NOTES
Peninsula School District Parent Council
Wednesday, October 7, 2026
10:00am-12:00pm

I. Attendees

Beth LaTendresse (Facilitator), Krestin Bahr (Superintendent), Michael Farmer (Chief of Schools), Julie Shultz-Bartlett (Deputy Chief of Schools), John Hellwich (Director, Secondary Teaching & Learning / Thriving Generation), Maureen Brunetti (Artondale), Kate Kelley (Discovery), Nicole Kruger (Discovery), Stacey Hansen (Evergreen), Sarah Johnson (Evergreen), Eric Walsh (Harbor Heights), Olivia Mutek (Minter Creek), Lindsay Gathmann (Purdy), Stephanie Guimont (Swiftwater), Victoria Bercek (Swiftwater), Brittney Nordseth (Vaugn), Julie Hoffman (Harbor Ridge), Angie Costa (GHHS), Abigail Shoquist (GHHS), Marcy Trott (GHHS), Karmen Furer (Hands on Art)

II. District Update

Michael Farmer

- The 2030 Strategic Plan was adopted over the summer. This handout was shared with an overview of the 2030 Strategic Plan as well as "Peninsula School District Fast Facts". The metrics and data from last year are representing areas from the previous strategic plan. Once last school year's data is complete, metrics will shift to align clearly with the 2030 strategic plan.
- Enrollment for the 2026/27 school year is within 1/10 % of the projected enrollment.
- In 2025, a long range facility advisory committee led an assessment of the district facilities. This committee found that the areas most in need of attention were the Bus Barn and transportation facilities, Peninsula High School, and Gig Harbor High School. A Capital Bond Planning Task Force was created last spring to identify what is needed to address those facilities. The group has met 6 times and will present their recommendation to the school board at the October 27th School Board Meeting.
- The new math curriculum is fully implemented in Middle and High Schools. Teachers received a full day of training prior to the start of school and October 12th is an additional full day training. There are also coaches for the curriculum working with our teachers. Generally the response from teachers has been positive.
- Orchestra has started at all three middle schools. Currently this program is open only to 6th and 7th graders. Next year it will expand to include 8th grade.
- Transitional Kindergarten is operating at all 10 elementary schools.
- Activity buses for middle and high schools are now running four days a week - Monday - Thursday.
- The Parent Partnership Program for homeschool families has started.
- Question for School Representatives: How are communications going this school year?
    - Feedback from the group identified that communication from the district prior to the start of school was good. GHHS reps shared that the communication for open house and senior night came out too close to the events.
    - The group shared that there is still frustration with Tandem and a desire to have a more user friendly district calendar of events. Discovery shared that they have created a VPO calendar that parents can subscribe to and it also includes some school and district events.

- Purdy revisited the discussion of PTA/VPO access to printing and Michael Farmer will follow up with Ashley Murphy.

Julie Shultz-Bartlett

- GHHS has a new Athletic Director, Jordan Halstead.
  - Jordan provided a short bio to the GHHS Athletics PDC rep which was read to the group.
- The athletic playbook is being updated. Additionally the district is working on getting the middle school sports schedules included in an online calendar. The district is also working to ensure that middle school coaches are hired before the seasons start.
- Conference week is coming up 10/26-10/30. This week will be half days for elementary and middle school students. Parents are encouraged to take part in conferences.

III. Thriving Generation - John Hellwich

- Thriving Generation is a campaign to promote play-based childhood over phone-based childhood.
- Last year the group held 5 parent presentation events and presented to over 200 high school students. Phone free weekend challenges also took place last year with community donated prizes.
- The campaign is continuing to grow this year with an updated website and more presentations and involvement planned.
- Parent presentations can be either 60 or 90 minutes and will include a family therapist as part of the group presenting. Thriving Generation will be giving a parent presentation at Pioneer at their balanced bodies and minds event. If your PTA/VPO group would like to schedule a presentation or include it as part of an event at your school, you can reach out to John hellwichj@psd401.net.
- KindEd is a social media literacy curriculum which is being piloted this year at Goodman MS and by 6th graders at Harbor Ridge MS. This is being incorporated into their homeroom time.
- GHHS Students have started an analog club to promote phone free activities for students to participate in.

