

They say it takes a community to raise a child; our North Mason School District is a huge part of that community. Nevertheless, a school district—via the school that your child goes to—is only part of the larger community it takes to raise a child to responsible adulthood and citizenship. While the schools have the specific charge to educate our children, their growth into maturity is influenced greatly by the myriad experiences they will have at the schools and outside the schools. In rural areas like North Mason, opportunities for children to interact with the community can be especially challenging due to geography, transportation, and other factors resulting from our rural character. Nevertheless, there are opportunities, and many of them center around activities that are generated in and around the schools. Our North Mason community has teamed up with our schools in numerous ways to give our children more opportunities and activities to participate in and we are blessed with a wide range of choices for our children to be involved in.

In the schools themselves, there are numerous clubs to join at all school levels (such as K-Kids in elementary school, Builders Club at middle school, Leo's Club at high school—all community service oriented, and sponsored by local adult service clubs such as Kiwanis and Lions, etc.). There are activity and interest clubs offered at various times (Chess club, German or other language clubs, Drama club, etc.), and there are numerous sports opportunities offered both within the school activity umbrella, as well as with other community groups such as Pee Wees. There are special events and activities conducted in the community with school sanction and otherwise (think Relay for Life, various parades in nearby communities involving our school bands or other groups, school produced plays, holiday and community events for example involving the Salmon Center) that our children (and ourselves) can participate in.

So, when thinking of how our community is involved in raising our children as we all should, our school district is a central hub for many of our community groups and businesses in helping support, sponsor and participate in the wide variety of activities and opportunities that we provide for our children. There is a very long list of groups, businesses and individuals that have stepped up to assist us in raising our children, and we can be grateful for that. Yet there is one more important area to mention, and that is our parent and community volunteers who step up each year, over and over again, to help us make our events happen, to chaperone our

children needing it, to offer their unique skills for specific events or activities, or even just to be a safe shoulder to rest on or to listen to our children's experiences. I want to thank all these selfless people who step up with us to raise our children, and I also want to encourage all of you who haven't thought to do so—please, volunteer for our children! It is not only the duty of all of us to raise our children, as the saying goes, it is also incredibly rewarding!

--Art Wightman  
Director, District 1