

# LOPEZ ISLAND SCHOOL

## HOME OF THE LOBOS

JANUARY 2012



### CALENDAR

**SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS ~ THE LAST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH AT 6PM**

**MS BASKETBALL HOME GAMES— FEBRUARY 8,9,15,16 AT 4:30PM**

**JAN. 24  
QUICHE SALES**

**JAN. 27—MAIL IN BALLOTS—BOND ELECTION**

**FEB. 14—  
ELECTION DAY**

**FEB. 15,16,17—  
DISCOVERY DAYS**

**FEB. 20-24—MID-  
WINTER RECESS**

**FEB. 27—SPRING  
SPORTS BEGIN**

**MAR. 6,7—FOURTH  
GRADE ~ OLYMPIA**

**MAR. 16—SNOW  
MAKEUP DAY**

**MAR. 29-APR. 13—  
TRIP TO FRANCE**

**APR. 4-18—TRIP TO  
JAPAN**

**APR. 9-13—SPRING  
RECESS**

**APR. 16-19—FIFTH  
GRADE ~  
ISLANDWOOD**

**MAY 25—SNOW  
MAKEUP DAY**

January 2012

Dear Lopez Community:

It feels really good to be able to say that again and to be able to address you all again as your Lopez Schools Superintendent. It is good to be back. My enthusiasm for the Lopez Schools and for the Lopez Island Community has remained strong. This school is still the special place it has always been and the quality of education provided the young people of Lopez is impressive.

Our students continue to be fed school lunches that are healthy, nutritious, to a large degree locally grown and to an ever-increasing degree grown right on our campus by the students themselves. The elementary and high school students have opportunities to actually be directly involved in the planning, harvesting and preparation of the food they eat in our cafeteria. We are working on reinstating such opportunities for our middle school students. The farm-to-school program that makes all this happen is the result of a lot of hard work and commitment by many dedicated people. We thank all of the staff and volunteers who make this all happen.

We are all proud of our athletes and the coaches who do such an amazing job of contributing to the overall positive growth and development of our young people. Our athletes have a well-earned reputation for their athletic prowess and are frequently selected for all-league honorary teams and other awards. The athletes are also known to be good students, including our volleyball and soccer teams who both won academic awards for maintaining a team average of 3.0 grade point or above (our football team missed such an award by less than 0.1 percent!) Our coaching staff is first-rate with football Coach Berg and volleyball Coach Chicovsky, our latest award winning Coaches

of the Year in their sports. Especially noteworthy is the high degree of sportsmanship and respect with which all of our athletes carry themselves on and off the field and court. Our football team recently received the prestigious John Trotto Award for Sportsmanship for their good sportsmanship, as voted by the officials and referees of our region.

We have two, possibly three, international trips for our students this Spring. A trip to Japan and a trip to France are both planned and participating students are busy preparing and studying for those trips. We also have an opportunity, that just recently presented itself, to send a student delegation and chaperones to China to work in a school for the blind. The China trip is on pretty short notice but we are scrambling to see if we can get some students who can travel to China this year and help us plan for future trips in the years to come. These international trips not only afford our students an opportunity to learn about countries, cultures, and people different than themselves, but they also serve as amazing learning opportunities for self awareness and personal growth for our students.

Our elementary students are afforded not only a solid day-to-day education, but are also provided such engaging learning opportunities as our Fall Discovery Days in which the students got to choose an exciting hands-on activity to pursue for a couple of hours for a week. They had such choices as cooking, dance, mountain biking, pottery, and other activities. Our elementary students are also engaged in service learning projects through their multi-age homerooms and ukulele lessons (and a chance to earn their own ukuleles) in fourth grade music. We also fielded a robotics team for the first time at

the elementary school and they placed well in the competitions they entered.

We at school sincerely appreciate the help and support from the Lopez Community that are graciously extended to the school. A good example of that was seen in the recent acquisition, refurbishing, and installation of a scoreboard for our athletic field by the Booster Club and a host of volunteers and others. The effort was much appreciated! The whole scoreboard acquisition and project is the subject of a documentary filmed by renowned film studios TRI-FILMS, Incorporated, out of the Seattle area. The community and everyone in it show their support in so many ways—too many to list here. Thank you, thank you, thank you!



Photo by Deanna Brant

Last, but not least, I need to draw your attention to a bond measure the school is placing before the voters this February. Detailed in the center section of this newsletter, the bond measure asks the voters to approve a bond, at \$0.07 per thousand, to pay off a line of credit the district secured to address the required emergency replacement of the elementary fire sprinkler system and further work on the HVAC system. If you have questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

This is a wonderful place to be and I thank you for letting me serve you all.

Sincerely,

# Lopez Island School District

## QUESTIONS and ANSWERS for Voters Election Day: February 14, 2012

### Proposition #1: CAPITAL PROJECTS GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS - \$1,000,000

Message from the Superintendent

Dear Community Member:

The main purpose of this newsletter section is to provide basic information, in a question-and-answer format, about the upcoming election on February 14, 2012. This election will contain a proposition from Lopez Island Schools:

Proposition #1: Capital Projects General  
Obligation Bonds - \$1,000,000

A secondary purpose is to provide information to students, staff, parents, and community members who are likely to receive questions about the schools in general, and the bond in particular.

