

KENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



CONNECTED



**SPRING 2023**

**KSD Bond Election on April 25, 2023**



# Highest Graduation Rate in Recent History



**O**ur graduation rates have been trending upward from **78.7%** in 2012-13 to **89%** in 2021-22.

We credit this upward trend to

our incredible students and outstanding team of educators and support staff working alongside our community toward a common goal – student achievement. It is our belief that **each student deserves to attend safe, inclusive, and welcoming schools that prepare them for higher education or meaningful employment and lifelong success.**

To that end, we have worked closely with our Board of Directors to identify priority goals. This year, school board members are individually championing a goal. This collaborative approach to goal setting is essential to continue seeing our graduation rate increase and keeping student achievement and well-being at the center of our work.

## GOAL ENRICHMENT CHAMPIONS

- GOAL 1** *All Students College & Career Ready*  
Director Bento
- GOAL 2** *Student & Family Engagement*  
Vice President Farah & Director Hamada
- GOAL 3** *Equitable Systems & Environments*  
Director Margel
- GOAL 4** *Retain Premier Diverse Staff*  
President Clark



*This work is about changing culture and becoming a more inclusive school district where every student feels like they belong, and they are seen and heard. A multifaceted approach and meeting the needs of the whole child is helping students graduate.*



**Tim Clark**

KSD Board President

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Tim Clark**  
President

**Awale Farah**  
Vice President

**Leslie Hamada**  
Legislative Representative

**Joe Bento**  
Director

**Meghin Margel**  
Director

**Israel Vela**  
Superintendent



## Dr. Dana Stiner Named Principal of the Year

### Personable – Trusted – Genuine

**T**hese are just a few of the qualities describing Pine Tree Elementary Principal Dana Stiner. In her sixth year as principal, she continues to increase positive outcomes for students.

“One thing I like about Dr. Stiner is she makes us happy, smart, kind, respectful, responsible, and she makes us feel safe,” said Treasure, Pine Tree student.

Before her arrival, the school had four different principals in four years. Turnover was high, behavior was a challenge, and bullying was on the rise. Dr. Stiner worked closely with staff to create a plan that included a positive reward system, social skills training, and developing a culture where everyone felt heard. Her team’s work has resulted in an environment where students thrive socially and academically.

“I love that she believes in all her students, no exceptions!” Said Tracee Romine, Pine Tree interventionist.



**Dr. Dana Stiner accepts Principal of the Year honors**

Dr. Stiner’s dedication to knowing each student and staff member is part of the school’s positive culture. She also knows how to mix learning with fun and dreamed up the idea of a vending machine for books. Her office manager was able to acquire an old vending machine and convert it to hold books. Now the vending machine has become part of the school’s reward system.

“One thing I like about Dr. Stiner is...loud, funny, read minds, nice, kind principal,” said Miracle, Pine Tree student.

When asked about Dr. Stiner, there is no shortage of praise from her team. Kent School District Executive Director Christine Avery writes, “Dana is the most deserving principal for this award because she improves the lives of children every day. She changes the trajectory of a student’s life by growing distinguished teachers and creating a school environment focused on learning, a sense of belonging, hope, and joy. She is relentless on her focus to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment and thereby achieves closing achievement, opportunity, and equity gaps for her students.”

Dr. Stiner will also be recognized at the national level by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) as a National Distinguished Principal.

**Source:** Association of Washington School Principals (Elementary Principal of the Year press release)



# Student Design Teams

## Listening sessions for students, designed by students

In the fall of 2021, district leadership committed to facilitate listening sessions across high schools regarding school safety. With that commitment came an opportunity to try a more student-centered approach. We developed a shared belief that something designed for you should be designed by you, so in this context, listening sessions for students were designed by students.

We started with a fluid structure that involved school-based teams at our high schools. Student leadership was at the forefront throughout the process and resulted in a student centered and driven format. The insights and information reported by students were invaluable and had a profound impact on district leaders and the school board. Upon reflecting on their experience, students shared their desire to continue these teams into the next school year. The design teams:

- Identified multiple topics including mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual safety and overall mental health.
- Recruited classmates to engage in participatory exercises allowing for unique styles of engagement.
- Listened, took notes, and engaged in two-way communication with their peers.
- Organized and reviewed data and presented that information to adults.

