



# Columbia Splash



## Columbia Students and Families,

After 38 years of teaching and being a principal in the Bellingham School District, I am thinking it's time for me to retire and move on to new adventures at the end of this school year.

Being a teacher has been my life's work, it defines me. I'm so grateful for the time I've had here at Columbia working alongside an incredible staff, kind, creative students and supportive families.

I don't know what comes next, but I try to live by these words from poet Mary Oliver:

### Instructions for Living a Life

Thank you,  
*Julie Batten*

"Pay attention.  
Be astonished.  
Tell about it."

*After winter break, there will be a process to fill this position for next fall. This process will include meeting with the staff and families to gather input on desired leadership qualities.*



## SELF-AWARENESS...

Self-Awareness is a skill that is learned over time. Self-Awareness is the thinking skill that focuses on a child's ability to accurately judge their own performance and behavior and to respond appropriately to different social and academic situations. It is the ability to accurately assess one's strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a "growth mindset". Children who are self-aware are familiar with their strengths and weaknesses. This means they know what they're good at—and what they need to improve at to be successful. Self-Awareness is vital both to a child's academic success as well as their social emotional growth.

Developing self-awareness in grade school can set your child up for success in middle school. It can also help him learn to advocate for his needs when he's older.

Here are a few ways you can help your grade-schooler gain self-awareness:

1. Acknowledge the issues: It's important for your child to begin to acknowledge her strengths and areas that she is not as strong in. ("I'm good at other things, but reading and spelling can be hard for me.")
2. Don't let the areas in need of growth be a taboo topic: Try not to shy away from talking about areas that are developing.
3. Nurture your child's passions. Remind your child of what he's good at and give him opportunities to develop areas he is good at and passionate about.
4. Let your child try new things: Reassure her that she doesn't have to like or be good at everything. It's more important for her to discover and recognize new interests. Consider extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities can also help your child build self-esteem.
5. Talk to your child about their emotional responses to others and to situations. (Check out the book: "How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk" by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish.)

## School Grounds Committee

Is looking for students, parents and teachers with ideas for upgrading our school playground. Please email Rob Costello if interested!  
[rcostell2@gmail.com](mailto:rcostell2@gmail.com)



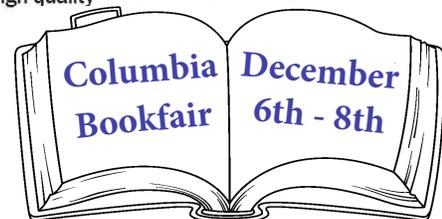
## Dec. 7th-Science Enrichment Day

**Volunteer Scientists Needed!** The CPA is looking for scientists that would like to visit our school on Dec. 7th to talk with students about their jobs. Scientists will meet with a class on this day for 45-50 minutes to share about their career and love for science. Please contact Gena Pass if you are a scientist or know a scientist that would like to get involved, [Gena.Pass@anthem.com](mailto:Gena.Pass@anthem.com).

## core beliefs

### We believe:

- all children should be loved,
- the whole child is important,
- every child can learn at high levels,
- early learning and development are critical,
- learning is lifelong and essential to a high quality of life,
- compassion and service build community,
- teaching children to do their best involves self-reflection and reaching higher,
- diversity enhances a strong and healthy community, and
- together we achieve more than alone.



## WEATHER RELATED PROCEDURES

As seasons change and weather-related warnings increase, we wanted to remind you about the procedures and impact of weather-related school cancelations.

Depending on conditions (which could include snow, flooding, power outages, etc.), school could:

- \* close for the day
- \* open two hours late
- \* open on time



Please familiarize yourself with our weather procedures. We will use a variety of methods to keep you informed, including email, text, phone, our website [bellingshamschools.org](http://bellingshamschools.org), local media (including KGMI, KOMO, KAFE and the Bellingham Herald) and our main district phone line at 676-6400.

**GREAT JOB, COLUMBIA! Our school community raised over \$12,000 during the jog-a-thon fundraiser!**