IV. PDC Representative Sharing

Pierce County Library

Food 4 All (formerly Food Backpacks 4 Kids)

- Holiday Food Drive starts October 1st. Flyer will be sent with the meeting notes - please reference the flyer for specific information.
- Groups looking to organize drives this fall can reach out to Food4All directly to coordinate and identify most needed items. www.food-4-all.org Visit the website to volunteer or get more information.

YMCA

Young Men's Service League

- Young Men's Service League is a non profit organization focused on community service. Moms and their teenage sons volunteer together in the community. Currently looking for new members from this year's 8th grade class. Flyer will be sent with meeting notes.

Hands on Art - Karmen Furer

- There are still 5 weeks left for the first HOA project, "Amazing Trees of Color"
- On November 11th (Veterans' Day Holiday) HOA will be having a Galaxy Theater takeover. This is an annual HOA event that is free to attend - donations accepted. Artwork will be on display in the lobby. There are two movie options this year - Dog Man and the live action version of How to Train Your Dragon. Flyer will be sent with meeting notes.

Artondale

- Finishing a two week theater program with C Stock. The play Finding Nemo will have two performances. Cost for the two week theater program was $200 per student.
- Trunk or Treat will be more of a harvest fest this year.

Discovery

- The fall festival will be held on October 23rd including a trunk or treat.
- Build a Piñata night will be during the first week of November. This was a successful event last year.
- There has been a lot of parent feedback in the shift of the STEAM teacher away from K-2 with a focus on just 3-5. Parents did not feel that this was clearly communicated to them prior to the change and would have liked to have understood what caused this change prior to its implementation.

Evergreen

- PTA is working to collect sizes for spirit wear from students. The principal wants every student to have an item of spirit wear so the PTA is working on that - 71% of students have sizes submitted.
- Family night was held on Sept 29th with the theme of Float on In. Rootbeer floats and food were served - the turnout exceeded expectations and food ran out early. Valor Threads mobile spirit wear vendor was at the event selling spirit wear. The PTA made $900 from the sales of spirit wear.
- Trunk or Treat will be on October 30th at the Longbranch Improvement Club (LIC). There will be a trail with a Disney Villains theme. Looking for volunteers to help set up and work the trail event.
- Read a Thon will be in November.

Harbor Heights

- Attended a Mariner's Game at the start of the school year - 121 tickets were sold!
- Boo Bash on October 30th.
- Looking at options for theater groups - may choose not to use Missoula Children's Theater again.
- Had a Panera takeover at the end of September and A Couple of Scoops Takeover on October 9th from 4 to close.
- Chipotle takeover scheduled for October 20th 4-close and Fondi takeover for November 4th.
- Looking into hosting a Jingle Bell Bingo family night on December 4th.

Minter Creek

- Fall event will be on October 30th from 5-7. There will be free activities as well as activities requiring tickets to be purchased. Candy donations are being accepted for the event.
- Minter, Evergreen, and Vaughn held a 3 day takeover competition at El Sombrero. Each school had a night and were competing to raise the most money. However, all the funds raised from the three days of the takeover will be split evenly between the three schools. The winning school will get a trophy and be recognized.

- Read a Thon will be next month. Receiving book donations from Bikes for Books.

Pioneer

- Astro Dash fundraiser took place and raised $32,000. This met the fundraising goal and as a reward the planetarium will come and host an event at the school.
- Balanced Bodies and Minds event was held on October 8th.
- Trunk or Treat event will be on October 23rd.
- The Near Space Balloon from the launch last June landed in a tree on tribal land. In order to retrieve the balloon, an arborist will need to assist. If anyone knows an arborist who may be willing to donate their time, have them reach out to Pioneer PTA.

Purdy

- Monster Mash will be held on October 22nd. Looking for more volunteers to decorate trunks for the trunk or treat - could be high school students looking for volunteer hours!
- Ice Creamery takeover on October 16th from 11 AM - 8 PM. Must mention Purdy PTA.
- 1st grade parents are starting an art club on Mondays from 3:30-5:30. This is currently only being offered to 1st graders but could expand. This is starting as an 8 week program.
- Purdy PTA is happy to share other schools events on their social media - just message the information!

