

2009-2010 School Performance Report

Point Defiance Elementary School

4330 N. Visscher St. • Tacoma, WA 98407 • 253-571-6900

Olga Lay, Principal

www.ptdefiancepolarbears.org

Welcome to Point Defiance Elementary School

"If you read...you will succeed!" Students will say this slogan to any visitor to the school when asked about reading. They have learned this year more than ever that the love of reading will allow them to do anything in life they want. The ASB student body set their school goal earlier this year to reach 40,000 Accelerated Reader points.

This is a program that keeps track of each book they read and gives them points for answering comprehension questions. Book points range from 0.5 in most of the primary books to 15+ for upper elementary. They were able to reach their goal by reading many books this year. Excitement and motivation by staff and families were part of the key to success.

An additional motivator to reach this goal was the opportunity to see their principal do something out of the ordinary for the day. Principal Olga Lay has been a clown who has washed cars, a student for the day and a person who sat on the roof all day. Students, families and staff work together to make a big difference in reaching all academic goals.

The Point Defiance staff is committed to helping children develop and gain a life-long love of learning while acquiring skills to become productive citizens of the 21st century. Along with academics, students are given many opportunities to be recognized for good choices in school.

There is a positive recognition program in which students receive an honor of being Students-of-the-Week. They are acknowledged each Monday morning on our intercom. Students-of-the-Month are recognized for academic achievement and citizenship at our monthly assemblies. There is an atmosphere of learning and fun for all our families!

Olga Lay,
Principal

"If you READ, you WILL succeed!"

Mission statement

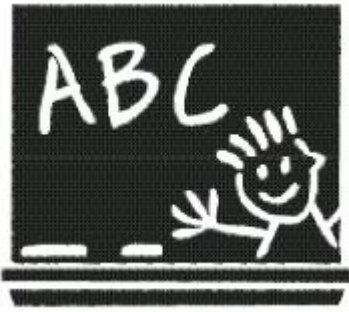
Point Defiance Elementary School welcomes students, families and the community to a nurturing, learning environment that promotes academic achievement. We have a clear and shared focus to ensure high standards and expectations for all. Together, we provide the knowledge and skills for students to become respectful, responsible, life-long learners and citizens.



Working together: Home, school and community

Point Defiance has a dedicated group of volunteers, which includes parents, grandparents and community members. These volunteers help students in many ways: small-group tutoring, computer assistance, the annual auction and Reflections Art program. To become a volunteer, call 253-571-6900.

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a vital part of our school community. This is an energetic group with the primary focus on supporting staff to meet the needs of our children. The PTA supports numerous family events, including; movie nights, bingo and karaoke night. This is the best and most active PTA in town. We have increased the number of volunteers working in our school because of our members' ability to reach out to parents and make them feel welcome. We encourage participation in our school and invite you to become involved in this association. In an effort to strengthen communication between families and our school, we send home weekly newsletters which feature PTA and Student Council news, a principal's message and important information about school and the community. Other means of communication include class newsletters, reader board announcements and our Web site at www.tacomaschools.org. Parents, students and teachers come together twice a year for "partnership conferencing" to develop positive relations and set goals to increase student success.



Demographics

Enrollment (October 2009)

Pre-kindergarten	20
Kindergarten	65
Grade 1	72
Grade 2	68
Grade 3	62
Grade 4	71
Grade 5	69
Total	427

Ethnicity

African American	63	14.8%
Asian	24	5.6%
American Indian	3	0.7%
Hispanic	27	6.3%
Pacific Islander	6	1.4%
White	304	71.2%

Staff

Administrators	1
Classroom teachers	16
Educational assistants	5
PE specialist	1
Librarian	1
Music specialist	2
Head Start	3
Guidance	1
Nurse	1
Clerical	3
Custodians	2
Food servers	3
LAP reading teacher	1
LRC teacher	1
ESL teacher	1
Playground supervisors	5

Test scores comparison

For 2010 Measurement of Student Progress and 2005-2009 Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) results and detailed demographic information about the Tacoma School District and its individual schools, please go to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction Web site at www.k12.wa.us, then click on the School Report Card link or go directly to: <http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us>.

