

COMMUNITY



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A Publication of Mount Vernon Schools



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WINTER 2016 NEWSLETTER

Featured Alumni »

You will find our alumni working in every field imaginable, changing the world around us every day. Take a look at what our alumni are doing today and where they started.

Featured Articles »

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- *Frequently Asked Questions – February 9th General Obligation Bond*
- *Giving Back to our Community*
- *Thank you to our 2015-16 School Calendar Sponsors!*

Every year at this time, our schools become wonderful examples of what it means to care for the less fortunate in our community.

From giving trees, to food drives, to toy drives, to efforts to “adopt-a-family,” our staff, students, parents, and administrators are engaged in ways to make a difference. These activities not only build school community, but more importantly teach students the importance of empathy and compassion for others. Some examples of these efforts from around the district are featured on page 6.

On the February 9th special election ballot, voters in the Mount Vernon School District will be asked to consider a bond proposition for school construction and renovations. If approved, the bond will provide funding to:

- Build a new elementary school on East Division
- Rebuild Madison Elementary School at its current location
- Expand LaVenture Middle School
- Replace the Mount Vernon High School Agriculture building with a 3-story classroom building, housing career and technical education, science, and other classes
- Renovate Mount Vernon High School’s Old Main building

These projects would add permanent classroom space for a total of 1,152 students.

Important information about the bond is included on pages 3-5. I encourage you to take a moment to become familiar with the proposed projects.

As always, if you have questions about any of the information included in this edition, please feel free to call or e-mail my office.



Carl Bruner
Superintendent,
Mount Vernon School District

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FEATURED ALUMNI

Our alumni are working to change the world around us.

One alum's journey from around the world to around the corner...



Renata Hoyle Maybruck

World traveler and 1994 Mount Vernon High School graduate, Renata Hoyle Maybruck, thought she was headed for a career in international service, but she discovered the best use of her education and experience was closer to home.

"My goal was to work for the United Nations or the World Bank," says Maybruck. "But I realized I could make a sizable impact in the community where I grew up, so I came home to Mount Vernon." Since then Maybruck has worked with several local social service agencies and is currently director of development and communications for the Skagit Valley Family YMCA, where she is preparing for a fundraising campaign to build a new facility.

Maybruck earned a BA degree in Cultural Anthropology from Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA and a Masters of Science in Anthropology and Development from the London School of Economics, London, UK. Her abiding interest in travel was sparked in Madame Redd's French classes at MVHS. She went to France and England the summer after graduation and caught the travel bug. Since then, Renata has visited, studied and worked in several European, Central American and Asian countries.

Maybruck says the most satisfying part of her work is raising awareness of the value social service organizations such as the YMCA bring to local communities. She credits some special MVHS teachers, such as Mr. Negley, Mr. Stromer, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Hobbs and Mr. Fraser, with helping her develop strategic planning skills, a sense of community and the ability to adapt to new situations.

Today Maybruck is raising a family with her husband, Darren, in the town where she was raised. She urges MVHS graduates to become involved in their communities and support current and future Bulldog students.

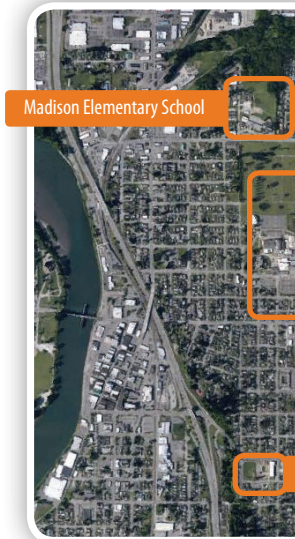
"...I realized I could make a sizable impact in the community where I grew up, so I came home to Mount Vernon."

- Renata Hoyle Maybruck



PRIORITIZED FACILITY NEEDS

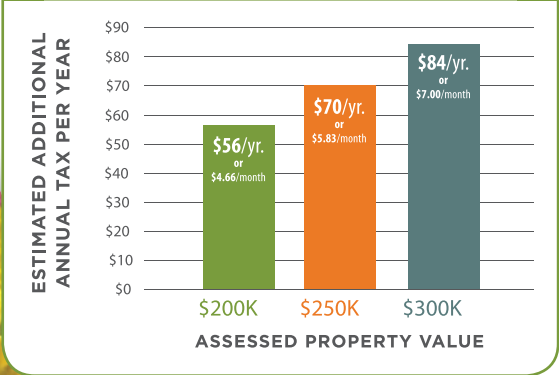
- PROPOSED NEW CONSTRUCTION
- SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS
- SAFETY UPGRADES
- EXPANDED OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS



Financial Implications for Taxpayers

TOTAL ESTIMATED COST
\$106,463,549

How would this affect my taxes?



