From the Principals Desk:

Dear Willagillespie Families and Friends,

What a difference a year makes! Think of this year’s kindergartners a year ago, or last year’s kindergartners today. In stature, vocabulary, sense of self, and thrills—in a year each of them grew into a more complete expression of their beautiful selves. A year of food, sleep, family, love, friendships, and learning and look what happens—children grow, inside and out. The powerful, resilient, and sacred growth of children is what brings us all together at Willagillespie Community School. May the year ahead be one where we celebrate growth; so much so that our kids start to glow.

My name is David Jacobson. I begin my second year as principal at Willagillespie with passion and purpose for the growth of each member of the Willagillespie Community and the school community at large. You should know that my wife Sandi teaches second grade, and with our three boys in high school, middle school, and elementary, school and education is a way of life for us. We’re all in it together. My part as a parent and principal is to help to create and sustain the conditions for each person in our care to grow.

I keep three things in mind when it comes to helping kids grow: skill, will, and thrill. A person’s skills are the background knowledge, prior experience, and understanding of the content or skill at hand. The will is the desire to embrace the challenge, push through mistakes or misunderstanding, and persist through difficulties in pursuit of knowing more and doing better. The thrill is the magnetic attraction to it, whatever it is—the pleasure and satisfaction in knowing and doing that some adults call being in the zone. I will tell you, the sheer pleasure of being with children as they sort through and develop their skills, will, and thrill in learning to read, in seeing patterns with numbers, in describing their ideas in writing, or in sharing their interpretation of a story is one my favorite things about being at Willagillespie.

You can almost feel it as that glow begins to show through when kids feel at ease and at home as they learn. Academically, socially, emotionally, and civically, our staff finds ways to connect each student with new knowledge and celebrate growth. Please plan to attend our Curriculum Night September 22 to hear more from your child’s teacher about the skills, will, and thrill ahead. Tammy Coleman and I will also be sharing insights into the changes in math curriculum and the strategies we work to instill in our students at Willagillespie. Please spend some time reading through the boxes of information in this newsletter. If you are new to Willagillespie, it will help you understand some of the basic daily operations of the school. If you are familiar with WillaG, it may refresh your memory and help you be a guide to a new family.

Thank you for bringing your children to Willagillespie Community School. You are welcome here, welcome to come and learn and grow with us, welcome to celebrate the glow. The staff and I love what we do and we can hardly wait to get started again. See you soon.

Go Eagles, Grow Eagles! Glow Eagles!!

Best Regards,
David Jacobson (AKA Dr. J)

To speed your way through some details, I’ll address aspects of the start of the school year and Opening Day at WillaG with bullet points:

- **Staff**: Our staff, programs, and community make WillaG a special place. A list of staff assigned to serve at Willagillespie for 2015-16 is included with this newsletter on pg. 3. Be aware—we may face last minute staffing changes if enrollment patterns change significantly.

- **Office Hours during the school days**: The office will be open to assist you during the hours of 8:00am - 3:30pm (Mon,Tues, Thurs, Fri) and 8:00am - 2:30pm on Wednesday Early Release.
• **Sign-in & out Every Visit:** For each child’s safety, every parent, guardian, and visitor must sign in through the office before entering the building during school hours. Before leaving, please sign back out. Thank you.

• **Class Lists:** This year, lists will be posted **Friday September 4, at 4PM.**

• **Curriculum Night:** is scheduled for **Tuesday September 22.** Come and see our classrooms, student work, and hear from the principal. Watch for more information to come home with your students.

• **Communication:** We need your digits! Please update email and phone information in the office. We will utilize email and the school website to communicate school news and updates on programs and events.

• **Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook:** The handbook guides our response to attendance, behavior, and student safety. Pay close attention to explanations of bullying and harassment and how weapons are defined in relation to school. We will do all we can to ensure a safe school for everyone, emotionally and physically.

• **Cell Phones:** We permit students to use cell phones to contact family members in the event of an emergency. Otherwise, cell phones tend to be a distraction. All student phones will remain off during the entire school day and kept in backpacks. Cell phones used in the classroom or the bathroom will be confiscated and returned to the parent.

