

GREEN MOUNTAIN SCHOOL GAZETTE

FALL 2023

2018 CAPITAL LEVY

Final projects completed!

We have completed the final projects funded by the 2018 voter-approved capital projects levy and are excited to show off the projects!

- We completed the installation of the large outdoor covered play area.
- Many long-term maintenance issues have been addressed including upgrading and repairing HVAC units, parking lot resurfacing, remodeling restrooms in the gym and brick building, play field restoration, and more.

Thanks to a grant secured by previous Superintendent Vogeler, we were able to combine capital levy funds with the grant to expand our cafeteria, remodel the kitchen which will support the future creation of our own school meals, upgrade HVAC and electrical systems in the gymnasium complex, and add restrooms.

Thank you district taxpayers for your support of our unique school!



COVERED PLAY AREA



CAFETERIA EXPANSION

PTSO volunteers organize fun events and fundraisers



The Green Mountain School Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO) helped make the 2022-23 school year a wonderful year! The PTSO raised money throughout the year with several large fundraisers, including the most successful fundraiser ever, the GLOW RUN. Students and families raised over \$10,000 for that event and turned Mrs. Vansoest into a human ice cream sundae!

Funds raised by the PTSO have helped pay for field trips, new books, classroom support, and our

Cispus Outdoor School trip.

The PTSO is already off to a great start this school year. The back-to-school ice cream social was held in our brand-new covered play area! Students raised money selling Payback books and purchasing spirit wear. They are looking forward to our first family night and the first book fair.

The PTSO is always looking for more volunteers to make these events possible. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Traci at greenmountainptso1@gmail.com.

MESSAGE FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT



I'm now in my third year as superintendent at Green Mountain School, and I want to express how much I love and appreciate this school and the community it serves. I appreciate the hard work of our students, their care for each other, and the responsibility and grit that they develop during their time at GMS. The parental support for everything "Green Mountain" is unmatched in any district I've served.

My first two years were so rewarding, as we moved beyond the pandemic and were able to get back to full-time in-person learning. We completed the construction of the outdoor, covered play area and are now completing a remodel and expansion of our kitchen and cafeteria areas.

Last year, we adopted a new math curriculum (iReady) that is a great combination of old-school basics and some newer teaching methods. It's already paying dividends in student math growth.

With our board's excellent fiscal oversight, we've increased our rainy-day fund, finalized an affordable yet fair 3-year contract with our teachers' association, caught up on a variety of district maintenance issues, upgraded our bussing fleet and provided new instructional materials for our students. We have also been able to provide one-to-one laptops for all students in grades 3–8 and maintain our media center at the same time.

Lastly, as we look forward to the many goals the Board of Directors has set for us, none is more important than maintaining the trust and transparency we have with our taxpayers. This coming year, the district will be asking taxpayers to renew our Educational Programs and Operations (EP&O) levy. The EP&O levy funds many important educational services and supports that are underfunded by the state. If anyone has any questions about the levy and what it provides for students, or other questions please call me as I'd love to discuss this with you.

Dave Holmes, Superintendent

Rick Syring retires from Green Mountain School Board

After serving 35 years on the School Board, Rick Syring retired on October 31. As impressive as that is, his history with the school and community is even more amazing.



Rick is a lifelong resident of the district, living on the farm his family homesteaded in the late 1800s. He attended GMS from first through sixth grade, beginning in 1956. He graduated from La Center High School, and then Washington State University with a degree in electrical engineering in 1973. After working at Portland General Electric for 34 years, he retired for three days, then went on to work at Cowlitz PUD for 10 years, retiring for good in 2016.

Rick began serving on the school board in 1988 and has served as board chairman for 25 of those years. He has worked with dedicated board members, seven superintendents, and two interim superintendents. He has seen numerous changes in our unique school district, where each change had the goal of creating an even better educational learning environment for the students who attend here. From remodeling the original school building to adding portable classrooms to house the ever-growing student population, change was constant. The long-term goal of adding the covered play area has just been completed. Only a teamwork approach allows for the school board to accomplish so much—so thank you!

