



# West Sylvan Foundation

**Smaller classes. Greater choices.**

*"Middle school is the last and best chance to prepare students for a successful high school career." - Laura W. Bush*

Welcome to the start of a new year at West Sylvan Middle School. As families enjoy the last days of summer vacation, the West Sylvan Foundation would like to remind you of our mission to raise funds for the purpose of paying for more staff at West Sylvan enabling Principal Ferraro to provide smaller classes and offer more elective choices for all students in the East and West Sylvan buildings.

The Foundation is run entirely by a small group of volunteer parents. Every year we need to raise between \$150,000 and \$200,000 to make our goal. Knowing people are busy, we try to do this without requiring lots of volunteers. Knowing that every dollar counts, we spend less than 2% of the money we raise on expenditures.

Many parents see the middle school years as a chance to step back from supporting their children's school. Often they have given a lot of time and money to their child's elementary school and many will jump back into volunteering and giving when their children get to high school but supporting West Sylvan Middle School matters a lot. Did you know that. . .

- A 2009 ACT study of middle school impact found that "The level of academic achievement that students attain by eighth grade has a larger impact on their college and career readiness by the time they graduate from high school than anything that happens in high school."
- Most middle schools, even in affluent districts, see a drop in student achievement in grades six through eight but West Sylvan students consistently score at, near, or above the same level that they did in elementary school.
- Studies have shown that any reduction in class size increases the probability that students will be on-task and positively engaged in learning.
- A recent Oregonian article noted that compared to other Oregon school districts, Portland allots proportionally more of its teachers to high schools and elementary schools than to middle schools.

Please help us in our continued efforts to keep class sizes down and elective choices up at West Sylvan Middle School. Your registration form includes a place to provide a donation to the Foundation. We need to raise about \$500 per family to reach our goal but anything you can provide is helpful and greatly appreciated. In addition, if you are interested in getting involved in the Foundation please contact Heather Gaitan at [heather.gaitan@yahoo.com](mailto:heather.gaitan@yahoo.com).