Coordinator

Director of Special Services  
25720 Maple Valley Highway  
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425-413-3400  
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