



In a Falcon Flash

March 9, 2011

Welcome

Dear Prairie High School Parents,

The start of second semester is well underway at Prairie, and I want to introduce our electronic parent newsletter to our school community.

One of my main goals for the high school this year is to improve the communication between school and home. I will be making a concerted effort to inform parents and community members of all the great things that are happening within our walls. We will be using technology to aid us in achieving our goal of improving our connection with you.

The main vehicles that we will be using to convey information will be our continued use of the school web page, Skyward, and Connect Ed. Also, we will be creating and updating an electronic newsletter on a consistent basis again, to improve communication between our school and home.

I am very excited to be part of this community and look forward to being a part of this learning environment. I will make myself available to meet with parents, students, and community members on a regular basis.

Jason Perrins, Principal

High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE) Begins Next Week

On March 15, PHS, along with the rest of the state of Washington, will begin the 2011 HSPE testing. The HSPE test measures the proficiency of students in high school and serves as the state's exit exam for reading and writing. Students in the classes of 2011 and 2012 must pass this assessment or a state-approved alternative in reading and writing in order to be eligible to graduate. Students must also pass the end of course exam in math (administered at the end of May) or state approved alternatives. If your student is a junior or senior who has not passed the HSPE, or a state approved alternative you should have received a letter and met with a counselor by this point. Contact the counseling center at 885-5002 if this has not happened.

Students in the class of 2013 and beyond must pass reading, writing, and science HSPE. Additionally, they must pass end of course exams in Algebra and Geometry.



Upcoming Events

March 15th & 16th

HSPE Testing
Writing
7:30 am

March 17th

HSPE Testing Reading
7:30 am

March 26th

PHS & Community
Painting Project
9:30 - 3:30 pm

April 12th

HSPE Testing
Science
7:30 am

April 14th

8th Grade
Open House
6:30 - 8:00 pm

April 19th

Parent Conferences
12:00 - 2:30 pm
&
5:00 - 8:00 pm

April 20th

Parent Conferences
12:00-2:30

All sophomores and upper-classmen who need to pass the HSPE will be taking the writing portion on March 15 & 16 and the reading portion on March 17. Science testing is not until April. Testing begins promptly at 7:30. Room assignments are posted outside the attendance office on Mr. McSheehy's window and reminders to students will be given, so they know where to test. Seniors, juniors and reclassified students who have not passed the WASL/HSPE will receive a hand written note during their 3rd period reminding them of the sections they must complete and the test room location where they should report.

A quick reminder to parents: if your student is testing, please make sure they get a good night sleep and a good breakfast before the test. Students are welcome to bring a snack. Remind your child that electronic devices such as iPods and cell phones are forbidden during testing. Students will be asked to put their personal electronic devices into their backpacks

Important Reminders

When thinking about Spring, it is important to remember a few things about student dress and appearance. Please review the guidelines in the student handbook regarding appropriate school clothing.

Parent Conferences on April 19th and 20th

Mark your calendars for a visit with your student's teacher

The Prairie High School parent / teacher conferences will be held on Tuesday, April 19th from 12:00 to 2:30 pm and 5:00 to 8:00 pm then, on Wednesday, April 20th from 12:00 to 2:30. All parents are encouraged to come with their student and meet with their student's teachers. All conferences will be held in the library and the commons. Please check in at the table in the main entrance.

Parents of the Class of 2014

This year we are preparing all freshmen to conduct a presentation for their parents. Students have or will prepare their presentation during their Falcon Transition class. We are expecting all 9th graders to give their presentation to their parents during conferences. Following your student's presentation, you and your student can visit and meet with the teachers. The presentation will last approximately 15 minutes. More information will be forthcoming.

What are those Waiver Days all about?

With the goal of continually improving our teachers' skills in the classroom, the Battle Ground School District held three Professional Development Days this school year. These Professional Development Days were also posted in your calendar as "Waiver Days." The focus of these days is to train teachers in instructional strategies that will increase students' learning.

Just as any professional must keep up with changes in their field as new and better ways of doing business emerge, teachers need to keep up with the latest research that will help them to maximize their effectiveness in the classroom. Our professional development days provide our teachers with the most current information so they can serve our students well.

On these days, we focused on a classroom practice called *formative assessment* that has been shown to improve a students' understanding of what is being taught. Formative assessment is a tool for teachers to continuously check for understanding and guide a teacher's decision about future instruction; they also provide feedback to students so they can improve their performance. As they serve as practice for students, just like a meaningful homework assignment

Our goal is provide students with well-trained, highly skilled teachers. Our professional development days will help us to achieve that goal.

Accreditation Process Begins

Every six years high schools who select to be accredited institutions must journey through a self-analysis process commonly known as a "self-study." The process requires schools to meet specific requirements like counselor to student ratios. It also requires an evaluation our school in many other areas related to student achievement. For example, we will review our mission statement, our approaches to student intervention, student services, and school culture to name a few. In short, we will be evaluating and/or reviewing almost every aspect of PHS as it relates to impacting student support and academic achievement. In order for Prairie High School to maintain our accreditation, we will need your help.

We currently have a school improvement team responsible for leading the accreditation process. We refer to this team as "SIT". The team is made up of teachers, classified staff, administration, and parents. Our SIT meets often and will continue to meet as we journey through our self-study.

During the first year of the self-study process, we collect information on a variety of aspects of school improvement. During January and February, the Prairie staff completed a series of surveys addressing school improvement. In the next couple of months, we will be inviting parents and students to participate in our self-study process with a survey. The survey will be posted online and will come to you in a link to Survey Monkey. We will also be collecting information from students.

Your input is highly valuable as Prairie and the school improvement team work through this process toward renewed accreditation. We will keep you updated through the newsletter and in posts on the PHS website. Thank you in advance for your input.

Questions or comments?

Email us at: perrins.jason@bgsd.k12.wa.us **or call 885-5000**