Swiftwater

- Currently students have 2 PE classes per week - one indoor and one outdoor. The outdoor PE classes overlap with recess creating some space issues. The current solution is to have the 3-5 outdoor PE classes walk to the YMCA/PenMet fields across the street for class.
- Fall Carnival was already held - this was a small fundraiser. The first hour of the carnival was a low sensory time. This was really well received and was a great addition to the event. There was a separate entrance and activities were kept quiet during this time. There was also a great turnout of teachers and admin at the event.
- Ending Read for Success soon. Current fundraising is at $15,000 and the goal is $23,000.
- The garden is getting a greenhouse. There is a gardening club which has grown to 45 students this year.

Vaughn

- Completed a fundraiser through catalog sales - $12,500 was raised and the PTA will receive $5000 from that. It was a no effort fundraiser. Students also got a prize just for registering.
- Participating in El Sombrero takeover with Minter and Evergreen.
- Spooky Stroll will be on October 31st from 12-3 at the Key Peninsula Civic Center.
- 5th graders will be selling wreaths starting on October 26th.
- The key peninsula schools joint Carnival will be held at Camp Seymour this year on January 23rd. The YMCA offered Camp Seymour to host the event! The Pink Gorilla food truck will be there and funds raised from those sales will go back to Camp Seymour. Funds raised from Cotton Candy sales will go to KPMS.

Voyager

Goodman

- Tech Free lunch is happening this year and has been really well received.
- Still working on finding club advisors for several clubs.
- Yearbook will be a club instead of a class starting this year.

- Homework helpers will start soon and they are hoping to have high school students come tutor and provide homework help.
- Ice Creamery takeover on October 22nd from 11:30 AM - 8:00 PM.

Harbor Ridge

Key Peninsula Middle School

Kopachuck

Gig Harbor High School

- Scholarship Foundation
    - 50 Scholarship notebooks sold so far. November 5th is pick up date.
    - Bunco Fundraiser planned for November 17th 152 students applied

- Party Parents
    - October 30th handing out Halloween candy

Athletics

- GHHS welcomes new Athletic Director Jared Halstead. Halstead is a graduate of Olympic High School. He graduated from CWU with a Bachelors in Recreation & Tourism and Coaching, and a Masters in Athletic Administration. Post college, he worked at CWU (4 years) and the University of Oregon (2 years) managing recreation and athletic programs. Most recently, Halstead was at Issaquah High School as the Athletic Director for the last 3 years.
- Football is currently 3-2 overall and 2-0 in league play. GHHS won the Homecoming Football game versus Bellarmine and just beat the league favorite Lincoln on Friday night. Senior night is coming up next week.
- Girls soccer is 4-2 overall and 4-0 in league play. Girls soccer is preparing for a long road stretch in Oct but will host Peninsula HS on 10/27 for senior night at Roy Anderson.
- Volleyball is 5-3 overall and 3-3 in league play. A couple tough early losses to Timberline and North Thurston but have shown resilience throughout the rest of the season with 4 straight wins.
- Tennis is 4-1 on the season and currently our #1 doubles team is undefeated at 5-0.
- Boys and girls Cross Country are currently ranked 4th in the coaches association poll. The boys had an outstanding showing at the Fort Steilacoom Invitational with top 3 under 16:00. The girls Varsity team was hit with an illness bug so they've been running a little short-handed, but still posting great times to help earn the #4 rank team. The team is looking forward to when everyone is healthy and finishing the year off strong.
- Girls Swim & Dive. Returning state champion diver Jane Jackman just secured her trip back to the state meet and has earned a National All-American qualifying score.
- Water Polo is currently 5-2 coming into the back half of the schedule and looking for another deep run into the postseason!

Band / Choir / Drama

- Band

    - Fondi takeover on October 12th - Jazz ban will be playing.
    - Band is selling band merchandise such as clear bags for football games.
    - This spring will be a Disney trip - the trip is full and there are currently 4 people on the wait list.
    - Wreath sales starting.

- Drama:
    - Midsummer Night's Dream will be the fall play. Performances are on November 13, 14, 20, and 21.
      Musical Theatre Summer Camp - Matilda Jr.
- Choir
    - GHHS and Kopachuck will perform together at the first concert of the year on November 6th at 6:30 at GHHS.

Henderson Bay High School

Peninsula High School

NEXT MEETING Wednesday, November 4, 10:00am