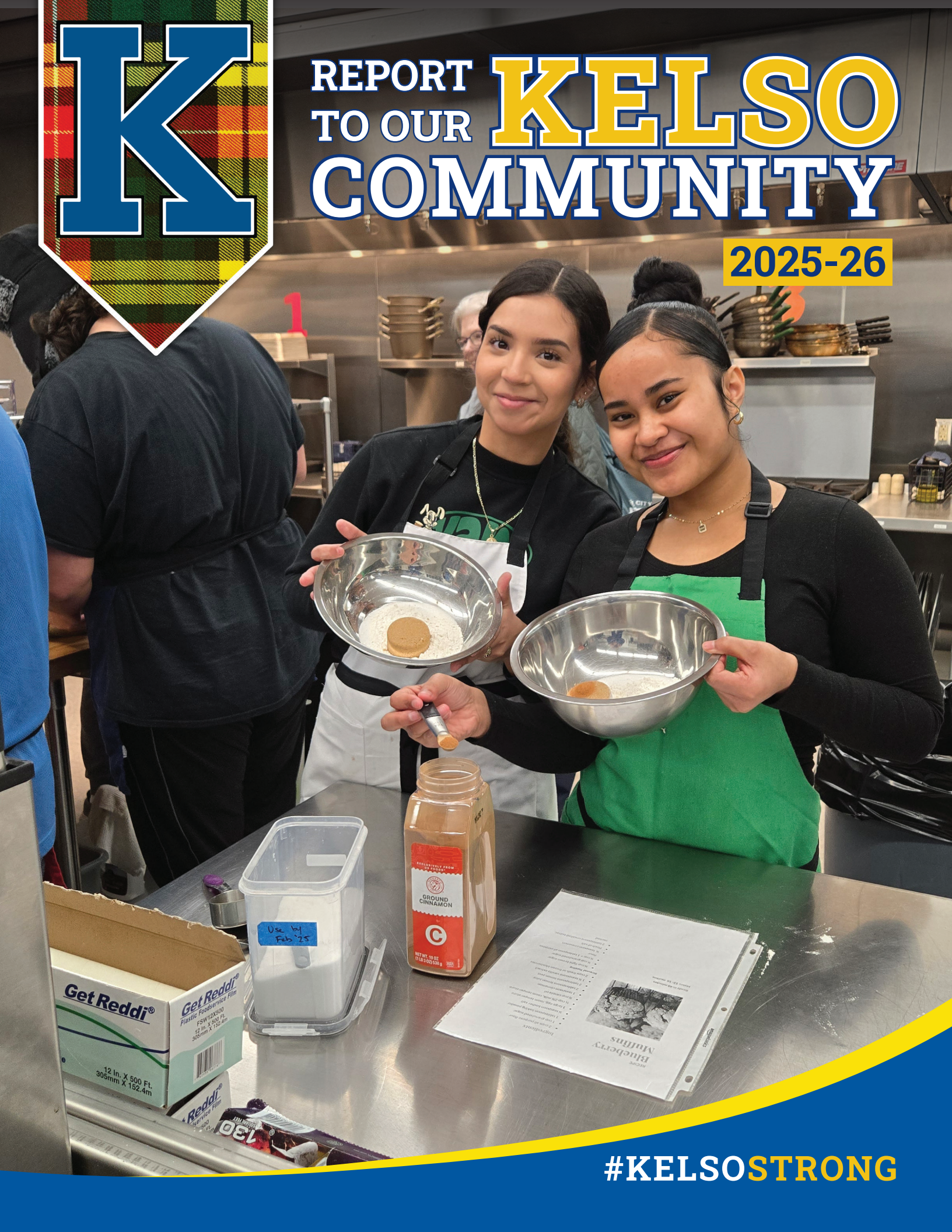




REPORT TO OUR **KELSO** COMMUNITY

2025-26



#KELSOSTRONG

MISSION

The mission of Kelso School District is to prepare every student for living, learning, and achieving success as a citizen of our changing world.

VISION

Our students begin school ready to learn, transition confidently between grades and schools, and emerge from our district as engaged citizens, both career- and college-ready.

Full Strategic Plan: bit.ly/ksd-plan



CAREER, COLLEGE & COMMUNITY READY

Kelso School District students experience smooth transitions between grades and schools, master academic standards, and explore post-graduation career pathways—equipping them to reach personal goals, post-graduation career enrollment, and contribute meaningfully as productive, fulfilled citizens.

