

HLS NEWS

Hope Lutheran School Alumni Newsletter



Graduating class of 2023

Congratulations to the Class of 2023!

by Kristen Okabayashi

I can't believe it, the school year is over! It's been a great transitional year for Hope School, as we have emerged from the pandemic years and are soaring off into new heights next year. We have a lot to look forward to!

And speaking of soaring off into new heights, congratulations to our Hope 8th grade graduates! Our students are moving on to the high schools of their choice, with about half the class headed to West Seattle High School, and the remaining half of the class going to Kennedy Catholic, Summit Atlas, O'Dea, Holy Names, Seattle Prep, or Seattle Christian High Schools. Seven of these students have been at Hope since preschool; they will all be very missed next year but we are happy to see them soaring off on their own.

Congratulations also to our preschool students who are heading off to Kindergarten! Many of them will remain here for Kindergarten, and we know they are all ready for the next step in their educational journey.

LEST 2023

by Sally Heit & Kristen Okabayashi

LEST is a highlight of the school year for students, families and staff and still a favorite memory of Hope alumni. Open to students in grades 5-8, this year's LEST Northwest was February 16-18, 2023 at Pacific Lutheran University. Many of the students at Hope competed in at least one event this year, and we had a great turnout of Eagle fans.

This was the second year LEST was held at PLU, and 18 schools participated. PLU's campus was filled with middle students running from one event to the other in typical LEST fashion. Opening ceremonies honored the Champion of Character winners; 8th grader Serena Ablin represented Hope. The Hope Eagles did really well this year; some highlights were receiving fourth place in the Science competition, third place in the math team competition, and 8th grader Isaac Robertson, awarded first place in the individual math competition! The cheer team encouraged our girls and boys basketball teams as they battled it out on the court ending with the boys Consolation Bracket win.

Hope had two 6th graders (both new to Hope this year) compete in the swimming competitions earning ribbons in a variety of heats. The Glee club performance earned them a blue ribbon for what was an outstanding performance of "A Beautiful Noise" by Alicia Keys and Brandi Carlile. The ultimate award came at the end of the event when Hope was awarded the Spirit Award! It is an award that was a happy surprise and is Mrs. Okabayashi's favorite award of the competition.

[Click here](#) to enjoy a quick slideshow of all the fun had at LEST 2023!



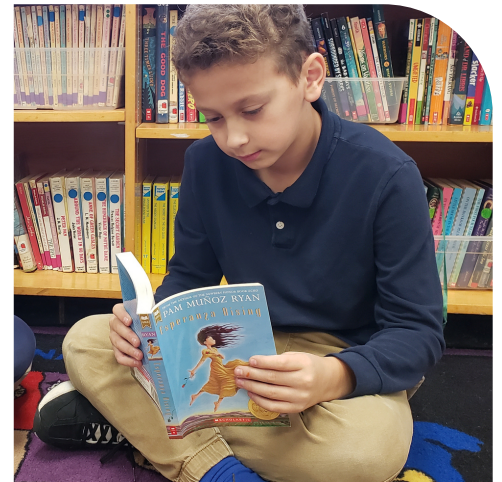
Books! Books! And More Books!

Erika Alba, 4th Grade Teacher

Building a classroom library is a task that is never really finished. Popular books get worn out quickly and need to be replaced. Student interests change from year to year. Even the types of books kids read can change drastically over just a few years. I remember a time in the not too distant past when Dav Pilkey's *Dog Man* was a new book. 4th grade teachers everywhere were racing to buy class sets of the book and introduce their students to this new genre in literary fiction: the graphic novel. Meanwhile, 5th grade teachers were praising Jeff Kinney and his *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series. In the years since then, almost everything has become a graphic novel. Classics like *Nancy Drew* and even *The Babysitter's Club* have taken on a modern-day graphic novel twist.

When I started teaching 4th grade last year, I inherited a decent library, but one that could definitely use some updates. In addition to adding more graphic novels, this year, I decided to have students read the 1979 classic *Bunnicula* (also available as a graphic novel), in small reading groups. Trying to find 20 copies of *Bunnicula* at a reasonable price was the first order of business. One teacher recommended that I try the local junction bookstore, Pegasus Books. I was excited to learn that Pegasus Books, a seller of both new and used books, gives teachers a discount when purchasing books to be used in their classroom

When I went to pick up my classroom copies of *Bunnicula*, I got to chatting with one of the employees about how I was trying to update my classroom library.