Overcrowding at Mount Vernon High School and poor condition of Agriculture building

Proposed Solution

- 3-Story design for greater efficiency
- Space for agriculture science, robotics, manufacturing, and engineering
- 7 science classrooms
- 7 general purpose classrooms

Estimated Cost: \$17,218,789



- Modernize Old Main at MVHS: \$12.3M**
State Match: \$7.6M
- Build East Division Elementary School: \$33.7M**
State Match: \$6.1M
- Replace Madison Elementary School: \$33.6M**
State Match: \$6.9M
- Convert AG Building into AG/STEM: \$17.2M**
State Match: \$4.6M
- Expand LaVenture Middle School: \$9.6M**

3 new Nationally Board Certified teachers: bringing the district total of Nationally Board Certified to 64.

64

108 elementary school parents received certificates for completion of the 6 week inaugural MVSD PARENT ACADEMY program, acquiring new tools to support their children's education.



Poor condition of Old Main at Mount Vernon High School

Proposed Solution

Modernize Old Main

- Upgrade failing plumbing, HVAC, and electrical systems
- Address life safety issues, including seismic improvements, fire sprinklers, fire alarms, and security
- Enhance accessibility
- Improve energy efficiency to keep operating costs low
- Update classrooms with current technology

Estimated Cost: \$12,250,426



Middle School overcrowding

Proposed Solution

Expand LaVenture Middle School

- Add 8 permanent classrooms
- Expand cafeteria to ease overcrowding
- Expand library to provide additional learning spaces

Estimated Cost: \$9,588,270



Elementary overcrowding and poor condition of Madison and Lincoln

Proposed Solution

Build a new elementary school on East Division

- Capacity for 560 students
- 2-story structure to maximize site efficiency
- Energy efficiency building to keep operating costs low
- Up-to-date security
- Up-to-date classrooms with current technology
- Pedestrian and vehicular safety
- Apply state matching dollars from Lincoln Elementary; repurpose Lincoln

Estimated Cost: \$33,750,434

Replace Madison Elementary

- Capacity for 560 students
- 2-story structure to maximize site efficiency
- Energy efficiency building to keep operating costs low
- Up-to-date security
- Up-to-date classrooms with current technology
- Pedestrian and vehicular safety

Estimated Cost: \$33,655,629



7,617 credits earned
 by MVHS students at Skagit Valley College over the
 past 4 years is worth **\$870,623 in college tuition!**

Frequently Asked Questions – February 9th General Obligation Bond

What is a school bond?

A school bond is a means for financing additions and renovations to school facilities. Voters authorize District officials to offer bonds to investors and pledge repayment through property taxes collected over a specified number of years. Bond monies can only be used for school construction, remodeling or specified improvement projects. Funds cannot be used for salary increases or other District operating expenses. This differs from a school levy, which is a tax paid by property owners for the maintenance and operation of the District. School levies are typically voted on every two years in Mount Vernon. More simply put: Bonds are for buildings; levies are for learning.

When was the last time the District passed a bond?

The last bond passed by the District was in 2001. Since that time, the district's enrollment has grown by almost 1,100 students.

Why has the District chosen to run one large bond as opposed to two or three smaller bonds separated by several years?

First, the cost of each of the proposed projects is expected to increase over time. The longer we wait, the higher the cost of construction.

Second, the cost of operating and maintaining Madison and the High School's Agriculture and Old Main buildings continues to drain needed funds from classrooms.

Third, we are simply out of classroom space at all levels. Additional student growth, projected at 1.5% each year, will require the District to continue purchasing portable classrooms, at a cost of approximately \$120,000 each (including location and site work) and to continue offering some high school science classes before the school day.

Overall, how much classroom space will be added by the bond projects?

