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Three Gladstone school leaders to retire in June

After contributing many years as education leaders in Gladstone Schools, three administrators have announced plans to retire in June.

Wendy Wilson has served 10 years as Principal at John Wetten Elementary, working with her team to develop a rigorous academic program, successful interventions for challenged learners, and a Culture of Care that helps children build social-emotional skills.

Jere Applebee has been an employee of the district for 20 years, serving the past three years as the Director of the Gladstone Center for Children and Families [GCCF]. Prior to that he was Assistant Principal at John Wetten Elementary, and Athletic Director at Gladstone High. His skill in partnership development benefited all three roles, resulting in successes like the new dental clinic that opened at GCCF this month.

Patti Alexander has served 16 years as Assistant Principal at Gladstone High School, overseeing student activities, including the school's Adopt-a-Family project. Her efforts helped raise the school's graduation rate to one of the highest in the state.

"Wendy Wilson, Jere Applebee and Patti Alexander have been remarkable leaders in this school district," said Superintendent Bob Stewart. "We will miss each one, and each has made the Gladstone School District a better place."

3 PHOTOS

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After school program builds connections

For too many kids, middle school can be a bumpy transition from childhood to adolescence. That's why Kraxberger Middle School launched the KAOS after school program, Kraxberger's Awesome Opportunities for Students.

For many years, this free Northwest Family Services program has provided students with adult supervision and social connections each Tuesday after school. KAOS also offers a low-cost, month-long summer program.

"We provide snacks and a wide range of activities, from sports and games to STEM projects, crafts and homework or reading," said site coordinator Shauntel Stoughton. "The connections we provide are especially important for kids that usually go home to an empty house."

“It’s a great place to chill after school,” agreed eighth grader Justice Skei.

KAOS invites Kraxberger students to join the program at any time. The program is also seeking adult volunteers to enable them to expand opportunities for middle schoolers. Those interested can contact Stoughton at [sstoughton@nwfs.org](mailto:ssoughton@nwfs.org).

PHOTO: Kraxberger students Cody McMurtrie and Rylan Fisher play pick up basketball with Miles Brandon of Northwest Family Services during the KAOS after school program.

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Church renovates staff room at Wetten Elementary

When New Life Church [formerly Gladstone First Baptist] was in search of a service project, they called John Wetten Elementary to ask what was needed.

“We’ve been wanting to renovate our staff room for years,” said Principal Wendy Wilson. “This was the perfect gift, and our team is thrilled with how it turned out.”

A team of five New Life volunteers painted and decorated the room. Then they cleaned, re-stocked, and reorganized the cupboards and set up a coffee cart

“It was so much fun,” said project organizer Katy Nicholson, the church secretary. “I love organizing and decorating, and we all really enjoyed serving together.”

Photo: New Life Church volunteers Linda Newbloom, Katy Nicholson, Debbie Tuneberg, and Karen Tobin helped renovate the staff room at John Wetten Elementary. Albert Roy [not pictured] did the painting.