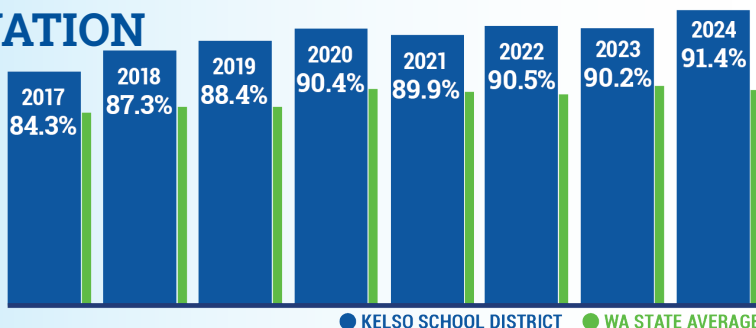
HIGH SCHOOL AND BEYOND

Kelso students in grades 7-12 will now complete their High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP) using SchoolLinks, Washington's new statewide platform. The HSBP is a graduation requirement that helps students answer three key questions: **Who am I? What can I become? How do I become that?** SchoolLinks provides tools for exploring careers, planning college and career pathways, and tracking progress toward graduation.

Learn more here:



GRADUATION RATE



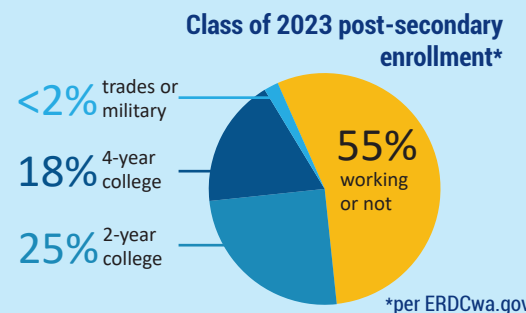
CAREER-CONNECTED LEARNING (CCL)

CCL helps students explore, experience, and prepare for careers. It includes hands-on learning experiences like guest speakers, job shadows, industry tours, internships, and career fairs that connect classroom learning to real-world jobs.

From kindergarten through graduation, Hilanders get hundreds of CCL experiences. More at bit.ly/ksd-ccl

LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

Our goal is to have 100% of graduating seniors immediately enrolled in an apprenticeship, trades, military, 2-year institution, or 4-year institution.





CLIMATE & CULTURE

Kelso School District is committed to cultivating a safe, caring, and inclusive school climate and culture where strong relationships and rigorous and relevant learning thrive—supporting the growth and long-term development of each and every student.

SAFETY UPDATE

We continually review safety policies and procedures in Kelso. Learn about our building features, trainings, drills, and more on our website at bit.ly/ksd-safety.



K SAFETY & SECURITY

IN KELSO SCHOOL DISTRICT

KELSO TOP PRIORITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The health and safety of our students and staff is a top priority for Kelso School District. All children have the right to live and learn in a safe and nurturing environment.

We have comprehensive safety plans and features in place, and are continually refining and adapting them in these changing times.

SAFETY HIGHLIGHTS

Thanks to the passage of the 2018 bond, we have been able to allocate \$7.5 million to upgrade our safety and security systems.



Features Include:

- Security cameras
- Secure entry vestibules
- Access controls
- And more

Safety Dog Program

In fall 2025, we introduced a Safety Dog Pilot program at Kelso/Looiit High School. A trained and certified detection dog works alongside school staff to help deter and identify dangerous items while remaining friendly, non-intrusive, and respectful.



The dog specializes in detecting narcotics, firearms, and contraband, helping to maintain safe, drug-free school environments.

TRAINING & DRILLS

Before school starts:



- All district and school administrators and safety personnel attend the Lower Columbia School Safety Summit annually.
- All school staff receive instruction on safety plans and protocols.

During the school year:

- Safe Schools posters (below) are displayed in every room in every building.
- Every school has district-aligned, school-specific emergency response information.
- Every school performs at least one safety drill each month when school is in session.
- Every school goes through an internal safety audit twice a year.

THREAT ASSESSMENTS



Threat assessments, used to determine whether a student poses a violent threat, are intended to prevent violence and involve both assessment and intervention. Threat assessments are conducted by a multidisciplinary team of trained professionals, including a school mental health professional, administrators, and school resource officer or local law enforcement.

THE WHOLE CHILD APPROACH



Providing a safe environment means not only having comprehensive safety plans and features, but also increased mental health services and supports. Our whole child approach to safety includes social emotional learning (SEL) and counselors at every school.

