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Gladstone High School launches Mandarin program

This winter, the Gladstone School District expanded the Confucius Classroom program to include Mandarin language classes at Gladstone High School.

The program introduces students to Chinese culture and Mandarin language with the goal of building relationships between China and the United States. It is funded through a partnership with China's Hanban agency and Portland State University.

"Mandarin is spoken by more people than any other language," said Superintendent Bob Stewart. "Offering this class at the high school opens doors for students to gain a significant career advantage."

All students at John Wetten Elementary receive language lessons in Mandarin, learning, songs, games, crafts, and customs in the process. Forty-nine high school students are taking the new first year Mandarin I course, which will continue next year with the addition of Mandarin II. Besides language, students are learning about Chinese geography, arts, and cultural differences.

Teachers in the program are Hao and Xianling Li, a young married couple from China's Shandong Province. Both are certified to teach in Oregon. Previously they taught Chinese in Thailand and South Korea.

"My students are very happy to have the option of Mandarin," said Hao Li. "They want to learn more about Chinese culture and are interested to discover how different China is from the United States. They are especially excited about learning to write Chinese characters."

Gladstone schools are open to 2016-17 enrollment for students from other districts through April 1. For application information, call Natalie Weninger at 503.496.3935 or visit the Gladstone School District website.

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Gladstone teens plan talent show to help homeless youths

This fall, Macy Kingsley's class at Kraxberger Middle School studied the plight of homeless people. When they discovered that Clackamas County had 2,070 homeless people, they wanted to help.

Together, the class planned a fundraiser event that includes a talent show, an art auction, and a benefit performance by Portland Chamber Music. Proceeds will benefit two local support agencies supporting teens experiencing homelessness, Springwater Transitional Living and P:EAR.

The performance will take place at 6:45 p.m. on Friday, January 8, in the auditorium

at Gladstone High School, 18800 Portland Avenue. A \$4 donation will be accepted at the door.

“We will auction off 14 pieces of art created by youth experiencing homelessness,” said Kingsley. “They are compelling pieces relating to personal experience, wonderfully framed, and quite stunning.”

The event features eight student acts, including tap dancing, singing, guitar, and piano performances by Kraxberger students. The second half of the show will feature Portland Chamber Music, a group that works to bring art and music to all people regardless of their socio-economic status.

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Gladstone schools invite open enrollment for 2016-17

The Gladstone School Board voted to admit students from outside district borders in the 2016-17 school year, with open enrollment spots for students from kindergarten through grade 10. Applications, due April 1, are available at <http://gladstone.k12.or.us/>. For more information, call Natalie Weninger at 503.496.3935.

“As a small, close-knit community, Gladstone offers an innovative, caring education experience,” explained Superintendent Bob Stewart. “We work to serve the whole child, supporting individual needs while providing a robust academic program. Our small size means we can take the time to know each student.”

Gladstone’s full-day kindergarten will open spots at the Gladstone Center for Children & Families, a technology-rich program including weekly instruction in music, science, art, and physical education.

John Wetten Elementary will open spots in grades 1 to 5. The school provides weekly technology education, music, P.E., Chinese, and library time. Afterschool programs include art, science, and choir, plus clubs ranging from Chinese and robotics to speech and debate.

Kraxberger Middle School will open spots in grades 6 to 8. The school uses the AVID college-readiness system. Electives include art, band, choir, Spanish, and Chinese. After school programs include drama and robotics, plus intramural volleyball, cross country, and basketball.

Gladstone High will open spots in grades 9 and 10. The small, college preparatory school is known for having 36 college level courses, on-site career-technical electives, and Mandarin Chinese. Over 64 percent of students participate in sports, the arts, and activities ranging from robotics to Key Club. Academic support programs include after-school tutoring and Saturday School.

Each school will offer opportunities for tours or student shadow experiences

starting in the new year. To arrange for a tour, contact the school office.

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Auction to benefit Gladstone kids

To raise funds for education and youth programs in Gladstone, the Gladstone Education Foundation plans an auction and dinner on Saturday, February 20, at the Clackamas County Fairgrounds. The event theme is "Let's Make Waves," so wear your beach attire!

Those interested in event sponsorship, donating auction items, or purchasing tickets should call GEF Executive Director Tammy Tracy at 503.655.2777.

Tickets are selling fast, so order now! \$40 each or \$320 for a table of 8.

The last GEF auction raised over \$56,000 for classroom grants, athletic programs, and support of the district's Food Pantry and Clothes Closet.