



# INSIGHTS

December 2005 Edition  
News & Information  
from Human Resources  
206.433.2281

## “INSIGHTS”

YOUR CONNECTION TO  
THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

Some of you may remember that “Insights” was sent in hard copy form when it was first launched in January 2002. We began the electronic distribution in December of 2002, and the inclusion into the emailed District News in August 2003.

Distributing “Insights” on-line has and will continue to be a very convenient way to share information. However, not every employee has access to a computer. So, a paper version will once again be made available to ensure everyone receives the same information.

Help us provide valuable and timely information – you are invited to send in any questions you have from the Human Resources and we will do our best to answer them promptly.

Just send an e-mail to **Marcia Julson** at [julsonmn@hsd401.org](mailto:julsonmn@hsd401.org) or call her at (206) 988-7282.



### TIME IS RUNNING OUT!

#### ParaEducator Assessment Testing

Only one testing date available  
to meet January 8, 2006 timeline

December 7, 2005  
ERAC—Computer Lab  
Maximum—13

Call or email to register:  
**Marcia Julson**—206-988-7282  
[julsonmn@hsd401.org](mailto:julsonmn@hsd401.org)

(Please check the Staff Development website at <http://www.hsd401.org/StaffDevelopment/index.htm> for more information.)



## MEDICARE - PART D

If you are a Medicare beneficiary or have a beneficiary in your family who is on Medicare, beginning October, 2005 an important decision will be upon you. You will decide whether or not to sign up for the new Medicare prescription drug coverage (known as Part D). You will have to determine which plan best suits your needs.

Medicare Part D insurance is voluntary. You don't have to enroll. It is advised that you do not enroll in the Medicare Part D unless you are planning to stop your group coverage effective January 1, 2006.

To continue your enrollment in the District's Regence Blue Shield, Premera or Group Health Cooperative plans, do nothing. If you are covered by a group plan, you can join later after losing your employer prescription coverage.

If you do choose to enroll in Medicare Plan D and maintain your enrollment in the District's group medical plan, then Medicare will become the primary payer of your prescription claims and the District group plan will be secondary. However, the cost of Medicare Plan D would be unnecessary, since prescriptions are already covered 100% by the District plans after a copay.

Beginning in November you, or your dependents who are 65 or will be turning 65 in 2006, will receive a notice from your group medical plan company stating that your coverage is considered creditable and you do not have to enroll in Plan D at this time.



### HR DEPARTMENT DECEMBER CLOSURE DATES

Human Resources will be closed to the public from December 22, 2005 through January 2, 2006. Normal operation hours of 7:30 a.m.—5:00 p.m. will be back on January 3, 2006.

*“How lucky am I? At work each day, I get to help children learn and play, and keep them safe so they will grow into adults I'll be glad to know. How proud am I? I guide today's youth to strive for knowledge, goals and truth. I know I play an important part in inspiring them to take learning to heart...” – Robyn Squire*

Hiring ■ Employee Records ■ Benefits ■ Payroll ■ Recognition ■ Retirement ■ Training



# F.Y.I.

## SUBSTITUTE ID BADGES

Have you noticed something a little different about the badges our non-regular employees are wearing? Photo identification badges reflect, now more than ever, that substitutes, coaches, consultants, temps, and other “non-regular” employees are part of the Highline Public Schools family. The badges remain color-coded so that at a glance you will be able to determine that this “family member” is a substitute, and as is clearly stated on the badge, what type of non-regular employee they are, (i.e. substitute, temporary consultant/contractor, coach, etc.) This new ID badge came into effect on November 1, 2005, and as is customary for these employee badges, the color will change each school year.



### TRAINING

Human Resources continues to develop opportunities for personal/professional growth. Additional training opportunities combined with the currently-scheduled trainings, which are geared toward opportunities for classified employees on early release days as well as waiver days, will be available for all employees. In the near future, you may register electronically through the Staff Development website. Current sessions cover topics such as conflict resolution, time management, balancing work & home, “True Colors,” career pathing, etc. New classes in a Leadership Journey Series will be offered for:

- Job-specific training linked to new employee orientation and recurrent training.
- Student monitor, office staff & clerical position training.
- Administration & Manager Trainees
- Current Administrators & Managers
  1. Mentoring opportunities
  2. Operational responsibilities
  3. Crisis management
  4. Committee-based learning
- Seasoned Leaders
  1. Recurrent operational training.



### Waiver Days, Early Dismissal Days

<u>Waiver Day</u>	<u>Early Release Days</u>	Trainings will be offered for affected classified staff on some of these days. Watch for future details in various forms of district communication.
12/7 /05	1/11/06	
1/25/06	1/25/06	
2/8/06	3/1/06	
4/5/06	3/29/06	
5/17/06	5/3/06	
6/14/06	5/31/06	

# Q&A

**Q:** December 30 is listed as a non-work day on the 12-month calendar. Does that mean it will have to be taken as a vacation day?

**A:** No. In previous years, this non-work day was included on the calendar around the July 4th holiday. This year, the non-workday is scheduled during the week between Christmas and New Year’s when a non-workday is required to keep the workdays plus holidays equal to 260 days total for the fiscal year.

**Q:** There are a couple of district-offered training classes that I am interested in taking that fall on my work day. Is it feasible to take these, and if so, how would I count them (i.e, sick, personal day, etc.)?

**A:** If you want to attend during a time you would be performing your duties at school, and the administrator approves, it would be considered work time.



## WHO IS THAT PERSON IN YOUR BUILDING...?

...none other than a staff member from Human Resources!

Human Resources staff members are making arrangements to get out of the office and visit individual buildings and/or departments. The purpose is to spend some time “in the field” to meet you, acquaint you with the staff, and answer general questions or explain processes. They may not be able to answer specific questions, but will follow-up on specific issues.

Listen and/or watch for information from your building administrator or office manager as these hour-long visits are scheduled. Even if you don’t have a question for them, just stop by and say “Hi.”



*Insights will be published monthly and sent in paper form to all departments/buildings on or around payday. The newsletter will also be included on a monthly basis in District News, the electronic newsletter distributed via the District’s Communication Office.. Additional and time sensitive news may be included in the District News between monthly publication dates.*

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