



Press Release
May 28, 2021

Griffin Bay "Online Multidistrict" School Open for Enrollment

Last September, San Juan Island School District's Griffin Bay School (GBS) was reimagined and relaunched as a school that offers educational flexibility and an opportunity for parents to be personally involved in their child's education. During the 20-21 school year this alternative school grew from a handful of students to almost 100 students, kindergarten through 12th grade.

In May of this year, Griffin Bay School was designated by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) as a Multi-District Online Program for Washington State. Previously, GBS served only those students who resided within our District boundary (plus 10%). This new designation takes away that barrier.

Griffin Bay School may now offer online access to anyone and everyone across Washington State. As our school district's elementary, middle, and high schools begin to open more fully, many current GBS students may choose to return to in-person learning. For some families, however, the Griffin Bay School model is exactly what they need.

The faculty and staff are proud of Griffin Bay School and what it stands for. Griffin Bay School provides students and families an education that allows for flexibility, individualized attention, and a "work at your own pace" approach. Certified teachers are in contact with students once a week, guiding each child on his or her journey.

One elementary student wrote:

"I love Griffin Bay because I get more help with my schoolwork. I love that Mrs. Heller always asks me what I am interested in and finds fun books and worksheets for me. I am always excited to pick up my new school materials."

A parent had this to say about GBS:

"With Griffin Bay I never have to feel like my child could be falling behind or not being challenged enough. They celebrate your child at whichever level they are at and see each student as an individual. It is a truly unique school and one that we feel very lucky to be a part of."

Statements like this 17-year-old student's reveal how remote courses are able to reach students in settings away from the traditional classroom:

"Because of doing school entirely online and only contacting Griffin Bay staff if I need assignments to be opened or if I have a question every now and then, I have been able to accomplish so many things this semester and I hope that it continues for the rest of my high school year."

Student Tate Geiser (pictured) is attending classes remotely, creating the time needed to also become certified in the career of his choice. In his own words:

“A big way Griffin Bay School has helped me pursue my dream to become a barber is by making it possible to do school on my own schedule and time frame. This flexibility allows me to develop skills that will help my future career and business. I have interviewed for and been accepted to a barber apprentice program. The time I need to spend at the spa to complete this program is important to me. Griffin Bay is making it possible for this event to occur in my life. I will be acquiring a barber license at the same time I graduate in 2023. I see Griffin Bay as the best type of high school for students like me and many others who need the independence and the opportunities that this system provides. Before I began attending Griffin Bay I dreaded doing what was required. I appreciate the different ways I can learn at my own pace. I am also grateful for the attitude of the teachers to personally help me not be mad about doing school but actually help me be more excited.” – Tate Geiser, 16 years old

Is an alternative learning experience right for your child? When it comes to education, some families focus on preparation for post high school education like college or trade school. Others prioritize preparing students for the workforce, developing social skills, or encouraging them to participate in civic life. The dedicated educators at GBS truly believe alternative learning experiences can accommodate all approaches and they look forward to serving the various needs of families all over Washington State.

Enrollment is now open. For more information, please contact the Griffin Bay School office:

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(see photo below)



Tate Geiser, Griffin Bay School Student