

**April 6, 2015**

**Dear families of prospective students,**

**We're writing to invite you to learn about the innovative programs and possibilities that are offered at Sammamish High School. Our next information session is on April 14, 2015 at 6:30pm in the Library at Sammamish High School.**



**Sammamish High School, Spring 2015**



**Sammamish High School, Autumn 2015**

If you've driven by the corner of 140<sup>th</sup> and Main, you've probably noticed the amazing new building that Sammamish will be moving into next fall. We're very excited about our new facilities, but we want everyone to know that Sammamish is a school that continues to re-imagine itself, inside and out.

Sammamish High School is in the final year of a five year transformation, funded by a multi-million dollar grant. Over these years, teachers have partnered with outside organizations and the University of Washington to develop new courses that actively engage students in amazing ways. Our new courses embrace Problem Based Learning (PBL). In PBL courses, students engage in real-world problems, collaborate with peers, learn from outside experts, and use their own voice and input as an important force that helps shape instruction. Problem Based Learning creates an authentic environment for students to develop skills and lifelong habits of learning that will serve students in the future as they enter the workforce and navigate science and technology in everyday life.

**National and International Recognition:**

This December, the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, an organization that advocates for 21<sup>st</sup> century readiness for every student, named Sammamish one of fifteen schools from across the country as exemplars of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning for 2015. Sammamish joins an elite list of schools that have successfully transformed their students' learning by incorporating 21<sup>st</sup> century skills into teacher practice, curriculum, and professional development.

Also, in recognition of its innovative use of technology to transform education, Sammamish is one of only six schools in the United States and just 80 worldwide selected as a Microsoft Mentor School for the 2013-2014 school year and Microsoft Global Showcase School for 2014-15. Participation as a Microsoft Showcase School means Sammamish will have the opportunity to share valuable experiences, lessons, and best practices with Microsoft and other schools and educators, while also working to promote innovation in teaching and learning. After a visit in March 2015, Satya Nadella, CEO of Microsoft, shared via Twitter: "Incredible to see the creativity of students and teachers at Sammamish High School using OneNote in the classroom."

In 2013, Sammamish was named a Washington State School of Achievement by Superintendent of Public Instruction, and The Washington Post ranked Sammamish the third most challenging high school in Washington State on their 2013 Challenge Index.



**New Campus:**

The innovation that is going on at Sammamish will be supported and expanded by our new \$125 million dollar campus. Classrooms will be organized in clusters with common space to encourage different ways to collaborate and share work. Some classroom walls will fold up to allow larger teaching spaces.

Three-story open areas, filled with natural light, will provide an entirely new setting for our students. Our new state of the art facility was also designed with an eye towards STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) coursework and Problem Based Learning in ways that prepare all students for work in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



**A New Computer for Every Student:**

This year, every Sammamish student was given a laptop hybrid device with touchscreen capability as part of the Bellevue School District's One-to-One Hybrid Laptop Pilot. As the only comprehensive high school in the pilot, Sammamish has led the way in using innovative technology and teaching strategies now that we have a computer checked out to every student. Students are collaborating online, sharing ideas, and receiving real-time feedback from their instructors. Crowded binders are being replaced by digital portfolios. In classrooms all across the building, you'll find students and staff interacting and working together in new ways thanks to our access to technology.

**Watch our Story on Edutopia:**

Want to see some of the great teaching and learning going on in Sammamish for yourself? Go online and watch our story. In articles and two videos, you'll see how Sammamish works together and with outside experts to change and grow. Search for "Reinventing a Public High School" at Edutopia .org

**We hope you will join us for this information session on April 14th. We look forward to seeing you!**



**Tom Duenwald, Principal**