• **Bell Schedule:** *The school day begins at 8:35 and ends at 2:50, with an early release at 1:50PM on Wednesday.* Supervision of students begins at 8:05. Please be sure your child arrives and departs promptly. Students need to be picked up at 1:50 on Wednesdays and 2:50 on every other school day. Our staff schedule and budget do not provide early or late supervision. Creative Care provides daycare service in the morning and after school. Contact Creative Care at *541-683-7291.*

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**Eugene Creative Care at Willagillespie**

Your child doesn’t have to take a bus for great after school care. We’re here on site, which gives your child the advantage of being at their home school for at-school enrichment programs and team sports. **Creative Care will be located in the cafeteria.** KIDS - come have fun and spend time with your friends. There are lots of games, crafts, cooking projects, gym and playground time, field trips and just plain FUN! There’s even time to get your homework out of the way before you go home.

**BEFORE SCHOOL** child care is also available.

Creative Care is a State Certified, Non-profit agency run by Parent Board of Directors.

DHS and other Grants are accepted. Scholarships are available.

**Eugene Creative Care has been operating since 1977.**

Call our office for more information and to register.

541-683-7291

[www.eugenecreativecare.org](http://www.eugenecreativecare.org)

*Drop off and pick up will be by the cafeteria*

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**SITE COUNCIL NEWS**

The Willagillespie Site Council will meet on **Wednesday, September 16, 2015 from 4:00 to 5:15 pm** in the staff room. Meetings are open to all Willagillespie families and staff.
Operation School Bell

Each year the Assistance League of Eugene provides quality clothing to many of our school children. Parents may submit the names of their school age children to the school office for consideration. Operation School Bell will notify us as to the date of an open shopping night at Fred Meyer where each student will be given a voucher to exchange for clothing/shoes. Depending on the number of slots that we are given a drawing will be held to fill those slots. Shopping nights generally occur in late October or early November. If you qualify for the free and reduced lunch program and need help outfitting your child for school please check with the school office.

Threats of Harm

If Your Student Receives a Threat:
It has always been our practice to keep parents informed if their child receives a serious threat of violence or harm at school, but it is important for you to know about a procedure we have implemented to comply with recent changes in state law.

School to Inform Parents if Their Student Receives a Threat:
Oregon law now requires schools to inform parents if their child’s name appears on a targeted list (i.e., a “hit list”) that threatens violence or harm from another student. We will be using the following procedure to inform you if your student either receives or makes a serious threat of violence or harm, or if he or she receives other threats of violence or harm by another student.

We will attempt to meet with you personally, or talk by telephone, within 12 hours of learning about the threat. We will tell you about the threat, who made it (if we know), and the action we are taking to respond to it. We will also send you a notice within 24 hours, stating that your child did not receive a threat. Our number one priority will be to make sure that school is safe for your child.

If your child made the threat, we will let you know that he or she made, and the action we are taking. We will then inform you of the student who received the threat. We are also required by the district’s Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook to inform the police.
Attendance Practices for Willagillespie Community School

Students should attend school everyday when school is in session and on time in order to benefit from the educational process at Willagillespie Community School. Most learning experiences in the classroom consist of: demonstration, discussion, conferencing, explaining, checking for understanding, and re-teaching. Written work (the type of work that can go home to a sick child) is only a small part of what goes on in the classroom. Regular and prompt attendance is encouraged by the staff at Willagillespie and required by the state of Oregon to ensure that every child has equal opportunities to learn from the academic and social opportunities in the classroom.

If your student will be absent:

- **Call the attendance line by 9:00am.** The attendance line is 541-790-7125.
- For extended absences you can make arrangements to pick up homework by contacting your student’s teacher. Otherwise, the missed assignments will be available when the child returns to school. It is each student’s responsibility to make up any written or reading assignments missed due to absence.
- The parent or guardian must call or send a note within 48 hours of a student’s absence for the absence to be “excused”.
- If you are planning an extended absence, please notify the office in advance.
- Students with 4 or more consecutive absences due to illness will be required to bring a physician’s statement in order for the absences to be considered excused.
- **If a student’s unexcused absences 4 days or 8 unexcused one-half day absences in any four-week period in which school is in session is considered irregular attendance. If this occurs, the parent/guardian will be notified through a letter from the school.** If the student’s attendance does not improve, the student will be considered truant and may be referred to the Lane ESD Truancy Department.

