



825 Fifth Avenue SE ♦ Olympia, WA 98501 ♦ (360) 357-9535
www.wsascd.org

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Kathy Clayton
kclaytonascd@gmail.com
Office: (509) 270-2907

Tacoma Public Schools Cohort 1 Schools to receive Safe School Award from Washington State ASCD

Olympia, WA July, 2015 – The Washington State Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (WSASCD) has announced that Tacoma Public Schools Cohort 1 Schools will receive the Safe School Award for 2015. The Safe School Award is intended to recognize educator(s) who contribute to providing a safe school where students learn in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults. Cohort 1 includes the following schools: Birney Elementary, Boze Elementary, Downing Elementary, Edison Elementary, Franklin Elementary, Larchmont Elementary, Lister Elementary, Mt. Tahoma High School, Point Defiance Elementary, Roosevelt Elementary, Skyline Elementary, Truman Middle School, and Whitman Elementary. The award will be accepted by Jennifer Kubista, Director of Student Life, as well as representatives of the Cohort 1 Schools at a district event this fall.

Through the Tacoma Whole Child Initiative, Tacoma educators are creating safe and secure schools by implementing social emotional learning practices, restorative practices, and positive behavioral supports. The staff and students model, teach, and reinforce the three pillars of Respect, Responsible and Safe expectations. These pillars are taught, practiced and reinforced in every school setting and classroom activity. Over the past four years, the victimization, bullying, truancy, racism, assaults and vandalism that plagued many of these schools has been replaced by safety, belonging, respect, equity, responsibility and kindness.

Building whole children, through social emotional learning is part of the district and schools' action plans. This collaborative approach is developing a sustainable and safe school system for now and for the future. The foundational focus is developing, defining and teaching a set of clear expectations to cultivate positive behaviors and routines during the school day. The educators in the cohort schools continue to lay the foundation where every student, every day is engaged and learning in an environment that is not only physically safe, but emotionally safe for all. Whole children know how to read, write and solve math problems. Whole children are also socially strong, emotionally resilient, advocates, and self-determined. The educators in the cohort schools are creating positive cultures that are safe for every student, every day.

Utilizing community resources is standard for Cohort 1 Schools, making the most of their partnerships with University of Washington-Tacoma (UWT), Comprehensive Life Resources (CLR), City of Tacoma, Facebook, Olive Crest, Cascade Bicycle Club, Shared Hope, and Tacoma Pierce County Gang Coalition.

A key sentence from the award nomination form says it best, "many have heard the statement, 'It takes a whole village to raise a child,' but it also takes a whole child to build a sustainable and safe school and community."

Founded in 1956, the Washington State Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) is a community of all educators committed to promoting promising practices to ensure ALL students are safe, healthy, engaged, supported and challenged.

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Kathy Clayton
Executive Director
WSASCD

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Whitworth University

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School District