Fast forward to Winter 2023, we now have five student design teams, with the addition of Kent Laboratory Academy. Students are actively meeting, have expanded their membership, and are using the information from their prior listening sessions to strategize for action.

Our goal is to continue to grow these teams' impact by implementing the Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) framework that aligns with our design team process. The YPAR reinforces that students are researchers and change makers. As these teams evolve, they will stay focused on skill development among students in inquiry, evidence, and presentation. Also, teams will remain action-oriented, providing data from their research findings that can illuminate the issues and solutions that are important to students.

Source: <https://yparhub.berkeley.edu/why-ypar>

### YPAR Framework can:

**Redefine** who has the expertise to produce knowledge — not only professional adult researchers but young people who are living the issues.

**Provide** skills in inquiry, evidence, and presentation important to student development as agents of positive change.

**Generate** findings that provide insights into issues experienced by young people and resources that matter to help solve these issues.

**Promote** young people's sociopolitical development and psychological empowerment to understand root problems facing their communities and have the skills and motivation to take action.

**Evaluate** programs, policies, and practices that affect young people.



## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

### TIERRA FROST

**Equity and Engagement  
Program Support Specialist**  
Kent School District

#### EDUCATION

*Kent-Meridian High School, 2010*

*Washington State University*

*B.A. Journalism and Broadcast Production, 2014*

*University of San Francisco*

*M.A. Urban Education and Social Justice, 2017*

#### Who do you admire the most?

My Nana. She taught me unconditional love and to be a fierce leader with a purpose that must involve helping others.

#### What is your proudest achievement?

Being a teacher sticks with me the most. My students taught me patience, care, trust, and love that has supported my personal development greater than any award or accolade.

#### What mark do you feel you've left on KM?

I was heavily involved in sports and extracurriculars, but I believe the mark I left was when I went out into the real world and demonstrated the values I learned there.

#### Do you have a personal hero?

Anyone who has ever selflessly poured into me is my hero.

#### How have you left a mark on your community?

I beat a lot of odds and statistics to achieve every success I've achieved. Growing up in a low-income single parent household, there were a lot of odds stacked against me and I've conquered every single one of them. I hope that inspires others in this community that share a similar background to know that there is a path for you if you listen to your heart, believe in yourself, and never deny help from those who care.

That said, I'm not done leaving my mark. More to come...



*Building Bridges: every student, every voice, every day*



2023

# KENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOND



**2023 Bond funds will be used to make major repairs, replacements, and upgrades in our schools and facilities across the district.**



## Health & Safety

**Address student safety, health and well-being** by investing in modern school safety features like secure entrances and additional cameras, upgrading accessibility features, and improving building ventilation systems.



## Facility Improvements

**Extend the useful life of school buildings and systems** such as new flooring, roof replacements, update lighting, refresh parking lots, and boiler system upgrades.



## Outdoor Learning

**Ensure students have access to outdoor learning environments that are ADA compliant** by updating playgrounds and adding secondary synthetic fields.



## Districtwide Program Growth

**Create early learning space in every elementary school** by expanding or reconfiguring existing space, districtwide furniture replacement, and address district support facilities.



## Technology Infrastructure

**Equip our buildings with the necessary technology** to support modern classroom teaching practices and replace emergency messaging intercoms.



## MODERNIZE SCHOOLS FOR STUDENTS

To learn more about projects at each school, please visit [bit.ly/2023KSDBond](https://bit.ly/2023KSDBond)

# Where will your money go?



KENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
EQUITY | EXCELLENCE | COMMUNITY

## ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS

- **Health & Safety**  
\$120,300,000
- **Facility Improvements**  
\$132,300,000
- **Outdoor Learning**  
\$100,100,000
- **Districtwide Program Growth**  
\$70,500,000
- **Technology Infrastructure**  
\$26,700,000
- **Administrative & Contingency Funds**  
\$45,100,000