And to my delight, [Pegasus Books](#) offered to donate books for our 4th grade classroom library! I picked up three boxes of quality books (graphic novels included) that the fourth graders will surely love and cherish. We are so lucky to have such a supportive community and generous folks here in West Seattle.



Hope School Cleans Up

By Sally Heit

What began as a Saturday morning beach cleanup group at Alki has grown into something much bigger thanks to Hope alumni, Erik Bell (class of XX). Bell organizes the clean up efforts in West Seattle through his group, [A Cleaner Alki](#). You have probably seen his Block Drop buckets and litter sticks in strategic places around West Seattle, encouraging those walking by to take a few minutes to pick up litter. He then picks up the bags at the end of the day and disposes of them.

Bell reached out to another Hope alumni, Christina Figgins, to see if Hope School would be interested in starting their own "block drop" program or adopting a few blocks surrounding their campus to keep clean. *(continued to next page)*

Erik Bell, receives Orville Rummel Community Service Award at the West Seattle Grand Parade.

We immediately jumped at the chance to support a Hope alumni as well as involve our students in a service activity that has a direct impact on where they live and gives them first-hand insight into how their environment is affected by the trash that they find in the streets and green areas.

Bell presented about his group at a Wednesday chapel and our first clean up in February. Each class was given an area on or surrounding the Hope School and church campus. Paired with a buddy, orange vest, bucket and stick, they went out with their teacher and chaperones to find litter. And boy did they! Many were surprised and saddened by the amount of litter that covered alleyways, sidewalks and parks and even their own playground! The older classes covered alleyways on the west east side of California in the Junction area as well as the public park across from QFC.

Hope School has since officially adopted streets through Seattle Public Utilities: Genesee St between 42nd and 40th as well as 41st between Oregon and Genesee. Throughout next year Hope will be organizing clean-up activities as well as working with Erik to establish their own block drop program.

Recently, Erik was encouraged to start a Go-Fund-Me campaign to help raise capital for a work van and growth fund for the group's ongoing cleanup efforts. Having operated for several years out-of-pocket and using the family car, the group's scope and supplies have far exceeded the car's capacity.



From preschool to middle school, students were busy picking up everything from band-Aids to car parts.



Left: A full bucket of trash for Eleanor and Luciana

Right: Fourth grade found a ton of loose screws on their clean up day.

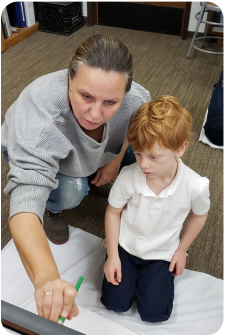


Goodbyes & Hellos



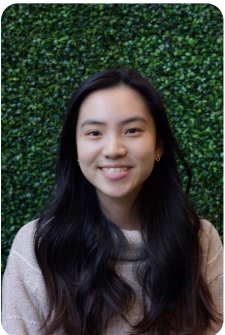
Goodbye Ms. Zetsche

We're sad to say goodbye to Ms. Zetsche who did her student teaching in first grade at Hope during the pandemic and was later hired to be the permanent first grade teacher. She has spent a total of three years a part of the Hope community, and we have loved having her. She has moved to Berlin, Germany to teach preschool as she is fluent in German and holds German citizenship.



Goodbye Ms. Romaine

Ms. Romaine is stepping away from teaching art at Hope. She started teaching art to our youngest students the year before last year and then taught art to all grades K-8 this past year. She is a creative teacher and will be missed!



Hello Sabrina Chau, First Grade

We welcome Ms. Chau to our first grade classroom. She recently graduated with her teaching degree from Seattle Pacific University after completing student teaching in first grade at a public elementary school. She has worked with students in a variety of roles and is fluent in Mandarin.



