



Glad Report

Gladstone Schools – Growing great people.

GHS achieves best ever graduation rate

Gladstone High's four-year graduation rate is 92.81%, a historic high. That's over 14% higher than six years ago, and over 10% above the state rate.

"We have great students who value their education and work hard to meet standards and expectations," said Principal Kevin Taylor. "All of our staff continues to work tirelessly to develop and maintain a supportive educational environment for students to succeed."

Gladstone again showed strong performance by historically underserved groups.

Over 92% of economically disadvantaged students graduated on time, a rate 10% better than last year and over 14% above the state average. The district improved the graduation rate for low-income students 28.7% in six years.

Nearly 90% of Gladstone's Hispanic/Latino students graduated in four years, over 10% above the state rate. That's an improvement of 17.66% in the past six years.

In 2020, 71.43% of students with disabilities graduated in 4 years, a rate 3.48% above the state average. That's a district improvement of over 21% in the past six years.

Measure 98, the High School Success Act, brought Gladstone High career-technical and college-level programs to keep students on track.

Investments included a freshman engineering/design class, a college/career counselor, a freshman success coach, and production tools for career-technical classes.



Save the date for GEF online auction!

May 13 is the date for the Gladstone Education Foundation [GEF] online auction to raise funds for students in our community. Silent auction bidding will take place May 9 to 16.

Since 2000, the Gladstone Education Foundation has raised over \$1 million to support schools.

Past projects funded by the GEF ranged from John Wetten library renovations, GCCF's dental clinic, and local restaurant gift cards for struggling families to ukuleles, Clothes Closet support, and distance learning technology.

"As students return to classrooms, we want to ensure our Gladstone students have the best possible education," said GEF President Terry Marsh.

More news about the event will be shared on the district Facebook page and the weekly news blast in coming weeks.



The Gladstone High Key Club, Honor Society, and Student Senate held a drive-through food drive in December.

They gathered 80 boxes of food to help 120 families across Gladstone have a happier holiday season.

Band instruction evolves during pandemic

Gladstone band teacher Seth Arnold feels like a first-year teacher again. Distance learning has ended daily group rehearsals, live performances, master classes, and travel to the All-State Honor Band. So band looks different this year.

“We have focused more on individual technique, music theory, guided listening, composition, writing about music,” said Arnold.

Arnold has prioritized social-emotional wellbeing for his students, providing a weekly story time and weekend gaming competitions so teens can interact.

“Positive things have come from this challenging situation,” said Arnold. “A number of students have played their instruments even more than usual. Others have begun learning new instruments on their own.”

Amazingly, school bands were able to perform a fall concert. Each student recorded an individual soundtrack, and choir teacher Josh Weir spent hours mixing the soundtracks to create ensemble performances.

“It was quite a lot of work, but the reaction from the kids, their parents, and the community has been worth it,” said Arnold. The bands' concert is available at <http://bit.ly/GladstoneBands>.



Students learn science of wellbeing

When Brad Kuntz's new class began in December 2019, students sat on soft cushions on the floor, in a circle. They were surrounded by periwinkle walls, murals, and low-key lighting, there to take the newest class at Gladstone High, the Study of Wellness and Happiness.

From global issues like climate change and COVID-19 to the school angst of social media and academic pressure, teens across the nation have experienced unprecedented levels of stress, anxiety, apathy, and depression. That motivated Spanish teacher Brad Kuntz to take action.

“When students look into the world, the problems seem insurmountable,” said Kuntz. “I want to give them tools to create a meaningful life, increase positive emotions, and connect with others.”

Founded on brain science, the new course is based on the most popular class at Yale, Psychology and the Good Life, and a similar class at Stanford.

The class studies neuroscience and psychology, why people have certain emotions, ways to focus on gratitude, and how to savor their experiences. They also learn ways to increase empowerment and how to alter negative self-talk.

“What surprised me most was the diversity of students who took the class,” said Kuntz. “This was an opportunity for popular kids and jocks to connect in meaningful ways with kids they never noticed before. We created a community where students felt safe enough to open up and share.”

“I want to give them tools to create a meaningful life, increase positive emotions, and connect with others.”

— Brad Kuntz

Class topics ranged from overcoming trauma and how to create a meaningful life to goal setting, motivation, and identifying personal values and principles.

“This adds brain science to our K-12 wellness program, combining behavioral science and positive psychology,” said Kuntz. “It will give students life-long tools.”

Winter trimester of 2021, the class is offered online.