Measurement of Student Progress and Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) scores are listed for the last six years along with the state and district averages.

Grade 3	Reading						Mathematics					
	Year	05	06	07	08	09	10	05	06	07	08	09
Pt Defiance	-	73	73	76	75	73	-	61	78	73	70	68
District	-	63	65	64	65	66	-	52	64	61	55	54
State	-	68	71	70	71	72	-	64	69	68	66	62

Grade 4	Reading						Mathematics					Writing						
	Year	05	06	07	08	09	10	05	06	07	08	09	10	05	06	07	08	09
Pt Defiance	86	84	66	72	79	75	52	49	52	54	45	47	65	46	54	58	66	64
District	76	75	70	66	67	61	50	43	46	47	39	45	59	55	54	58	56	56
State	80	81	76	72	74	67	61	59	58	53	52	54	58	60	60	62	60	61

Grade 5	Reading						Mathematics					Science						
	Year	05	06	07	08	09	10	05	06	07	08	09	10	05	06	07	08	09
Pt Defiance	-	92	73	72	63	74	-	53	63	53	58	41	23	24	24	35	42	39
District	-	70	65	69	68	63	-	46	54	51	52	44	25	24	23	30	32	21
State	-	76	72	75	74	70	-	56	59	61	62	54	36	36	36	43	45	34

Unexcused absence rate (2009-2010): 0.2%

Free/reduced price meals (May 2010): 61%

In the 2009-2010 school year, Point Defiance teachers and staff continued with year four of their Enhancing Literacy Instruction training, which provided them best instructional practices for teaching reading during the 90-minute reading block. Grade levels implemented Walk-to-Read groups where students were able to work in specific ability and small groups. The staff continues to implement the FOSS science program where students are taught physical, earth and life science through the rotation of three modules per grade. It is an exciting curriculum to teach. Staff members work hard in their grade-level teams to help students succeed in math using a variety of programs. Students are also writing more than ever as they learn techniques to become good writers with the Step-Up-To-Writing curriculum. Work continues at Pt. Defiance on building strong professional learning communities where teachers can engage in conversations with each other about students' achievements and best practices. Grade-level and cross-grade-level teaming provides the way for these conversations to happen.



About our building and neighborhood

Point Defiance is located in the north end of Tacoma about one mile south of Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium near the Vassault playfield. We also include many of the children from the town of Ruston in our school population. Our neighborhood is mostly composed of single-dwelling homes with some apartment complexes intermingled. Over 20 years ago, Point Defiance Elementary School was remodeled to become a model school with capacity to house 500 students. We have a library, music room, art room, computer lab (a Mac lab) and gym with a climbing wall. The art room is used for classes working on special projects, multi-class activities and special events. Throughout the school and courtyard is student artwork that was created with the help of visiting artists. Our PTA teamed up with the school to provide the supplies so all students could participate. Our computer lab is used by all students and staff members. They use a variety of software for word processing, multimedia presentations, logical thinking and drill practice installed on each computer.

Student achievement

Students have been working hard on reading and it shows in all their academic work. Setting high expectations and providing instruction that will prepare students to meet the proficiency standards is always the goal of our educators at Point Defiance. Academic progress is assessed using various assessments throughout the grades. All grades take a test called Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) three times a year. This helps our teachers determine literacy components necessary for students to succeed. Teachers are able to help students gain understanding in areas that need strengthening and reinforcement. All grade levels also work on computers almost daily and take Accelerated Reader tests which score the ability to comprehend books they have read at home. The PTA purchased the entire selection of over 110,000 tests to help students be motivated to read. All together, Point Defiance students are succeeding and working hard to do great academically.

