GLORIA ARAUJA RUIZ  
Clover Park High School  
Congratulations, Class of 2021!  
Gloria Arauja Ruiz believes that if you want to be the change you wish to see, you need to start by being part of it. “What I want to share with other students is that anything is possible. Being a first generation student can be overwhelming,” Ruiz said. “They should believe they can do it and get involved. It’s going to pay off.”  
Thanks to her hard work, she received multiple acceptance offers to colleges and universities across the country. Ruiz will attend Columbia University in the fall to study political science and economics. She plans to attend law school after earning her bachelor’s degree. She is interested in social justice and has a long-term goal of becoming a Supreme Court Justice.

EMILE AFULU  
Open Doors  
Open Doors graduate Emile Afulu is using the skills, knowledge and grit he learned during his years in Clover Park schools to catapult him towards his future in the United States Army. He is the first in his family to enlist in the military and believes in the importance of serving his country and community. 
His favorite subject was science which allowed him to incorporate his love for drawing as he illustrated scientific concepts to reinforce his learning. This love of science will also help him as he embarks on his military journey. 
The strong school and family partnership through Open Doors helped him regain his footing and stay on track for graduation. “I realized I had to think about my life and graduate. It was a huge motivator,” Afulu said. “Open Doors helped me. My family was encouraging me, and I was able to pull through.”

LINDSAY MWANGI  
Harrison Preparatory School  
Harrison Prep graduate Lindsay Mwangi is excited to make major milestones that will contribute to her future. “My future is in my hands, and I dictate my success,” said Mwangi. “Though it might be a little scary, I’m excited about my trajectory.”  
She plans to attend the University of Washington-Tacoma this fall and major in biomedical science and minor in gender and sexuality studies. She is working over the summer to become a Certified Nurse Aid (CNA) and wants to attend medical school. 
Mwangi is ambitious and works extremely hard. She was born and raised in Lakewood and been part of CPSD her entire school career. Her parents came from Kenya in 1998 and cultivated community. Lakewood is home and has helped shape who she is today. CPSD and Lakewood are a close-knit community where “you feel like you are significant, feel loved and feel like you belong.”

EDRICK WEATHERS  
Lakes High School  
Lakes High School graduate Edrick Weathers is looking forward to making a difference by becoming a doctor. He will attend the University of Washington this fall to study chemistry before pursuing medical school. He likes how objective chemistry is and the problem-solving aspect of it. “It feels good for my soul to help others,” Weathers said. “If some of my teammates are having a hard time with their homework, I like to help them out. I know they will help me if they have the resources.” 
Weathers played football at Lakes High School and loved being part of the team. He has fond memories of travelling with the team as a freshman to the playoffs and participating in summer workouts. He enjoyed being part of something bigger than himself and developing friendships that he hopes will last for years to come.
Supporting students during the pandemic

In addition to hearing from students, Banner has asked students to provide their input in the form of the Superintendent’s Youth Coalition (SYAC). The group, which includes six students from each of the district’s high schools, meets once every other month to represent their student body in an advisory capacity to the superintendent. The SYAC has already made a difference. Last spring, SYAC was invited to a countywide youth listening session with Pierce County Councilman Jim Hinchten, and students participated in an inspiring conversation with leadership about last June’s graduation.

Supporting Students Through Our Focus on Equity

CPSD student voice is enriching our classrooms, the district and the community.

“We built trust with students in the first year when we met for lunch to hear from them in their schools. Now they’re collaborating with us to tackle emerging issues as they come up,” said Director of Equity and Community Engagement Grant Tymian. “It’s exciting to recognize and give space for the inherent wisdom, cultural wealth and powerful voices of our students.”

SAYING YES TO EQUITY

As part of the district’s ongoing work to create equitable and inclusive schools, students from each middle and high school participating in a series of workshops to elevate and empower diverse voices. Students networked across school campuses to build a community of support, belonging and affirmation. It is within the context of a healthy community that students are equipped to partner with the adults in their community to help foster equity.

EQUITY POLICY

The school board has engaged in training on equity, diversity and inclusion for the last five years and initiated a process in January to create an equity policy to guide the school district’s efforts to ensure educational equity, access and outcomes for all CPSD students.

The school board identified 10 essential elements to be a foundation for the policy: student success and achievement, language, instructional practices and teaching, professional development, diversity in the workforce, collective responsibility, collaboration to empower voices, reporting and accountability, and a glossary of terms.

The school district implemented a thorough process to develop the school board’s equity policy development by reviewing policies from across the state, as well as engaging 23 stakeholders from across the region, to establish the district’s equity policy and gain input. An emphasis was placed on gathering input from historically underrepresented communities, such as Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPoC), individuals who participated in the input process and responded to the survey felt that the issues that impact marginalized people groups were identified, the first meeting was a start of true collaboration, and that their ideas were welcomed, valued and heard.

The equity policy affirms that different students have different needs and works to ensure each person is valued, celebrated and supported. It is important to clarify that the district’s equity policy is not Critical Race Theory (CRT), Critical Race Theory is not taught to CPSD students, and staff are not being trained in Critical Race Theory.

The school district reviewed its equity policy with the school board and collected input during the process. The board will conduct its second reading of the equity policy at its Sept. 13 board meeting.

New administrative changes for 2021-22

CPSD welcomes new administrators this year, including current CPSD employees transitioning into new roles. The district also created and filled new administrative positions for the 2021-22 school year.

City of Lakewood: Lakewood has fully reopened, and life is getting back to normal. Our parks are joyfully bustling with events and people enjoying time outdoors. Our downtown and parks are getting back to normal. Our events are plentiful and our city is looking brighter than the past.

