

BRIDGES by GAPS

Greater Albany Public Schools is proud to announce a new mission statement and values and beliefs, crafted by the Strategic Planning team from the survey data shared by our students, staff, and community members.

After analyzing data from roughly 1,200 surveys, 17 focus groups, seven staff discussions, and four community forums, the Strategic Planning Team met for five four-hour sessions to capture the district's future focus.

The mission and values and beliefs were crafted by the 20-person Strategic Planning Team and multiple drafts were vetted by several groups before being presented to the GAPS Board on Feb. 10. The Board approved the new statements at their next meeting on Feb. 24

A central piece of the mission, values, and beliefs is the term BRIDGES, which appears both in the mission statement as well as serving as an acronym for the district's seven central values and beliefs. The Willamette river bridge that crosses into downtown Albany has already been part of the GAPS district logo and the concept of bridges is integral in the district's initiatives.

"The idea of the bridge is to connect," Superintendent Melissa Goff stated at the Feb. 10 School Board meeting. "We know we have students that are further behind than other students and we want to build a bridge to their success and close the gap that has been created.

"We talked about bridges in a lot of metaphorical senses and we liked the counter message compared to our acronym of GAPS. If we can get everyone saying what we do is 'build bridges' I think we'll have gone a long way."

The values and beliefs, built off the acronym BRIDGES, were heavily driven by the feedback from the community. Key words including Build, Respect, Instruct, Design, Grow, Engage, and Strengthen serve as a blueprint for how the community envisions its school system.

"It was very important to us that equity and relationships

MISSION

*Building bridges to
lifelong learning and
brighter futures*

VALUES AND BELIEFS

- B**UILD lifelong learners
- R**ESPECT individuals and community
- I**NSTRUCT at the highest level, preparing students for life
- D**ESIGN systems that represent all voices
- G**ROW social, emotional, and physical well being
- E**NGAGE multiple perspectives
- S**TRENGTHEN relationships



shined through in many ways," Goff added. "Making sure that instruction and learning were called out explicitly were also important. The D for design systems comes from one piece of feedback we received particularly from those internal in the organization that there was a need for systemic consistency."

"It amazes me how much work and time it takes to thoroughly create these statements," GAPS Board Chair Jennifer Ward said. "This shows the kind of work that has gone

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into this over the last few months so thank you to all of our stakeholders and all of our students and everybody that has been a part of the team for the hours, the thought, and the heart that were put into it."

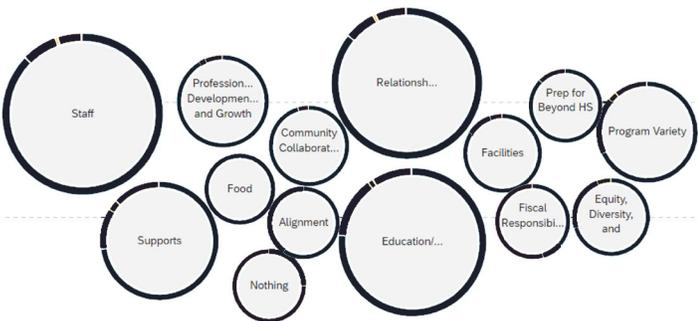
With Board approval to move forward, the Strategic Planning team met again on Feb. 26 to develop goals to be recommended to the School Board. When goals are established and approved, the district will move forward with outlining detailed steps to meet the new plan.

A sampling of community and student survey data is shown below, including an overall word cloud from responses and themes from responses to the first two survey questions. The larger the size of the words in the cloud and the larger the circles in the question responses represent the most common themes. Graphics created by Qualtrics using all responses.

