

Winter Lakes High School

Program Description

Open in September 2011, Winter Lakes High School (WLHS) is located in the historic downtown area of Coquille, Oregon. It is a closed campus with breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack available on site. The school building supports the WLHS's business-like but highly personalized approach to education. Winter Lakes High School is a joint partnership of Bandon, Coquille, Myrtle Point, and Powers school districts.

WLHS serves up to 70 students with classes that are designed to teach to a variety of learning styles and skill levels, graduating youth ages 17 to 20. Courses address all graduation requirements (math, science, language arts, social science, world language, health, and physical education) through the use of on-line and individualized courses. Average class size is 15 students, allowing for frequent teacher/student interaction. All WLHS students have the opportunity to apply for intensive career-based learning programs. Career-based courses occur in a setting where the curriculum is hands-on and project-oriented, using the career site as a classroom. In all courses, students work to earn credits toward a high school diploma or prepare to earn a GED.

The heart of Winter Lakes lies in helping its students to develop positive academic achievements and respectful relationships with others. By emphasizing community learning, students experience success and develop a sense of purpose and going beyond where they thought they would go.

Mission

The mission of Winter Lakes High School is to meet its students "where they are" and take them beyond...

Vision

The vision of Winter Lakes High School is built on four central pillars:

Beliefs

- Recognize that a creative community-based education is essential for student success.
- Welcome all students, staff, parents, and community members.
- Meet all students "where they are."

- Embrace educational diversity.

Community

- Involve community partners and parents in the education of our students.
- Actively engage students and equip them with appropriate social skills through regular interaction with multiple age groups and generations.
- Provide a safe learning environment for all students and staff that is warm, welcoming, and inviting for all.
- Students are actively engaged in their education with support of the school community and friends of the school.

Teaching & Learning

- Seek to open educational doors in a variety of ways, including non-traditional classroom methods.
- Use technology, educational practices and innovative strategies to engage students in a variety of educational pursuits.
- Show its appreciation for the past while moving forward into 21st century technology.

Student Success

- Curriculum is challenging, engaging, and supportive of student success now and in the future.
- Create pride and ownership in students' educational successes.
- Students enjoy a rigorous and relevant education built on strong relationships.

Educational Program

Winter Lakes High School is a unique educational setting that provides opportunities for an individual wanting to earn a high school diploma. A second option is to be involved in a GED preparation program in conjunction with community college academic counseling. Academic and vocationally oriented education programs are provided through an individualized, student-centered approach. WLHS teachers develop the school's curriculum to match it with what their students need to know, understand, and are able to do and to meet the expectations of the partner school districts, as well as the graduation requirements of the State of Oregon. WLHS seeks to implement a rigorous and relevant academic core curriculum that local communities hold in high regard. The curriculum is highly varied and

adaptable, using OdysseyWare software and community partnerships as its basis.

Instruction is sensitive to the variety of learning styles among students. Students participate in whole classroom, small group, online education, individual and group projects, vocational activities, community-based outreach programs, and internships. The environment created for each student will be positive, caring, and adapted to individual needs. Instructional content areas will stress individualized academic education, career development, and personal growth. Teachers at WLHS meet frequently to review curriculum and student assessment data. The school principal consistently monitors classroom instruction to see that it meets state and local standards and to provide support to ensure high student achievement. To determine instructional needs, counseling and credit analysis is conducted and a Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) to determine where a student is academically is created when a student enrolls.

To sustain instruction, staff compile and review progress reports (Progress to Graduation Report) at a minimum of every two weeks. These reports are shared with parents/family members and include attendance data and student specific guidance for improvement, when needed. Licensed and highly qualified Winter Lakes teachers determine the sufficiency and proficiency of the work done by students. Staff maintain and model an orderly learning environment through fair and respectful treatment of students.

Winter Lakes High School will work with each student to assess academic, career and personal needs in order to develop and maintain a Personalized Learning Plan (PLP). Student degree of satisfaction with schooling will be determined upon enrollment and regularly reviewed thereafter through data from transcripts, achievement tests, interviews, and teacher narratives. Emphasis will be placed on helping students develop self-discipline and responsibility, and assessments of growth in students' social/emotional development will be used to evaluate progress. Data on social/emotional development will be collected with the use of questionnaires, during a "friendly" intake process, and from additional counseling sessions. Each student and student's family regularly receives a Progress to Graduation Report showing exactly where they are toward earning credits for high school graduation. As adequate progress is made toward graduation, a Transition Plan will become part of the Personalized Learning Plan (PLP).

The local communities will be involved in the assessment process by being asked to contribute critiques of the performance of students placed in worksites, and the school is open to community members' reports of student behaviors in public places. As soon as possible, WLHS will share results of Oregon Department of Education report cards, school enrollment and program data, and assessment test results with its partner communities.

School Leadership and Organization

Mr. Tony Jones is a veteran in public education. He served as a classroom teacher and athletic coach for 18 years before going into school administration, nine years ago. Mr. Jones held the position of school principal and special programs administrator in the Port Orford-Langlois School District for the past three years. Prior to that experience Mr. Jones worked in the Coos Bay School district in a variety of capacities. In his last six years in Coos Bay, he worked mainly with alternative education programs.

Winter Lakes is organized so that its staff and students achieve the school's mission and vision. The way the school is organized reflects current research and innovative best practices, and effective implementation and continuous improvement of the school's educational program.

School Services

Winter Lakes students receive counseling, access to library services, and health supports. The school works to involve families and local communities in support of student learning.

Facilities

Winter Lakes High School is located in the former Courtyard of Coquille building. It has ample space for the number of students WLHS will serve, with a large open classroom on the main floor, smaller classrooms and a dining area downstairs, and an outdoor area that can be used as an additional classroom or assembly area.

School Finance

Winter Lakes High School operates at no additional cost to its participating local school districts.

Program Evaluation

On an annual basis, Winter Lakes High School will complete a program evaluation that involves processes of 1) inventory and the determination of 2) compliance and 3) quality. Students, parents, school staff and the community will all take place in the process. Objectives for evaluation will be determined during the 2011-12 school year. Additionally, timelines for evaluation will be established and specific feedback tools developed. Formative and summative data will be built into the process. Generally, the program will be evaluated on its ability to meet accreditation standards while delivering innovative elements of school design.

Goals areas in the program evaluation are school accreditation, compliance with regulations, and measures of student success. This process will be completed as a joint effort between the staff at Winter Lakes High School, the South Coast ESD, with the involvement of the administrations from the school districts involved, and cooperation of the Oregon Department of Education.

Admissions

Students seeking admission to Winter Lakes High School are referred by the home school district. Students and parent/guardians must schedule an appointment with the administration of their local high school to discuss the possibility of attending Winter Lakes High School. The student and parent/guardian or advocate will then meet with a Winter Lakes advisor and go through an intake interview and establish a program of studies that meets his or her individual needs.

The focus of Winter Lakes High School is to allow students to continue their high school education at a level that is appropriate for the student. Winter Lakes' students in conjunction with staff will create a daily schedule that fits their academic goals. Full-day students will work into a schedule that involves a portion of the school day in the pursuit of academic credits and part of the day at an internship within the community. Some students may only need to be working on a limited number of credits and be at Winter Lakes on a part-day or hourly basis. Individual schedules can also be orchestrated to accommodate individual needs and time constraints.