Hello Lauren Zemke, Sea Turtles Lead Teacher

We are excited to welcome Ms. Zemke as the new lead preschool teacher in the Sea Turtles class. She is an experienced preschool teacher, most recently teaching at Weekdays outdoor preschool and Our Lady of Guadalupe's preschool. She holds a degree in Early Childhood Education from Western Washington University. For the coming year, the Sea Turtles class will be located in the former kindergarten class on the main floor while the kindergarten class is sharing a space with our extended care program in the Fellowship Hall. In fall 2024, grades K-2 will all move to the second floor on the main campus.

**Hello Isabella Cabada, Sea Turtles Lead Aide**

Working alongside Ms. Zemke will be Isabella, as an aide in the Sea Turtle class. Originally from sunny California, she has made Seattle her home. She has been working with children since 2016, and is currently pursuing her associate degree in Early Childhood Education.

**Hello Sandra Scragg, French teacher**

Born in South Africa and having traveled the world with her diplomat parents, Sandra Scragg settled in the PNW where she is happily married with two children and their beloved golden retriever. She speaks seven languages and holds a BA degree (Hons Cum Laude) in modern languages with a post-graduate degree in French. After teaching drama at Hope for 15 years, plus being a Hope parent, she is thrilled to be back teaching French.

**Hello Michele Guiao, Art teacher**

Michele the proud mother of 3 kids. Her daughter started at Hope in middle school in 2021 and her youngest will start kindergarten this Fall. Her oldest attends West Seattle High. She grew up in West Seattle and graduated from Kennedy Catholic High School. Michele received her bachelor's degree from the UW where she fell in with ancient art, literature and history. She read the New Testament and the Iliad in Greek and Cicero and the Aeneid in Latin and also fully immersed herself in Greek and Roman art. Before working at Hope, she was an art docent and taught STEM classes at Rose Hill Elementary. In her free time she enjoys spending time with family, teaching and practicing Ashtanga yoga and will be assistant coach for cross country at Hope.



Hope Purchases Former Seattle Lutheran High School Building

by Kristen Okabayashi & Sally Heit

We are thrilled to announce the sale of the former Seattle Lutheran High School campus, gym and parking lot is complete! You can read the full [press release here](#). Hope has now officially taken over the management of property and plans on using the gym full-time this year for PE and athletics as well as renting it out to community organizations. Renovations to the patio and bathrooms as well as updates to the classrooms are in the planning stages and will begin soon.

We have our work cut out for us as we look ahead into this next year and plan for the expansion of the middle school in Fall 2024. It's an exciting time for the Hope community! As we work toward creating a new space for current and new middle school students and rejuvenating the building, we welcome the expertise and skills our community. If you have a business or skill that you feel could be helpful in our efforts or would like to volunteer, please check out our [Sign-Up Genius](#) where we list areas that we could use help in. Signing up doesn't obligate you in any way; it's simply a way in which we can contact you should we need help in an area that is of interest to you.

In the fall there will be some exciting events focusing on the Hope North campus, and we look forward to sharing more about those events in the coming weeks so keep an eye out.

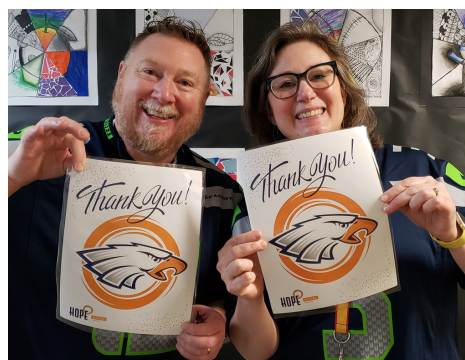
We Made Our Goal!

By Sally Heit



We are part of a wonderful community! THANK YOU so much to everyone who donated to **The Eagle Excellence Fund** in support of our teachers and staff! We are so grateful for your continued support of the great work we do here at Hope Lutheran School and the talented, dedicated people that do that work tirelessly. A total of **65 donors** along with the help of company matching helped exceed our goal of \$60,000 for a grand total of **\$61,270**! Amazing! These funds will add a 3% increase in addition to the planned salary increase for all staff.

Words cannot express how grateful we are to our current families, alumni, church members and friends of Hope for supporting Hope School in this way.



Enjoy Summer!

HAVE AN UPDATE?

[Click here](#) to update your contact information and let us know what you are up to. We love to hear from alumni!

Contributors: Kristen Okabayashi, Erika Alba, and Sally Heit

