Olympus Junior High Community Council April 8, 2024  Hello OJH Family,

It is not often that the Olympus Junior High Community Council specifically reaches out to the OJH community.  We felt the urgency to do so as we finalize the 2024-2025 Land Trust Plans and as the RISE testing for our students approaches.  Land Trust Funds provide a significant amount of money for our school and the Community Council is required to support all money allocations through data driven goals. The best data to use for student achievement and teacher effectiveness is RISE assessment data.

Although RISE testing can only be used to increase a student’s proficiency score, often RISE testing is seen as unimportant and insignificant by our students and our community. As a result, recently a culture has developed where students quickly try to finish the assessment in order to get checked out for the rest of the day. We have seen a noticeable decline in our school’s scores as an increasing number of students rush through the test and are then checked out by parents.  We went from first place out of the surrounding five junior highs to fourth place *in one year.* In general, our same students are not testing as well as they previously did. In addition, the number of students who finish early has increased along with the number of students being checked out after the first day of testing.  There are cases where students with high grades and GT classes score in the lowest percentiles which does not show their true abilities. We do not believe our scores reflect our student’s abilities well in general.

Students putting their best effort into the test matters to them as an individual and to the school.  You can see your student’s Reading Growth Measurement scores and RISE scores on the Granite School District FOCUS site. Learning how to focus and pace themselves for tests like this and the ACT is to our students' advantage.  Although not all learning is indicated in general tests like these, it can be a good indicator of a student’s progress and whether they are being well educated and served. Likewise, students doing their best to show what they have learned will provide the administration with a clearer insight into the necessary adjustments for instruction, interventions, and class offerings for the upcoming school year. Again, the Community Council also uses the data gleaned from state assessments to guide our goal-setting and funding allocation within the school. Each department, teacher and student deserves our resources to be well thought out and utilized where there is true need.  True need is best seen when we have good data to go by.

The teachers and administration have made some adjustments to the testing schedule to alleviate the rush and leave challenge.  ***As a community, please join us in committing to keep our students at the school during RISE test days and to encourage them to make their best efforts.***

Thanks,

Olympus Junior High Community Council

If you have any questions or concerns you may contact community council members Elyse Soukup (elise.soukup@gmail.com) or Jody Matsumori (jojolmatsu@gmail.com)