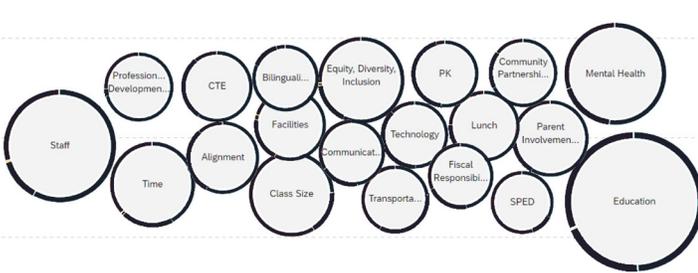
Overall Themes



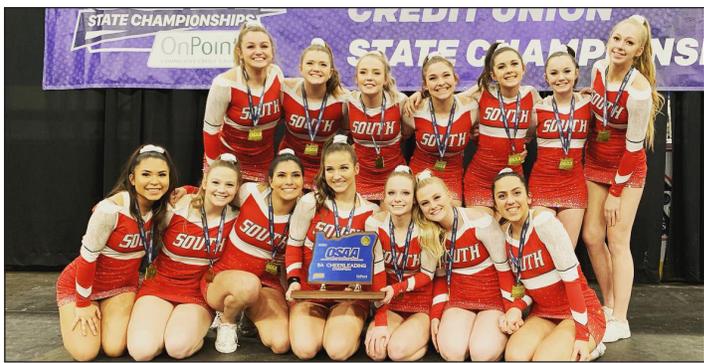
Survey Q1 (paraphrased): 'What makes you most proud of GAPS?'



Survey Q2 (paraphrased): 'Where can GAPS improve?'



GAPS Champs



The **South Albany High School Cheer Team** won its fifth consecutive Oregon School Activities Association (OSAA) 5A State Championship on Feb. 15 at Portland's Veterans Memorial Coliseum. The squad easily beat its six 5A opponents in the state competition, with its 13.9-point margin of victory the largest win among the six divisional champions.



Two GAPS boys swimmers earned OSAA state championships on Feb. 22. South Albany's **Nathaniel Young (L)** claimed the state title in the 200 IM and West Albany's **Dylan Hayes (R)** won the state championship in the 500 Free. In addition, the West Albany boys placed second overall among 19 teams in 5A and the girls took seventh.



Sisters **Sabrina and Amina Saghezli**, Albany Online students who are temporarily residing in another country, won 1st Prize in a national competition through K12/FuelEducation. Their entry in the Minerals Education Coalition Move Mining Next Gen competition was chosen as the top video in the Grades 6-8 group for a \$250 prize.

The Team Behind the Bond

Many of the Greater Albany Public Schools bond projects continue moving closer to completion. While weather and other factors have slowed some progress, GAPS Facilities staff along with HMK Company, Gerding Builders, Todd Construction, and other local partners continue working diligently to provide our students with the best, most secure and fundamentally sound facilities.

As is common with most long-term, multi-faceted construction projects, delays and cost increases since the bond was initially passed in May of 2017 created the need for a review of resources and the remaining Critical Facility Upgrades (CFU). The GAPS Bond Oversight Committee continues to meet regularly with district and HMK personnel to determine which remaining projects should be pushed to the front of the queue.

GAPS Facilities personnel have worked to prioritize remaining CFU projects for consideration by the Bond Oversight Committee, who then make their recommendations to the School Board. The committee serves to ensure the highest priority projects are completed, the bond promises to the voters are met, and that construction is done with the highest quality the first time so there will not be necessary repairs in the near future.

“We get to see a lot of the stuff that the rest of the community isn’t able to see, like fire doors and electrical and mechanical work,” said Bond Oversight Committee chair Dale DeBolt. “We’ve had a lot of our roofs redone that you might not know about unless you live right next to the school. All of our schools have been touched, which is what we promised when the bond was voted on.”

Like the GAPS Board, the Bond Oversight Committee is also a group of local citizens who volunteer their time to ensure that the school district operates in the best interest of the community. DeBolt and his team certify that the bond money is spent as it was intended when passed in 2017. A pair of current Board Members, Eric Aguinaga and Pat Eastman, previously served on the Bond Oversight Committee before being elected to the Board.

“Bond money was designated for warm, safe, and dry projects,” DeBolt added. “Every single school has been touched by the bond money, and that’s not going towards curriculum or teacher salaries. We want to make sure the money is being used properly and they’re thinking about long term while not adding anything outside of school buildings or infrastructure.”

