



Washougal School District

Washougal School District in Washougal, Washington, is committed to seven elements of the Whole Learner Framework. These include culturally responsive classroom management, social-emotional learning (SEL), the development of all students' 21st Century Skills to prepare for success in college and career pathways, building rich learning experiences through cross-curricular connections, using AVID instructional strategies and student success skills, developing multi-tiered systems of support to ensure the success of all students, partnering with the community to be a hub of support and resources, and developing an "End Report" for the board and other stakeholders to convey a broad measure of student success.

A major component of Washougal's continuous improvement involves equity as a central tenet in the district's strategic planning process. This commitment involves a deep commitment to the success of all students, including equitable opportunities and outcomes that cannot be predicted on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, gender identity or expression, ability, or socioeconomic status. The district's "stretch goal" for equity is "to eliminate disproportionality in our data."

Washougal School District achieved Learning 2025 Lighthouse status for a variety of factors, including its articulated commitment to being future-driven. Its vision suggests that students must be prepared for success in a global economy. Students work collaboratively and are encouraged to engage in critical thinking. Through learning walks and inquiry cycles, the district has focused on improving instruction by developing collaborative structures and learning routines, emphasizing higher-order questions, encouraging student-to-student talk, and using rigorous learning tasks. In addition to its systemic commitment to AVID strategies and student collaboration, the district offers a range of programs and coursework focused on 21st century skills.

Key programs reflecting the district's guiding principles include its Learning Academy (an alternative learning environment that provides flexible options for students and families); a Dual Language Program; a Transitional Kindergarten; a District Equity Advisory Team; and a partnership with the Washington Educator Association and the University of Washington to provide Culturally Responsive Classroom Management training to all educators. Success indicators include a graduation rate that has grown from 74% to almost 90% over four years, a comprehensive Spanish-speaking family outreach program, and a shift toward "made-from scratch" meals for students to reinforce their sense of being valued.

Washougal reinforces its commitment to the Whole Learner by attending to the social, emotional, mental health, and trauma-based needs of all learners in addition to their academic achievement and cognitive growth. These core goals are fully articulated in the district's strategic plan, including systemic emphasis upon the following: effective instruction; equity embedded in every facet of the learning

community; partnerships to support students; and an emphasis upon career and college readiness, educational engagement, cross-institutional partnerships, and careful stewardship of resources.

A particularly impressive component of the district's success involves its ongoing commitment to partnerships that support all students. For example, "Unite! Washougal" is a community coalition that funds prevention specialists at middle and high school levels. This partnership is possible through the Washougal School District's ongoing participation in a federal grant (Drug Free Communities Grant). Due to the success of this coalition, Unite! was one of nine coalitions across the United States asked to present a report to President Biden's transition team. The coalition has also purchased Second Step programs for every elementary school (PK-5) and supports sustained SEL growth through Character Strong at the sixth through twelfth-grade levels. Washougal counselors have partnered to curate resources for families and caregivers as well as the community at large. According to district leaders: "As a result of our efforts, the graduation rate in Washougal has increased over the past six years. We are preparing students for the future through rigorous learning experiences and support for the Whole Learner. Our anti-marginalization work has led to improved outcomes for subgroups of students who have been historically marginalized. *We are Washougal Rising!*"