Taxes for bonds and levies, while critically important to the schools, are topics which can be confusing and complicated. It is our aim to reduce such confusion by providing this informational guide.

If this information raises thoughts, questions, or suggestions after reading it, please contact us at the school district. We continue to strive to make your public schools responsive and responsible to our community and to the needs of our children.

Sincerely,

Bill Evans  
360-468-2202, Ext. 2350  
[bevans@lopez.k12.wa.us](mailto:bevans@lopez.k12.wa.us)

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**Q.** *A bond of \$1,600,000 was passed in 2008. What was accomplished with that bond money?*

**A.** The projects below are listed in order of completion:

- Purchasing and installing additional playground equipment
  - Renovating/restoring the track (built in 1995)
  - Installing a covered elementary play shed
  - Upgrading and renovating existing technology and infrastructure
  - Installing new metal roofing on all pitched roofs to increase longevity and capture water runoff
- Installing a new heating and air circulation system to further conserve energy (partially completed with the \$1.6 M bond)

**Q.** *What projects that were scheduled for that bond did not get done?*

**A.** A new/supplemental off-site potable water source was not located. In addition, after initial work was done on the design of a water retention pond, and in consideration of increased cost estimates and community input, the school board decided to reallocate the remaining approximately \$241,000 to offset the cost of the HVAC system upgrades and other projects.

**Q.** *Were there unexpected project expenses that caused the district to need additional funds beyond the original bond intent?*

**A.** During the consideration and awarding of bids for the HVAC system upgrades, the board determined that there were insufficient funds available to finance the upgrades to the existing HVAC system recommended by our energy and construction consultants. Although the actual bids significantly exceeded the original projections, the board determined that it made sense to accept not only the base bid for the HVAC upgrades but also the alternates, since the cost of the HVAC project and recommended upgrades would have been significantly greater at a later date.

An additional emergency project surfaced at about the same time as the HVAC bids were being considered. It was determined by the fire marshal that the fire sprinkler system in the elementary building had failed. The district was given a choice at that time to either close the elementary building or install a new fire sprinkler system. After several emergency board meetings and in response to the requirements of the fire marshal, school was allowed to open with an hourly patrol looking for signs of fire until such time as a new fire sprinkler system could be installed and activated.

## BASIC ELECTION INFORMATION

**Q. Did the district look for other sources of funds to complete the HVAC upgrades and to fund emergency replacement of the elementary fire sprinkler system?**

**A.** The district was very diligent in its efforts to seek funding from other sources including many discussions with the district's insurance vendor. After being denied coverage by our insurance provider, the district sought funding through various options available through the Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, including Qualified Zone Academy Bonds and Qualified School Construction Bonds. After researching these two options, the district decided not to pursue them because repayment would need to come from the district's general operating budget, thereby undermining funding available for student learning and district operations.

**Q. How did the district fund the upgrades to the HVAC system and the emergency replacement of the elementary fire sprinkler system?**

**A.** Our bond consultants referred us to Cashmere Valley Bank for a line-of-credit which provided the funds that were needed to upgrade the HVAC system and the emergency replacement of the Elementary School fire sprinkler system. As a line of credit, the District only needed to borrow the funds necessary for the HVAC and fire sprinkler projects. The interest rate for this line of credit was 2.925% as compared to our then existing bond rate of 3.2%. In addition, the urgency of the financial need did not allow for the process necessary to go to the voters for a regular bond election. This decision was made with the full understanding that this line of credit would need to be paid off with a future bond.

**Q. How much will the \$1,000,000 bond cost me?**

**A.** The bond request is for \$1,000,000. The chart below shows how the new estimated local bond tax rate would affect your property taxes with the increase of \$.07 per thousand of assessed valuation over a period of 15 years.

Est. Rate/ <u>\$1.00</u>	<u>Yearly Cost for Property Valued At</u>	
	<u>\$300,000</u>	<u>\$500,000</u>
\$.07	\$21.00	\$35.00

**Q. Are there plans for any future bond requests?**

**A.** Yes. The Board and administration are reviewing and considering additional and ongoing capital facility needs of the district, as well as possible enhancements that would further the educational needs of the students. Input from community, staff and students will continue as this process evolves. The board will then decide upon an amount to meet the needs and a date of a future bond request.

**Q. Why has the district separated the repayment of the line of credit from a new bond request?**

**A.** The district wants to be very clear and straight-up with our voters and get this line of credit dealt with, without the potential for multiple issues. This line of credit was clearly used for the HVAC upgrades and the unanticipated emergency replacement of the elementary fire sprinkler system.

**Q. What is the difference between a bond and a levy?**

**A.** A **bond** is approved by voters for major capital improvements. The voter approved bonds are then sold (issued) and the district can receive all of the money up front with the principal and interest paid off over a period of up to 30 years through property tax assessments. Bonds must be approved by at least 60% of the voters.