Our SEL Team includes:

SEL Techs, Coach, & Coordinator • School Counselors • TSEC Para-educators • Substance Prevention & Use Specialist • Youth & Family Support Staff • Attendance Support

SEE OR HEAR SOMETHING... SAY SOMETHING



Keeping students safe is a community responsibility. See/Hear something-- SAY SOMETHING!



WE LOVE OUR KELSO TEAM

Caring for our staff means they can bring their very best to students. By prioritizing the health and care of our team, we create the foundation for stronger connections, better learning, and brighter futures for Kelso students.

One of the ways we do that is by providing an employee assistance program in addition to benefits like health, dental, and vision insurance; as well as paid sick leave and vacation. Our staff and their families can access a variety of resources through Magellan Healthcare, at no cost to them, including: counseling, wellbeing coaching, financial tools, legal services, and more.

Our efforts in building and sustaining a robust employee wellness program helped us receive the Zo8 Award from the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) for the third year in a row last year.



COMMUNICATION

Kelso School District fosters open, collaborative, and transparent communication with all stakeholders, strengthening trust and increasing support for district programs and initiatives.

COMMUNICATION METHODS

- **Hilander Highlights:** a publication mailed to every home in the district
- **Family Connection:** a monthly email to all our families and students
- **Inside Connection:** an email sent to district staff following each school board meeting
- **Listening Tours:** a team of staff and board members meet with students at each school to hear their experiences, challenges, and celebrations
- **Websites:** for the district and each school where families and community can find information
- **Social Media:** there are multiple social media accounts for individual schools and the district



2024-25 AWARDS & MAJOR MILESTONES

Looking back at 2024-25, our collective achievements are many. Our students, staff, and families have much to be proud of. Here are a few highlights. Find the full list at bit.ly/2024-25milestones.

SCHOOLS of DISTINCTION

Butler Acres (2nd year in a row), Carrolls, & Wallace recognized for academic growth & closing achievement gaps



10 Public Relations awards: 4 national (NSPRA) and 6 state (WSPRA) awards

11,400 clothing items provided to students in need



106 musical instruments donated worth a total of \$150,000



STATE

Girls Wrestling claimed the State Championship for the 1st time, making them the 8th team in KSD history to win a championship



Zo8

3rd year in a row KSD received this award for workplace wellness





EARLY LEARNING

By providing students with access to high-quality early learning opportunities, Kelso School District ensures each and every student is on track to meet or exceed grade-level standards in English language arts and mathematics by the end of third grade.

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS

Preschool Pups: 100 students enrolled in 2024-25

A preschool program available to all Kelso residents. Classes are taught by certified teachers.

Transition to Kindergarten (TK): 160 students enrolled in 2024-25

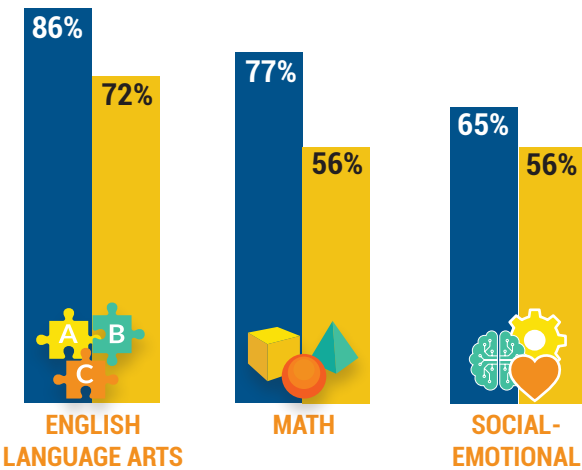
A pre-kindergarten program for children who would benefit from additional preparation to be successful in kindergarten the following year. Classrooms are staffed by certificated teachers and paraeducators who provide a curriculum that offers a rich, varied set of experiences in learning environments that are developmentally appropriate and address the whole child.



Kinder Readiness

CLASS OF 2037

● TK ● NO TK



Learn more about early learning opportunities at bit.ly/ksd-earlyinfo



Children's Discovery Museum

The Children's Discovery Museum moved into the Catlin site in the fall of 2024, beginning a new partnership with Kelso School District. Just down the hall from Preschool Pups classes, early learners enjoy weekly visits to the museum.

The Children's Discovery Museum is a child-friendly space where children and their families can engage in imaginative, interactive hands-on learning of the arts, science, and social play.



