

Parent Connection



Belonging & Achieving

Why We Are Creating More Inclusive Cultures in WLWV Schools

The West-Linn Wilsonville School District is deeply committed to meeting the needs of each child, every child. We lean in to this work with passion and devotion. We believe that it is particularly important for all students to learn and belong in their neighborhood schools.

This belief is supported by 30+ years of educational research that says that students served by special education have better academic, social, behavioral and emotional outcomes when they are included in classrooms along with their general education peers. In addition, students who are not served by special education also benefit from inclusive cultures - academically, socially, behaviorally and emotionally.

On the afternoon of November 21, WLWV hosted a presentation by Dr. Richard Villa, a nationally known expert on co-teaching and inclusive practices. Dr. Villa spoke to a crowd of over 60 parents, teachers, principals, district leaders and community members at Wilsonville High School, sharing the research as well as compelling stories from his

own personal experience as a teacher and principal.

Teaching all students in their neighborhood schools is complex work. We know that any complex work is best accomplished by a team of committed professionals in partnership with parents. We are continuing to build capacity in teachers, learning specialists, instructional assistants, and other school staff to support all students in the general education context as much as possible.

We know that to be truly included means more than just being present in the classroom. That is the first step, but we are also working to create a sense of belonging and community - in addition to rigorous and appropriate academic challenge and support for all students.

We look forward to continuing to partner with parents in this essential work.



WLWV Partnering with FACT for Parent IEP Workshop – January 9

The goal of the IEP is to create a plan that outlines the specially designed instruction and other supports that will allow your child to access their education in the least restrictive environment.

Parents are critical members of the team. You have experienced the long arc of your child's life from birth through early childhood and into school. And you have powerful hopes and expectations for their future.

The West-Linn Wilsonville School District values your voice in the IEP process, and we want to help you better understand how you can partner with school staff to create a successful plan for your child.

WLWV is hosting an event led by Family and Community Together (FACT) to help parents understand the basics of special education and their key role in the IEP team.

Topics include:

- Key SPED Terms & Definitions
- Parent Role on IEP Team
- IEP Process & Development
- Healthy Team Dynamics

Trillium Creek Primary School
Monday January 9
5:00-6:30pm

Tax and Financial Supports for Families of Students with Disabilities

Families of students served by special education may qualify for certain tax and financial supports.

Oregon Tax Exemption

The Oregon tax code provides a tax exemption for parents of eligible children with disabilities (Early Intervention, Early Childhood Special Education or School-Age Special Education).

The procedure for claiming an exemption for the 2016 tax year is explained in the Oregon Individual Income Tax Guide (p. 96). Search for *Publication OR-17* or go to <http://www.oregon.gov/DOR/forms/Pages/default.aspx> and scroll to the Personal Income section.

ABLE savings accounts

The federal government has established a tax-sheltered savings program for families of students with significant disabilities. The purpose of the ABLE account is to allow families to save for disability-related expenses without impacting their eligibility for federal benefits.

<http://oregonablesavings.com/>

WLWV does not give tax and investment advice. Consult a qualified investment advisor or tax specialist for more details about how these programs may relate to your family's financial needs.

New Middle School & Special Education

The West Linn-Wilsonville school district is building a new middle school! Meridian Creek Middle School will open next fall (September 2017).

Construction is moving along, and so is the planning for the middle school program.

Parents of students served by special education may be wondering how opening a new school will impact their child's services.



WLWV is committed to providing the resources to serve each student in their home school. Meridian Creek will be equipped with the same range of supports as the other three middle schools, and staffed with skilled specialists to meet the unique needs of each student – as outlined in the IEP.

In addition, the district is currently deep in the process of renewing our comprehensive

Middle School program. A team of middle school teachers, administrators, counselors and specialists have come together to review the essential components of middle school in WLWV.

The outcome of this process will be to ensure that all 4 middle

schools will have excellent teachers, rigorous curriculum, common structures, and a continuum of supports for all learners.

For information about Meridian Creek Middle School and other bond projects, visit the district's capital bond website:

<http://www.bond.wlwg.k12.or.us/>

For information about the boundary adjustment process for the new middle school, visit the district's boundary website:

<http://www.wlwg.k12.or.us/domain/2495>

Parent Opportunities

Being part of your child's class, school and IEP team are your most important ways to connect.

Here are some other ways to get involved and learn more about special education services in WLWV.

District & Parent Special Education Collaboration Group

This leadership team provides input and becomes key communicators for our district's long range direction in special education.

Meetings at the District Office:

All meetings 5-6pm

- February 13
- April 24

Parent Orientation & Resource Events

Learn more about the IEP process and how to partner effectively with educators for your child's success.

- January 9 – Parents' Role in IEP
- January 23 – ECSE Transition to K
- March 13