

New NMHS Follows 55 Years of Progress

The year was 1960 and our community had generously provided North Mason students with a new junior/senior high school building (the current District Office). I was just entering 7th grade and I remember being amazed by how well-appointed the classrooms were. I felt a little more "grown up", responsible, eager to learn and show our community that their investment was appreciated. As our school population has continued to grow over the last 55 years, the NM community has repeatedly stepped up to build more facilities, including the Hawkins gymnasium, Belfair Elementary, Hawkins Middle School, North Mason High school, the NMHS Annex and Sand Hill Elementary School. What a wonderful, supportive community we have!

The first senior class to graduate from NMHS was the Class of 1961. Those students were Gary Bambenek, Viola Baker, John Byerly, Tom Hanley, Sam Stallman, Fred Mills, and Barry Snover. A HUGE class of eight graduates!

In 1995 NMHS was forced to move the commencement event to the Kitsap Pavilion because classes had grown too large to graduate at home. The class of 2016, however, WILL be graduating at home - in the new high school gym! Our new North Mason High School will open its doors on September 9, 2015.

Our new school will do more than address the problem of overcrowding and replacing and updating infrastructure and equipment. It will advance the instructional effectiveness of our teachers and accommodate and motivate the learning potential of our young adults with 35 teaching spaces, 2 gyms, performing arts center, student commons area and other multiple meeting spaces.

The people of North Mason by their citizenship, pride in community and generosity have made possible this new school. In turn, the school will mark a new era in the relation of the North Mason School District to our constituents and to our young adults.

Drive by and view this fabulous building! Watch for announcement about the Community-Wide Open House we will host this fall for all to walk through the classrooms, look at the football practice field behind the school, visit the gyms, and take in the excitement first-hand. You can also go to www.nmsd.wednet.edu and click on Capital Projects, then Construction Site Camera in the drop-down menu. Choose Time Lapse to view slides of the project from its beginning. It's the best movie I've ever seen!

Laura Boad, President, NM School Board