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Gladstone schools add Chinese language instruction

This year, Gladstone Schools will offer instruction in Chinese language and culture to students in grades K-8. The Confucius Classroom program is possible through partnership with the Confucius Institute at Portland State University and HanBan, China’s national office for teaching Chinese language.

A teacher fluent in both English and Mandarin will be provided by the Chinese government, and she will stay with a local host family this year. Elementary and middle school students will study Mandarin, while exploring Chinese culture, art, literature, foods, and music.

“This is the next step in building a bridge to our new sister school, Middle School Number 89 in Xi’an, China,” explained Superintendent Bob Stewart, who traveled to China last spring.

“Gladstone’s mission is Growing Great People, and part of that work is preparing children for a global workforce. We are proud that Gladstone is one of very few schools in the area to offer this program.”

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Gladstone Schools refinances bonds, saving taxpayers

The Gladstone School District recently refinanced the remaining bonds from the 2006 bond issue, totaling \$15.9 million dollars. The sale will save the taxpayers over 5 percent, a total of \$805,040.

Taxpayers will notice the savings beginning in the 2024 tax year, when they will see and savings of approximately 22 to 24 cents tax per thousand dollars of a home’s assessed value.

The 2006 bond, approved by voters, funded creation of the Gladstone Center for Children and Families, renovations at John Wetten Elementary and Kraxberger Middle School, and a major remodel of Gladstone High, including the addition of a fine and applied arts wing.

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Gladstone Outdoor School receives \$20,000

Kraxberger Middle School in Gladstone has been awarded more than \$20,000 in grant funding for its sixth grade Outdoor School program. The school received \$10,000 from the Gray Family Foundation, and more than \$10,000 from Metro will provide sustainability curriculum.

The lessons, embedded in a week-long science camp, teach students to reduce, reuse, and recycle, while minimizing their impact on the environment.

“Outdoor School has been a life-changing, coming-of-age tradition for our sixth graders for over 40 years,” said Principal Nancy Bailey. “Kids return with a new way of thinking about their role in protecting our planet.”

Gladstone Clothes Closet fills back-to-school needs

Families who need school clothing for their growing children can find a selection of outfits at the Gladstone Community Clothes Closet. The facility provides free clothing, jackets, and shoes plus new socks and underwear for youths from birth to 21.

Managed by the Gladstone Ministerial Association, the Clothes Closet is open every Thursday from 3 to 5 p.m. and on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon. To get there, go to the north side of the Gladstone High School campus in a portable accessible via the fire lane off Nelson Lane.

“We’ve been blessed with a mountain of clothing donations from our community,” said project coordinator LaRae Applebee. “The back-to-school rush has begun, and we are happy to help families find what they need.”

Family Stepping Stones offers free parent classes

To help parents succeed at the most important job in the world, Family Stepping Stones offers several free parenting classes at the Gladstone Center for Children & Families.

Incredible Infants is a 10-week series for new moms and babies under 8 months. Each week covers new information about milestones in first-year development, how to care for and play with your infant, the importance of self care, sleep issues, and bonding. Space is limited for this series, so to register, call Chelsea Hamilton at 503.496.5764.

Three monthly drop-in classes at 18905 Portland Avenue provide information geared to the age of the child. Free dinner and childcare are always provided.

Beautiful Babies is for parents with children under 18 months. The group meets first Thursdays from September to May. Topics include child development, parenting styles, feeding, sleeping, and playing with your baby.

Terrific Toddlers is for parents with children 18 months to 3 years old. The group meets second Thursdays from September to May. Topics include toilet training, child safety, positive discipline strategies, learning through play, and ways to encourage language and social development.

Growing Up is for parents with children age three to six. The group meets third Thursdays from September to May. Topics include school readiness, healthy screen time, nutrition, love languages, and positive sibling and peer relationships.