PARKS

Harry Todd Park in the Tilikum neighborhood is back open after construction. The park features a new playground, more public restrooms, new picnic facilities and a renovated restroom. Enjoy a day on the beach, reel in a yellow perch or rainbow trout, or hit the water on a paddleboard. Harry Todd Park is open all summer long.

PUBLIC ART

New artwork is springing up all over Lakewood. Visit the vibrant “South Sound Proud” mural beautifying the beach wall at American Lake Park. Look for decorative street furniture and new gateways welcoming visitors to Lakewood. A new gateways monument has been installed in the Woodbrook and Tilikum neighborhoods.

EVENTS

Help kick off a quarter-century of Lakewood with our 25th Anniversary Celebration on Sept. 18.

City of Lakewood: 25th Anniversary Celebration
From the Superintendent

Better Together

Congratulations to our Class of 2021! I am incredibly proud of the achievements of all of our graduates. This edition of Inside Schools features some of our outstanding graduates and their future plans.

We are excited to welcome CPSD students back to in-person instruction in our schools for the 2021-22 school year. School is a special place for students to learn, explore new opportunities, collaborate with their peers and flourish. We are proud to provide your student with a rigorous world-class education that enables them to build a strong foundation for the future through the Four Pillars of Student Success: lifelong learner, collaboration, character and leadership.

Supporting each student requires us to seek to understand and be sensitive to their individual needs. We remain committed to equity and inclusion to ensure each student succeeds and contributes to their community. Although we are moving towards more normalcy in our school schedules and daily lives, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our students in various ways. In addition to academic support, we have invested in additional resources to help students adjust to the challenges they have faced, strengthen their resilience and support their social and emotional well-being.

This year’s calendar theme is Better Together and reflects the amazing things we are able to achieve by working together in support of your student’s education. Each month highlights a key area of support and achievement. You can learn more on our district website (www.cloverpark.k12.wa.us) or on our social media channels.

We look forward to partnering with you to support your student’s academic journey this school year. #BETTERTOGETHER

Ron Banner
Superintendent

Better Together
“Supporting each student requires us to seek to understand and be sensitive to their individual needs.”

Thank You to our 2021 retirees!

Clover Park School District is home to more than 1,600 staff members, many of whom have had long careers in the district. We would like to thank the 2020-21 retirees for their service and dedication to CPSD students and families:

Julie Jones, Beachwood
William Coon, Business Services
Maureen Arroyo, Clover Park
Debra Billingsley, Custodian
Robin Kuras, Custodian
Anita Bruscas, Dower
Veronica Leskajan, Dower
Madeleine Shelley, Dower
Paula Swann, Dower
Joshua Godsey, Evergreen
Denise Roswell, Four Heroes
Marie Lanhm, Hillside
Pamela Martin, Hillside
Sandra Tejera, Hillside
Julie Alken, Lake Louise
Margie Brooks, Lake Louise
Steve Anderson, Lakes
Jose Claudio, Lakes
Richard Kuras, Lakes
John Shelton, Lakes
Barbara Erickson, Lakeview
Maria Evans, Lakeview
Vickie Skeessick, Lakeview
Nancy Bush, Lochburn
Stanley Kilfoyfe, Maintenance and Operations
Karen Reynolds, Meriwether
Emily Westervelt, Meriwether
Janet Coppess, Oakbrook
Chulman Kim, Park Lodge
Julie Wells, Purchasing
Jill Kepper, Rainier
Rosalie Lewis, Rainier
Roger Wendt, Rainier
Janice Anderson, Special Education
Carol Staab, Teaching & Learning
Barbara Lindskog, Thomas
Jill Gilliom, Tillicum
Anton Bye, Transportation
Raymond Denison, Transportation
David Rugg, Transportation
James Walsh, Transportation
Susan Cruz, Tyee Park

Now Hiring

Apply to join the Clover Park team! We are looking for teachers, bus drivers, paraeducators and more! Please visit the district website for current positions or call Human Resources at 253-583-5080.

www.cloverpark.k12.wa.us

SEVEN EDUCATORS EARN NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION

The new certifications mean Clover Park is now home to 122 National Board Certified Teachers, which makes up 14 percent of the district’s total certificated staff.

National Board Certification is an advanced teaching credential. As part of this process, teachers must analyze their teaching content and students’ needs, submit videos of their teaching and provide student work samples that demonstrate growth and achievement.

“National Board Certification is the highest teaching credential in our profession. It requires hard work, dedication and a commitment to students and teaching,” said Professional Development Supervisor Jan Lonsway. “I enjoy being able to recognize those who are willing to put in the time and effort to improve their skills and demonstrate their strengths.”

NEW NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFIED TEACHERS ARE:
Elizabeth Fassnacht, Dower
Athena Houseman, Lakes
Sara Kaperick, Clover Park
Michele Lewis, Rainier
Anita Rhule, Hillside
Brenda Salas, Harrison Prep
Lucille Salazar, Harrison Prep

Inside Schools

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Clover Park 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. Address correspondence to one of the following individuals who have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination at Clover Park School District, 10903 Gravelly Lake Dr., SW, Lakewood, WA 98499-1341: Title IX Coordinator, Kevin Izenda, Asst Superintendent, (253) 583-5165, Section 504/ADA Coordinator, Brian Lacke, Deputy Superintendent, (253) 583-0500; Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator, Lori McClay, Executive Director for Human Resources, (253) 583-5087.