<http://gladstone.k12.or.us>

Kraxberger tackles million page challenge

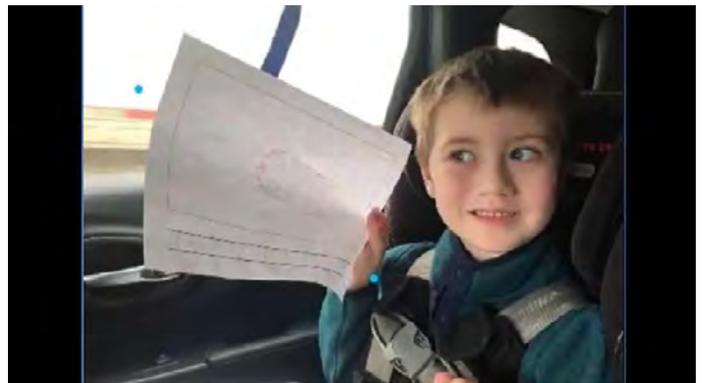
Sixth, seventh, and eighth graders at Kraxberger Middle School are competing to see which class can be the first to read a million pages by the end of the school year. The goal is 50 pages per student per day.

"The escape and entertainment that comes from reading is just as valuable as the academic practice students are getting," said language arts teacher Sarah Lennox. "We know the power of a good story."

Students are encouraged to read anything they can get their hands on -- articles, news, fiction, graphic novels, and e-books—as well as school reading assignments.

"The Million Page Challenge is a fun way to get excited about reading," said seventh grader Avery Smith. "I love how we can see other books that people really liked. It helps you find something new and different to read."

As of February 11th, the school has read 170,023 total pages. Sixth grade is in the lead with 60,089 pages, closely followed by eighth grade with 58,949 and seventh graders with 50,985. The current staff leader is Kelly Castillo, an 8th grade science teacher, with almost 5,000 pages.



Kindergarten authors books

After teachers read their class Todd Parr's book *It's OK to be Different*, kindergarten classes decided to create their own book. Each student provided an illustration and words for a page.

Students agreed that it's OK to lose a tooth, have big ears, play soccer, be silly, or have different colored skin.

Freshmen learn the science and design of clean water

Freshmen in the Gladstone Arts Technology and Engineering School (GATES) are learning about clean water through science, engineering, and design projects.

Each student designed a water filter in 3D using a free cloud-based application called Tinkercad. The designs were submitted to teachers and 3D printed at Gladstone High.

The 3D-printed filter was then sent home in the mail with all the components to build the filter and produce clean water.

Each student documented their filter

construction and created a presentation about clean water and earthquake preparedness.

Students were also introduced to the Water & Environmental Technology [WET] program at Clackamas Community College. The program certifies students in water treatment in just two years, leading to a stable job in the water treatment industry.



John Wetten students gear up for book battle

John Wetten fourth and fifth graders will again compete in the Oregon Battle of the Books.

The competition challenges students to read 8 books and then show their reading comprehension via a team competition to answer questions about details in each book.

This year 28 Gladstone children have joined the competition.

Books for the contest were provided through a \$1,250 grant from First Book, and the children who participate will get to keep the books.

T-shirts for the spring competition will be donated by the Gladstone/Oak Lodge Rotary Club.



George Farrah, a Luxor native, provided all Kraxberger seventh and eighth graders with a live virtual tour of three Egyptian historic sites.

Kraxberger students explore Egyptian sites

In December and January, Kraxberger seventh and eighth graders got to tour Egyptian sites, including the Luxor Temple, Queen Hatchepsut's Temple, and the Valley of the Kings and Queens.

The live virtual tour was arranged by social studies teacher Amy Otto, who planned it with Egyptologist George Farrah, her guide during a 2015 tour of upper Egypt.

"George started doing live virtual tours on Facebook because tourism is down in Egypt due to COVID-19," said Otto. "I asked him do virtual tours for our students, and he was thrilled to help."

"It was really fun, and I learned a lot," said student Josiah Sanderson. "I enjoyed learning about the mummification process and all they believe

about the afterlife. It's cool how scientists can learn so much from artifacts."

Student Grace Smith said the tour was the highlight of her distance learning experience. "I loved being able to see inside the Luxor Temple, Sphinx Avenue, and the market and streets of Luxor," she said.

"It has been such a special experience to bring in an expert Egyptologist to teach our students from one of the most amazing locations in history," said Otto.

"I am hoping that this is something we can continue to offer students even after the pandemic to enhance their learning about ancient Egypt," she added.

The Glad Report is published by Gladstone Schools to keep our community informed of school happenings.

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