The 5 bond projects will add permanent classroom space for:

- 416 elementary students
- 240 middle school students
- 496 high school students

Who set the priorities for the bond measure?

A Facilities Advisory Committee—composed of interested parents and other community members, teachers, and support and administrative staff—met between February 2013 and November 2014 to study current facility modernization and expansion needs... After reviewing a number of alternatives and their related costs, the Committee recommended that the School Board consider issuing a bond to the voters including 5 projects, based on:

- Need for permanent space for an additional 800 students by 2024
- Status of District's current facilities
- Eligibility of projects for state assistance funds

Following an additional 20 months of detailed analysis and communication with a cross section of community members through individual meetings, neighborhood forums, and a community survey, the school Board voted, on November 4, 2015, to take a bond proposal to voters in the February 9 special election.

Can seniors and individuals with disabilities receive a property tax exemption?

Yes. If you are 61 years of age or older, or legally disabled, your household income is less than \$40,000, and you own and occupy your property, you could be eligible for an exemption from all or part of the property tax. Contact the Skagit County Assessor's Office at (360) 336-9370 for more information on how to apply.



Thank you to our 2015-16 School Calendar Sponsors!

- Saunderson Marketing Group
- Skagit Regional Clinics
- Mount Vernon Education Association
- City of Mount Vernon - Mount Vernon, Create a Great Life
- Halgren Orthodontics
- Skagit Pediatrics
- Williams and Nulle
- Public School Employees 1 - General Teamsters Union Local 231
- MVSD Board of Directors
- BECU
- Skagit Valley College



Learn more and watch our online videos about the upcoming bond measures!

www.mountvernonschools.org

Giving Back to our Community

Since helping one another is always an important part of the curriculum in Mount Vernon Schools, it is not surprising that our schools were bustling with creative activities to extend a hand to those most-in-need during the holidays.

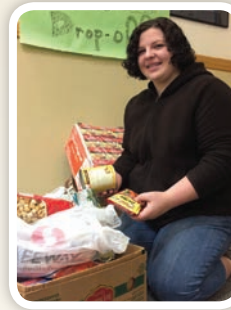
Thank you for the support from our many generous community partners, including; Soroptimist International of Mount Vernon, Mount Vernon Walmart, Mount Vernon Rotary and Mount Vernon Kiwanis, Neighbors In Need Food Bank, community businesses, neighbors and churches.



LaVenture Middle School

David Riddle, Principal

L.E.A.P. Club leaders are holding some of the dozens of specially wrapped gifts and food baskets that were assembled and delivered by their group and the CHIDO Club. Ten LaVenture families and students identified as homeless received these generous gifts.



Mount Baker Middle School

Jeff Ingram, Principal

The Mount Baker food drive drop off center was a busy place, collecting mountains of food items that were delivered to area food banks.



Centennial Elementary

Erwin Stroosma, Principal

Centennial was a busy place in December! Student Council leaders organized a school-wide charitable drive to support local animal shelters. Through the generosity of staff, students and community partners, Centennial families were supported with holiday gifts and needed items.

Little Mountain Elementary

Krista Paulson, Principal

Associated Student Body (ASB) leadership students led a school-wide effort to collect hundreds of toys and over 1,849 food items for 35 families and 82 children.



Madison Elementary School

Evelyn Morse, Principal

25 Madison families and 48 students were warmed by the donated shoes, cozy socks, hats, gloves and blankets from the Giving Tree. A food and toy drive brought in a generous 1,529 pounds of food items and dozens of gifts to add to the family baskets.

Washington Elementary School

Bill Nutting, Principal

The December "Warm Hearts, Warm Hands" mitten drive at Washington Elementary School brought big smiles to student faces. Students, families, staff and community worked together to provide holiday gifts for about 25 families and to stock the shelves of Neighbors in Need Food Bank with boxes of donated items.



Lincoln Elementary

Henk Kruitof, Principal

Associated Student Body (ASB) leaders display a few of the bicycles, helmets and beautifully wrapped gifts that were collected and delivered to 14 Lincoln families.

Jefferson Elementary

Tim Newall, Principal

Jefferson Student Council leaders show off some of the warm hats and mittens that staff and students collected to share with those most-in-need. The students also led a successful food drive to help support the community food bank.