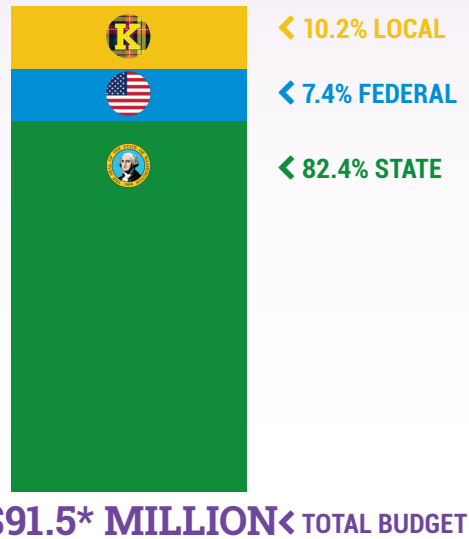


FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

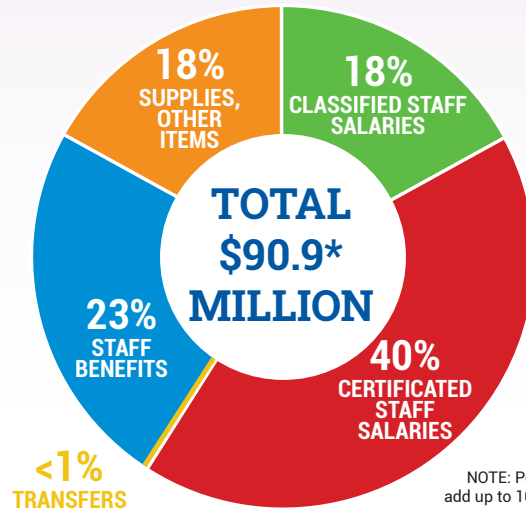
Through transparent budgeting, strategic resource allocation, and sound fiscal practices, Kelso School District ensures resources are efficiently managed and aligned to support student learning and success.

2024-25 FINANCIALS

Revenue & its sources:



Expenditures by category:



* Estimated until close of financial statements on Nov. 1, 2025

NOTE: Percentages may not add up to 100, due to rounding.



QUALITY INSTRUCTION

Kelso School District implements standards-based instruction grounded in the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) process, empowering every student to achieve at high levels and graduate prepared for college and career success.

ASSESSING GRADE-LEVEL STANDARDS

Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBA) and Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science (WCAS) are one measurement among several gauging student performance relative to grade-level learning goals. We gauge learning and growth in multiple ways, including engagement, attendance, grades, and class assignments and assessments.

SPRING 2025 ASSESSMENTS

% of students on-track for college-level learning*

SCIENCE

GRADE	KSD	WA AVG
5	48	51
8	36	42
11	33	37

MATHEMATICS

GRADE	KSD	WA AVG
3	56	51
4	40	48
5	38	42
6	27	39
7	35	39
8	23	35
10	12	31

ENGLISH LANG. ARTS

GRADE	KSD	WA AVG
3	43	48
4	43	49
5	49	53
6	34	48
7	44	50
8	41	48
10	46	59

534

Advanced Placement classes taken

W
712

University of WA College in the High School classes taken

1,787

Visual and performing arts classes taken

4,917

Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes taken

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

OUR DISTRICT SNAPSHOT



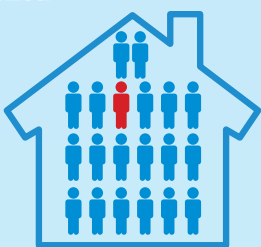
60th

largest district in WA
(out of 295 districts)

STUDENTS*

5,120 students enrolled

6% of students have been or currently are
HOMELESS
(1+ student in every 20)



18% of students receive special education services

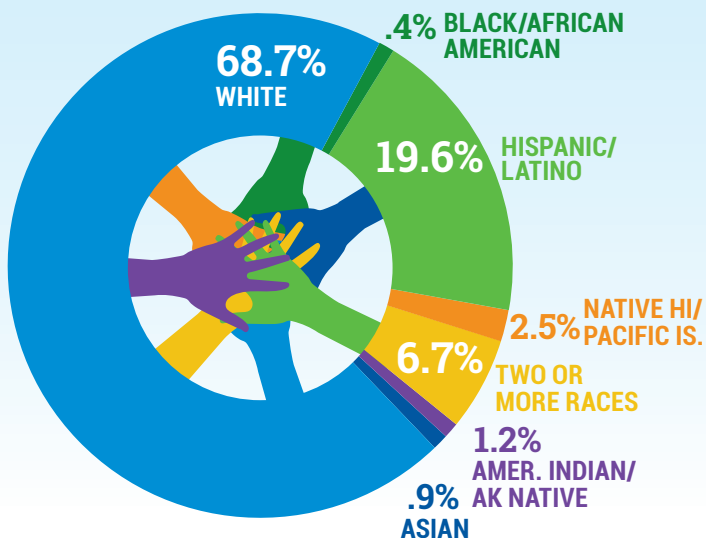
5% of students are highly capable (Hi-Cap)