**TOTAL \$495,000,000**



HEALTH  
& SAFETY



FACILITY  
IMPROVEMENTS



OUTDOOR  
LEARNING



DISTRICTWIDE  
PROGRAM GROWTH



TECHNOLOGY  
INFRASTRUCTURE

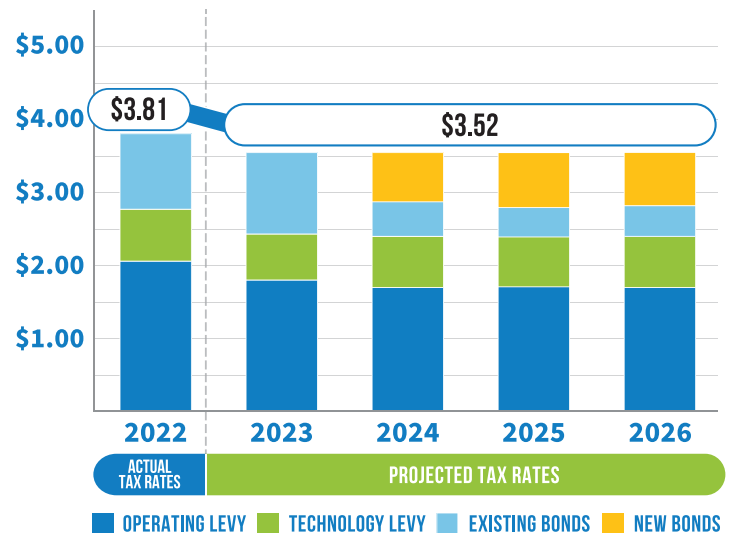
## How will the 2023 bond affect taxes?

**Overall local school tax rates are projected to drop by 8%**

Projections indicate a stable, lower overall school tax rate. Also, additional bonds cannot be sold if home values increase. The amount is capped at what the voters approve.

*These graphs represent a good faith projection of future local excess tax rates in KSD, but projections involve important assumptions that can change. If you would like to learn more about tax rate projections, contact us at (253) 373-7295.*

## Historic and Projected Property Tax Rates Includes new \$495 million bond authorization **SPRING 2023**



# REMEMBER TO VOTE APRIL 25, 2023

For questions, please contact us at [KSDBond@kent.k12.wa.us](mailto:KSDBond@kent.k12.wa.us)



# Transformative Learning in 2023

## Technology tools evolve

**M**uch has happened in the last few years. Our students, staff and families experienced fully remote learning, hybrid learning and a return to in-person learning. We have taken lessons learned from those experiences into our current school year as our technology tools evolve and in turn, we transform how they are used to best support our students. Additionally, we must keep up with the constantly changing landscape of technology and keep our students, staff, and data safe by upgrading and enhancing infrastructure and safety and security tools.

While work continues in all seven of our key areas, we are excited to share key updates on the progress we have made in four of the areas. Additional information about our process will soon be available on our website.

### One-to-One (1:1) Program

The one-to-one program reached districtwide implementation at the start of the 2019-2020 school year. This proved to be timely as we pivoted to remote learning due to the pandemic in April 2020. In the 2021-2022 school year, KSD (Kent School District) began to refresh learning technology for students and devices for staff. Included in the refresh process was a device pilot. This helped to ensure we were choosing the devices that would best support our needs based on the experience and feedback from our students and staff.

### Infrastructure Enhancements

Infrastructure enhancements continue as we ensure the district's ability to continue to provide robust, reliable access to the tools students and staff need for a successful learning environment. Upgrades and enhancements have been implemented or are in progress for phone and voicemail systems, backup systems, network hardware and servers.

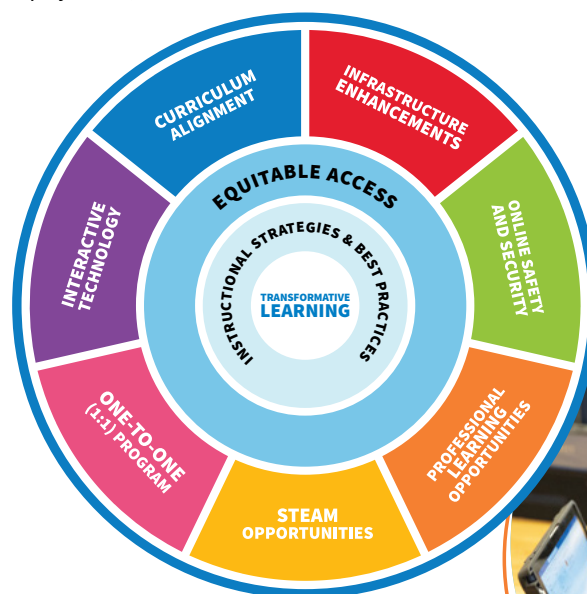


### Interactive Technology

Interactive Promethean panels and enhanced audio systems have now been installed in all classrooms districtwide. With the help of our Digital Learning Coaches and Promethean consultant, teachers across the district continue to learn the full capabilities of the panels and how they can transform learning for students.