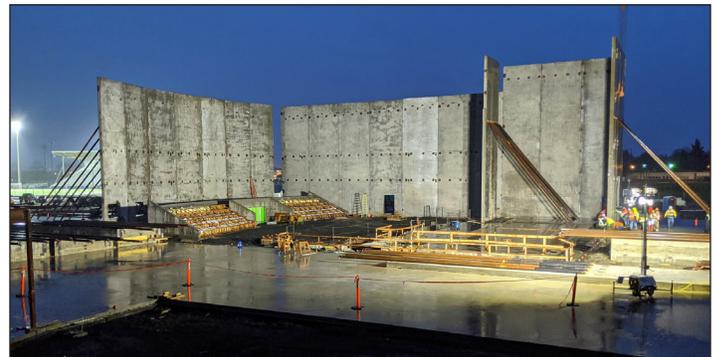
The new Meadow Ridge Elementary is nearing completion while major projects at both high schools and Critical Facility Upgrades continue throughout the district. For all the latest updates visit bit.ly/GAPSBond



Meadow Ridge Front Entrance



Meadow Ridge Play Structure and Open Area



West Albany HS New Theater Walls



Sky lights in the new South Albany Auxiliary Gym lobby

iRun for Kids March 14



The 2020 iRun for Kids race will take place March 14 at West Albany High School! Proceeds from this event support the Albany Public Schools Foundation and its programs including classroom grants for teachers, elementary enrichment grants, the student assistance program, and scholarships for graduating seniors.

Join over 650 runners and make a positive impact for Albany schools. You can run or walk the 5K, 10K, or 15K race. Younger students, up to 2nd grade, can also run the Little Leprechaun Dash. All 5K/10K/15K participants receive a race medal and there will also be a kid's area with 12+ Disney characters handing out goodies kids as well as free face painting, snacks and more!

There will be two prizes for the top schools (based on iRun school participation numbers divided by school enrollment numbers).

- 1st Place: \$500 cash prize for the top school + a Southpaws' pizza party for the race participants
- 2nd Place: Dutch Bros. party for the school's race participants

Race Details

Date: Saturday, March 14

- Packet pickup: March 13, 4-6 pm at WAHS Lobby or race day

Start and Finish: West Albany High School Stadium

Race Times/Distances/Cost:

15K (9.3 mile) - 9:00 a.m.

- Students: \$15, Adults \$55

10K (6.2 mile) - 9:30 a.m.

- Students: \$10, Adults: \$50

5K (3.1 mile) - 9:30 a.m.

- Students: \$10, Adults: \$45

Little Leprechaun Dash - 9:10 a.m.

- Pre-K - 2nd Grade: \$10

Find more information and registration at www.irunforkids.com

iSwim for Kids Raises \$12k

The Albany Public Schools Foundation raised over \$12,000 (gross amount) at the 2020 iSwim for Kids event on Feb. 8 at South Albany Community Pool.

A total of 16 Greater Albany schools participated in the event with 141 students taking part. Those 141 students combined to swim a whopping 2,820 laps!

Top School (\$350 cash prize):

- Oak Elementary

Top Classroom (\$250 cash + Dutch Bros. party):

- Mrs. Bell - Central Elementary

Top Student (Pizza & ice cream party for classroom):

- Crewe Schoonover - Kindergarten / Ms. Salyer's class at Clover Ridge Elementary (Crewe swam 50 laps and raised \$835)

Half of the proceeds raised (after expenses) in the iSwim for Kids event go directly back to the schools of the swimmers. The other half of the funds are distributed through APSF's classroom grants program.

APSF Big Impact Grant

The Albany Public Schools Foundation awarded \$5,200 to the Greater Albany Public School District through the Big Impact Grant program for student phonics kits for each of the district's 14 elementary schools. The winning proposal was made by Dr. Jodi Dodd, the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Coordinator for GAPS.

Dr. Dodd stated in her grant application that "536 kindergarten to second graders (27%) recently scored 'well below benchmark' and are considered at 'high risk' in foundational reading skills." She further highlighted that in two pilot program schools, "highly at-risk students [improved] by half a grade level in only 12 weeks" of using the phonics program.

The Foundation created the Big Impact Grant to fund a multi-school program that provides enrichment opportunities for a large number of students. Last year, the grant provided supplies for outdoor school for almost 700 middle school students. The previous year, the grant funded music instruments at all elementary schools.

Upcoming Dates

Mar. 23-27: No school (Spring Break)

April 3: No School (Staff Development/Grading Day)

April 10 & 13: No School - Elementary & TR Only



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