7% of students are multilingual learners

15

**DIFFERENT
LANGUAGES**
are spoken by students

Student Ethnicity:



STAFF & TEACHERS*

735 total personnel

358
certificated

377
classified

Facts about Kelso teachers:

- > 67.5% have a Master's degree or higher
- > 11.9 years average teaching experience
- > 5.4% National Board Certified



FOOD SERVICE

878,650

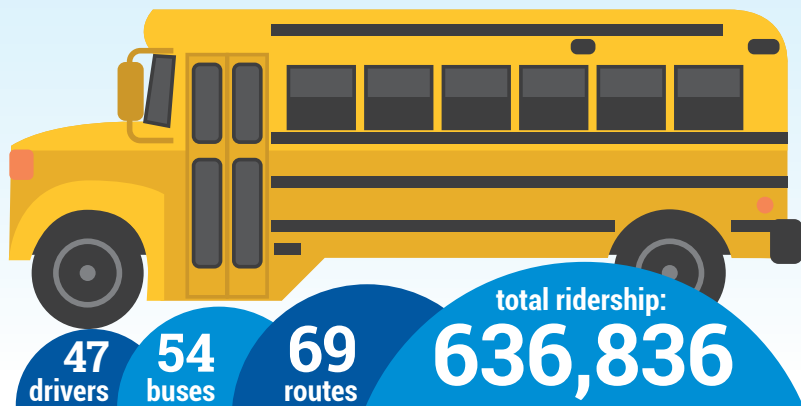
meals served in 2024-25

- > 4,800 meals per day on average
- > 10 new recipes added to menus
- > 2 USDA awards won



65%
of our students are low income

TRANSPORTATION





601 Crawford Street
Kelso, WA 98626
360.501.1900
www.kelso.wednet.edu

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
KELSO, WA 98626
PERMIT NO. 40

ECRWSS

Postal Patron

2nd YEAR IN A ROW Board of Distinction



Jeane Conrad
President
Position 3



Mike Haas
Vice President
Position 4



Rich Fletcher
Position 5



Karen Grafton
Position 2



Leah Moore
Position 1



HONORING OUR LEGENDS

Revived in 2024, the Hilander Hall of Fame honors extraordinary individuals who have left an indelible mark on our community.

Know a Hilander who made a lasting impact—in the classroom, on the field, in our community, or beyond?

Honor their legacy today by submitting your nomination for the Hilander Hall of Fame.

**NOMINATIONS
CLOSE OCT. 31**
VOTE IN NOV. & DEC.



**LEGENDS AREN'T BORN.
THEY'RE MADE IN KELSO.**

Learn more:
hilanders.org/hof

2025-26 THEME

The theme for the 2025-26 school year across Kelso School District is in celebration of 100 years of the Hilander as our official high school mascot.

As we celebrate **A Century Strong**, we uphold a proud tradition of honor, courage, and grit that has guided Kelso for 100 years.



Mary Beth Tack
Superintendent



NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT: Kelso School District #458 complies with all federal rules and regulations and does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups listed in Title 36 of the United States Code. Kelso School District offers classes in many Career and Technical Education (CTE) program areas, such as Agriculture Sciences, Business & Marketing, Family Consumer Sciences, Health Sciences, Skilled & Technical Sciences, and STEM under its open admissions policy. Lack of English language proficiency will not be a barrier to admission and participation in career and technical education programs. The following people have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Holly Budge, Director of Human Resources, Title VII Officer, ADA Coordinator; 360.501.1918; and Gunnar Guttormsen, Director of Student Services/Assessment, Title IX & Section 504 Coordinator; 360.501.1905; 601 Crawford Street, Kelso, WA 98626. For more information about CTE course offerings and admissions criteria, contact: Melissa Boudreau, CTE Director; Kelso High School; 360.501.1800; or Mara Rinker, Registrar; Kelso High School, 360.501.1800; 1904 Allen Street, Kelso, WA 98626.