### Online Safety and Security

At the start of the 2022-2023 school year, a new web filter was implemented districtwide. Web filtering software is used to reduce risks of internet malware and exploits while ensuring students and staff are protected from inappropriate content. Also, the district is implementing a new internet firewall which will improve security, performance, and capacity of the district's internet traffic.





# MINECRAFT EDUCATION



## Students Learn Through Video Games

### Coding With Minecraft

Video games offer ways to explore worlds that have never been seen before while interacting with story characters and gameplay systems. However, video games are not normally thought of as a learning tool. In fact, 20 years ago it would have been unheard of to use a video game in school. In Kent School District students are being introduced to problem solving skills and how to think critically using Minecraft.

This year, Microsoft's Minecraft Education team visited some KSD elementary schools to teach programming using Minecraft. "The Minecraft Education team produces learning experiences focused across three areas: future ready skills, climate and sustainability, and social education," said Susie Tinker, senior business program manager.

The Minecraft Education team builds worlds for students to explore, and then students explore these worlds using programming logic. However, students are also learning about different issues facing our world. "Our content really touches on tough topics like climate change, and equity and inclusion," said Tinker. "By using Minecraft's open-ended, creative environment, we can build lessons and learning activities that help students explore and understand these complex issues in a more engaging and interactive way."

Mary Elizabeth Pearson, community manager at Microsoft, is excited about how the Hour of Code and Minecraft is bringing more diverse student voices into the computer science industry. "When I see young girls get excited about coding, it makes me feel so proud to be on the team but most importantly, for them to see themselves as a coder and problem solver. I hope Hour of Code breaks down barriers for students to see that learning to code can be fun and rewarding," said Pearson.

Students at Sawyer Woods Elementary talked about their experience learning programming through Minecraft.

“

*It was fun, it was difficult,  
and it taught us to never give up.*

**Ibrahim, Jackson, and Artin**  
Sawyer Woods Elementary  
Sixth Grade Students

”

The determination that students display while trying to solve problems and excel through these Minecraft worlds has been a joy to watch for Amber Gonzalez, Sawyer Woods librarian. "It's awesome to watch our students approach the coding challenges with growth mindsets and positive attitudes.

They are determined to write code that solve each problem and are so proud of themselves when they do," said Gonzalez.

As we continue to explore student programming curriculum and engaging students with familiar tools such as video games, we are changing the dynamics of their learning process. The Minecraft Education team hopes to see programming become more accessible and provide students with a career pathway they did not know was an option. "I hope the Minecraft Hour of Code teaches students that coding is fun, it's for everyone, and they get inspired to continue learning more throughout their education," said Tinker.



Images courtesy of Microsoft Corporation



KENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 415

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2023

KENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOND

MODERNIZE SCHOOLS FOR STUDENTS

2023 Bond funds will be used to make major repairs, replacements, and upgrades in our schools and facilities across the district.

How much will this cost taxpayers?

The local school tax rate is projected to decrease by 8%.

VOTE APRIL 25, 2023

Successfully Preparing All Students For Their Futures

We're social!     

#### Kent School District Non-Discrimination Statement

Kent School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

#### Civil Rights Compliance Officer

Randy Heath (253) 373-7010

[Randy.Heath@kent.k12.wa.us](mailto:Randy.Heath@kent.k12.wa.us)

#### Title IX Coordinator

Susie Whitlock (253) 373-7235

[Susanne.Whitlock@kent.k12.wa.us](mailto:Susanne.Whitlock@kent.k12.wa.us)

#### Section 504 Coordinator

Cheri Simpson (253) 373-7235

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#### ADA Coordinator

Spencer Pan (253) 373-7610

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