Learning improvement

Staff development activities are in alignment with our School Improvement Plan, which provides goals and strategies to help students and staff received the highest quality education. Staff approved a new plan in the spring of 2008, which is consistent with the Standards for Quality Elementary Schools, and district and state student achievement and restructuring goals. To increase student performance in literacy and math, the following areas were addressed:

- Math and literacy targets
- Measurement and geometric sense
- Accelerated Reader
- Accelerated learning plans
- Professional development
- Reading fluency
- Establishing common assessment papers
- MSP planning (new WASL testing for 2009-2010)
- Classroom implementations from WASL scoring test scores 2008-2009)
- Understanding open-ended responses
- Gaining more information on narrative and informational text
- Head Start Early Childhood Program

Other facts to know

The peer mediation program is in its eighth year. Thirty fourth- and fifth-graders received six hours of training on problem solving, effective communications skills and how to act as neutral third parties to mediate the disputes of their peers. It is our opportunity to help students become leaders and help others to grow. The Student Council is also an active part of our school. This group supports the community and greater Pierce County with efforts such as the annual food drive and the American Heart Association-Jump Rope for Heart. The Student Council sponsors "spirit week" and promotes leadership skills in our school.

Special programs at Pt. Defiance

At Point Defiance Elementary School, we have a number of special programs which include:

Learning Resource Center (LRC): Provides special education services for qualified students.

Learning Assistance Program (LAP): Gives support to students in fourth and fifth grades who did not pass standardized tests.

Head Start: A 3- and 4-year-old preschool program for 20 students is a wonderful opportunity for our little ones to learn and grow in the school setting.

Other Special Education Services: Physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and counseling services are available for children with these needs.

Challenge Program/JAWS: Students who qualify for the Highly Capable program are bused to Skyline Elementary School one day each week for enrichment.

Student Assistant Program: Connects Pt. Defiance with mental health or family counseling services. Comprehensive Mental Health assists our families in many ways. For information, contact Jill Smith, counselor, at 253-571-6905.

Champions: A before- and after-school and summertime childcare program for school-aged children. For information, call 253-571-6869.

Math Olympiad: Fourth- and fifth-graders are able to participate in a regional math competition. Pt. Defiance students are trained for this competition and have always done well representing our district.

After-school activities: Broadway Center for the Performing Arts, Mad Science and Chess Club are just some extra activities offered after school.

About Tacoma School District No. 10

The Tacoma School District No. 10 is the third largest district in Washington state. There are nearly 30,000 children in kindergarten through grade 12. Tacoma Public Schools has 37 elementary schools, 10 middle schools, five comprehensive high schools, and seven alternative learning sites. The district encompasses 56 square miles and is located on the southern end of Puget Sound in the shadow of Mount Rainier. As of Oct. 1, 2009, the district had 2,008 teachers, 26 certificated management-level staff members, 88 principals, 1,406 regular classified employees, 55 exempt classified employees, 742 classified non-regular/substitute employees and 520 certificated non-regular/substitute employees.

2009-2010 district improvement goals

1. Increase achievement for all students each year by 10%. (Based on the difference between the 2007 WASL scores and 100% of students meeting state standard.)
2. Decrease the gap between underperforming subgroups and the district average performance on the WASL by 10% annually.
3. Decrease the dropout rate by 10% annually.
4. Reduce the number of students not graduating by 10% annually.

Financial data

Revenues 2009-2010:

State	\$181,436,768	56.4%
Federal.....	\$57,586,354	17.9%
Local taxes	\$72,232,664	22.4%
Local non-taxes	\$6,831,491.....	2.1%
Other	\$3,795,569	1.2%

Total revenues budgeted..... \$321,882,846

Expenditures 2009-2010:

Teaching activities	\$195,536,100	60.5%
Other support activities	\$54,738,203	16.8%
Teaching support	\$32,154,459	9.9%
Central Administration	\$20,776,021	6.4%
Principals' office	\$21,018,081	6.4%

Total expenditures budgeted \$362,222,864

Average per pupil expenditure 2009-2010\$11,990

The information in this report is a requirement of our state's legislature. The Tacoma Public Schools supports this sharing of educational information with the community. If you have questions about district policies or programs, contact the Public Information Office at 253-571-1015.

The Tacoma Public Schools Web site: www.tacomaschools.org



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Tacoma Public Schools
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