In addition to serving on the board, Rick is a regular volunteer with the district, specifically supporting the educational technology program. When Rick started, GMS had two Apple computers. He was instrumental in the program growth to more than 100 computers in all classrooms for all students to use. Rick did it all: the wiring and infrastructure needed to support the growth, plus programming, purchasing, troubleshooting, and training.

Rick also shoveled snow in the winter, built the greenhouse and nature trail for leadership students, installed the sound system on the stage, and has answered the call for help whenever needed.

Rick, on behalf of the entire Green Mountain community, we extend our heartfelt thank you for your service!

Green Mountain welcomes our newest team members!

PARAEDUCATOR
MICHELLE SCHMEUSSER



Michelle Schmeusser and her husband, Hans, have lived in the district for 21 years. Five of their kids have “graduated” from GMS and they have 3 kids still attending because they “love our little school”! Michelle will be supporting first graders in Ms. Jones’ classroom.

PARAEDUCATOR
SAVANNAH MCCALL



Savanah McCall and her family have lived in the district for almost 4 years and feel very grateful to have their kids attend Green Mountain. Savannah will be supporting second graders in Ms. Aldred’s classroom. Savannah says GMS is “such a wonderful community.”

BOARD MEMBER
ADAM DUNN



Adam Dunn and his wife, Mary, relocated their family back to Green Mountain in 2010, next to his parent’s place. A graduate of GMS himself, Adam and Mary have a grown son and a fourth-grade daughter currently attending GMS. Adam is committed to supporting the district’s needs and keeping the integrity of the school strong.

GMS students improve on standardized tests and outpace state averages

Staff have worked diligently for the past two years to minimize the impact that the pandemic has had on our students. We adopted a new, updated math curriculum last year and are seeing immediate impacts on student learning and corresponding test scores.

Test scores are lower than we’d like but are improving. Across the board we outpaced the state averages in most subjects and grades. The chart shows our scores by grade in math, English language arts and science.

Motivation for students to do their best during state testing is a struggle for our upper grades, as is the case for districts across the state. Students see these tests as having little to no impact on them personally, their grades or class standing.

We also have several students that do not take the tests at their family’s request—this results in a zero score that counts against the district overall scores. If we remove the

zero scores, our overall scores rise noticeably.

Last spring, we gave our iReady diagnostic assessment, which provides teachers with a more accurate measurement of student growth and performance. We were able to compare individual and grade level growth from year to year, which provides us more reliable and actionable data than the state tests.

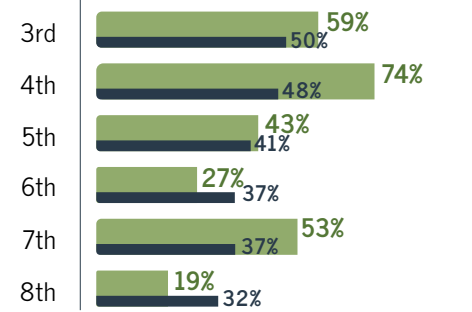
The iReady diagnostic assessment provides teachers with very specific areas of academic strengths and weaknesses, which allows teachers to plan and target more effective instruction at the individual and classroom levels. The state Smarter Balanced results do not provide teachers with any specific academic information that can support instructional support.

As always, we will continue to work to outperform others on the state test and by even larger margins.

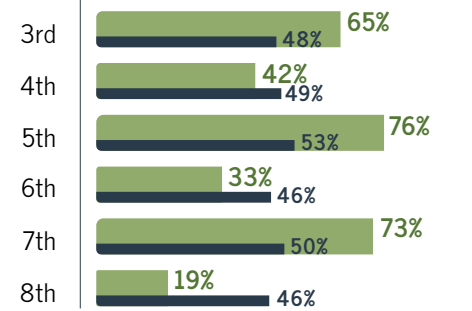
2022-23 STATE ASSESSMENT RESULTS



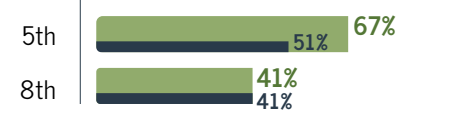
Mathematics



English Language Arts



Science



* Green Mountain scores after non-test taker zero scores were removed.