If your student is going to be tardy:

- **A student arriving at school at 8:35 or later is considered late** and the student must check-in at the front office. If a student is late due to a medical appointment, a parent must sign-in the student at the office for the tardy to be excused. However, a tardy still affects a student’s attendance record.
- **If a student is more than 30 minutes late, the tardy will become a half-day absence**
10 Reasons To Get Involved

1. Your child benefits.
   When parents get connected to the school, children do better. Research shows children whose parents are involved get better grades, do better on tests, and have fewer discipline problems at school.

2. We make a difference.
   Our mission is to create the kind of school community where teachers and administrators can do their best work—and so can our children. We provide support for teachers in and out of the classroom. We provide resources they need. We help create learning opportunities for children. And we try to build the kind of supportive, caring atmosphere that makes school fun.

3. We pledge to honor your time constraints.
   People are often reluctant to participate because they’re afraid they’ll get pulled into a black hole of never-ending time commitment. That won’t happen here. An hour or two a semester really makes a difference. And we won’t push you to commit more than you want to or are able to.

4. We have fun.
   Volunteer work shouldn’t be drudgery. We accomplish a lot, and not everything we do is easy. But we know we’re not balancing the national debt, either. We don’t take ourselves too seriously, and we try to enjoy ourselves along the way whenever possible.

5. Meet nice people who share your concerns.
   We all have a common bond. We care about creating the best possible educational experience for our children. We are neighbors and peers who share many of the same experiences. And many friendships have developed as a result of those connections.

6. There’s a lot to be done.
   These days, schools are asked to do more with less. Our help is needed more than ever to fill the gaps.

7. We can match jobs to your interests and abilities.
   The work we do covers a broad spectrum: filing and photocopying, planning and executing events, writing and editing, working directly with children, managing a budget and cash flow, and lots more. We encourage creative ideas, and we’re thrilled to have people take on tasks that meet their skills and interests.

8. We’re welcoming.
   To us, there are no “outsiders.” We are people who have come together to work toward common goals. We couldn’t be happier to have you join us in working toward those goals.

9. We’re about parent involvement, not fundraising.
   In these times of tight budgets, parent groups everywhere are having to fill in the gaps, and so are we. But our number one goal is to get more parents connected to the school. That’s because more than 300 independent research studies show that building parent involvement in education is the number one thing we can do to create a great school and improve student performance.

10. This work is very rewarding.
    It’s seeing the bright light of learning sparkle in a child’s eye. It’s seeing the smile that shows we’re making school a little more fun—and a child feel a little more comfortable in a learning environment. It’s learning that test scores have risen and knowing we played a role. There are lots of rewards, both big and small, for those who get involved. Won’t you join us?

Contact:
For more information email us at willagillespiepto@gmail.com
or find us on Facebook
PARKING LOT REMINDERS

Please remember that busses will drop off in the west parking lot, by Willagillespie Rd. side of the building. Vehicle parking on that side of the building is reserved for staff only. Parents and visitors may park by the front entrance accessed off of Abby Lane. Please do not park in Abby Lane parking lot or on the side street leading to the apartments.

WILLAGILLESPIE DAILY SCHEDULE

8:05 Breakfast/main entrance supervision begins
8:25 Doors Open
8:30 Students to be in class, ready to start the day!
8:35 School Starts
2:50 School Ends on M,Tu,Th,F
1:50 School Ends on every Wed

Attendance Line: 541-790-7125

Regular attendance at school is an important factor in your child’s progress. We urge parents to send their children to school every day possible. When your child is absent or arriving late, please call our attendance line. Adding a dedicated line gives us more time to answer those early morning questions that arise. Place your message by 9:00 am when possible. Thanks.