A **levy** is approved by the voters for a set number of years with taxes collected each year and distributed to the district as they are collected. Levies must be approved by at least 50% of the voters.

**Q. If the assessed value of the community or my property goes up, will the district get more money?**

**A.** In a bond election, the district doesn't actually even receive the tax collections. The district receives the revenue from the voter approved bonds that are sold following the election. Tax payments go directly to the County Treasurer where they are used by the county to pay the bond principal and interest payments as they are due, according to the schedule set out at the time of the bond election. As the community assessed value goes up, the tax rate (cost per \$1000 of assessed valuation) goes down.

**Q. What is the deadline for registering to vote in the February 14, 2012 election?**

**A.** The last day for mail-in and on-line voter registrations and transfers from other counties for the February 14 election is January 16<sup>th</sup>. The last day for in-person registration for voters not currently registered in Washington State for the February 14 election is February 6<sup>th</sup>. For additional information go to [www.vote.wa.gov](http://www.vote.wa.gov).

**Q. Is it true that, under certain conditions, persons disabled or 61 years of age or older may be entitled to special consideration regarding school levy and bond property taxes?**

**A.** Yes, citizens over 61 years of age, who earn less than \$35,000 per year, or a citizen unable to work due to disability may qualify to receive an exemption. For exemption information, call the San Juan County Assessor at 360-378-2172.

**Q. Who can I call with specific questions regarding the proposed levies for the February 14, 2012 election?**

**A.** Patrons with specific questions may call the Lopez Island School District Superintendent or Finance Manager at (360) 468-2202. Patrons may also call a school board member.

Bill Evans, Superintendent, [bevans@lopez.k12.wa.us](mailto:bevans@lopez.k12.wa.us)  
Joan Hartjes Love, Finance Mgr, [jhartjes@lopez.k12.wa.us](mailto:jhartjes@lopez.k12.wa.us)

# HOME OF THE LOPEZ LOBOS



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## School Board Members

**Diana Hancock, Chairperson**  
dhancock@lopez.k12.wa.us

**John Holding, Vice-Chairperson**  
jholding@lopez.k12.wa.us

**Diane Dear**  
toddanddiane@tanddfarmslopezisland.com

**Patsy Haber**  
habers211@gmail.com

**Clive Prout**  
cprout@lopez.k12.wa.us

## Postal Patron



## Can You Hear Me Now?

Lopez School instituted an automated phone and Email service a couple of years ago to communicate effectively and efficiently with our parents, students, staff, and community. As we attempt to reduce administrative costs to offset declining state monetary support, and keep our spending as focused upon student learning as possible, we are turning to such assistive technology as the auto-caller for help. We place a high value in communicating with everyone and we are using the auto-caller more frequently this year than perhaps in the past. We apologize for any multiple calls or other inconveniences we may occasionally impose upon our parents and community, but we ask that you bear with us, in the name of good communications! Thanks for your understanding.

## K-12 News

Dear Lopez Community,

For those of you I have not had a chance to meet yet, I am Lisa Shelby, the new K-12 principal at Lopez School. My family and I are settling into this wonderful and welcoming community, and we feel privileged to be here. I am enjoying getting to know the students, staff and parents, and time is flying by quickly! I think that happens when one is having fun?

To give you a glimpse of what is going on in this vibrant educational community we call school, we have 79 Elementary students and 126 middle/high students, for a total enrollment of 205. As we look ahead to next year, we have an incoming kindergarten class of over 20 students! We have a growing ELL (English Language Learners) population and welcome 6 more families that are Spanish speaking with our incoming kindergarteners next year. We are proactively seizing the opportunity for more diversity in our community and school, through relationships and connections with the Lopez Family Resource Center, and our Spanish IV high school students doing a radio show with KLOI on Saturdays, sharing stories in Spanish. We will continue to build our capacity to ensure that all families feel welcome and involved in our school.

We have 21 seniors this year, and many are still applying and waiting to hear on acceptances into colleges. Some of the acceptances already include Central Washington University, Evergreen College, Montana State, Rutgers, Hamline University, Eckerd, Emory and Northeastern. We have students who are looking into vocational schools, the armed forces and trade apprenticeships as well. It is exciting to watch students prepare for their next journey in life. As we refine our vision for education here at Lopez School we are looking to expand our Career and Technical

Education offerings, increase our integration of technology, increase our ability to offer challenging high school courses, and continue to ensure that all doors are open for students as they leave us to become citizens of the world. We are determined that every student will have the chance to pursue any opportunity they choose.

Some exciting highlights thus far this year include the implementation of a buddy system where we have paired older and younger students together to have lunch together, interact, and build relationships. At our next event students will share and appreciate each other's academic work, have lunch together, and allow the younger students to give their older buddy a tour of their classroom. We are also planning a K-12 science fair at the end of the year. We appreciate the energy of the K-12, one school model, as it fits our size well and capitalizes on the relationships that are at the core of this community.

We are always looking for ways to bring the community into the school and have as much involvement as we can, so please don't hesitate to stop in, give us a call or email about the possibilities. We welcome the community to be a part of this amazing place!

Take care,  
Lisa Shelby, Principal