**GREEN MOUNTAIN
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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Resident

OUTDOOR SCHOOL

5–6 graders look forward to Cispus this spring

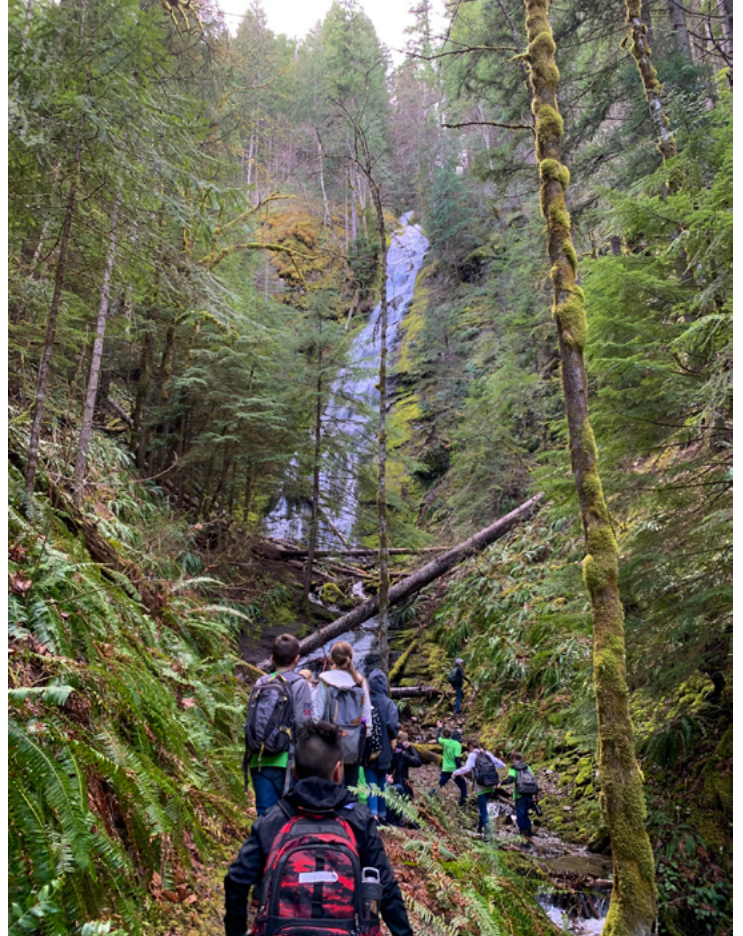
This spring, students will take part in our biannual outdoor school program for the fifth time!

All 5th and 6th grade students attend outdoor school once in their two years. Although we took a break during COVID, in 2022 we took our largest group yet—this included our regular group of 5th & 6th grade students plus the 7th and 8th grade students who were unable to attend previously due to the pandemic.

Located in Randall, Cispus Learning Center immerses students in nature and builds upon their knowledge of science, reading, writing and mathematics. Students spend five days and four nights at Cispus where they sleep in cabins, hike, build survival shelters, identify natural resources, play games, wash dishes, set tables and mop floors.

Students discover the interconnectedness of an ecosystem where all living and nonliving things affect each other. Seeing the ways in which we depend on our environment will help future generations work to sustain it. Students learn how humans impact the ecosystem, positively or negatively. They also learn about how important the sustainability of our forests is to the Pacific Northwest economy.

Beyond academics, students develop teamwork skills, independence, and a growth mindset. Our outdoor school program teaches survival, life, and relationship skills through engaging and unique experiences. And most importantly, students leave outdoor school with AMAZING memories!



The Green Mountain School District does not discriminate on the basis of race; creed; color; religion; sex; national origin; marital status; sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity; age; families with children; honorably discharged veteran or military status; the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability; or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal. We provide equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination: Title IX/RCW 28A.640 officer, Civil Rights officer: Superintendent Dave Holmes, dave.holmes@greenmountainschool.us, 360-225-7366, and Section 504/ADA coordinator, HIB officer: Principal Jacqui Vansoest, jacqui.vansoest@greenmountainschool.us, 360-225-7366.