



## **Happy Valley School District Excels in Statewide Achievement**

Happy Valley School District (HVSD) continues to shine academically, reporting outstanding state assessment scores of 80% in English Language Arts (ELA) and 83% in Math. Math performance alone grew by 8% in a single year, now 6% above pre-pandemic levels. These achievements stand out even more given the district's small size of 111 students and six classroom teachers, where combination classes, limited intervention time, and shared instructional roles are part of everyday life.

Superintendent Michelle Stewart expressed her pride in the district's progress: "Our school district was placed on the honor roll. We are one of two schools in our entire county out of eight that got on the honor roll, and that's a huge undertaking, since you have to reach growth in certain sub-areas."

While the district serves an affluent community, Stewart noted that the success reflects years of sustained effort, collaboration, and intentional work. Much of the district's recent growth, particularly in math, was the result of strategic instructional shifts. Sixth grade alone saw a remarkable 12% increase in proficiency, an outcome Stewart described as "huge gains."

A two-year partnership with the Public Education and Business Coalition (PEBC) played a key role in strengthening instructional practice. Teachers engaged in targeted coaching, in-person pedagogy sessions, and a shift toward deeper student reasoning and reflection. The district focused on big ideas, problem solving, and helping students articulate their thinking and respond thoughtfully to peers.

Culture is also central to Happy Valley's success. Stewart emphasized the importance of shared belief and staff unity: "You have to build staff morale and have a common goal to believe that your kids can learn... that you're going to make a difference in their lives for them to grow."

Superintendent Stewart's leadership philosophy centers on supporting teachers so they can focus on instruction. She explained that her job is to remove obstacles, large and small, to protect classroom time and ensure uninterrupted learning for students.

This collaborative spirit carries into how the district reviews and responds to data. Teachers and administrators regularly analyze student progress, share insights, and track cohorts closely as they move from grade to grade. Stewart personally reviews each student's annual assessment



results, noting individual growth and identifying supports before sharing those insights with teachers.

Happy Valley is a community that celebrates its accomplishments together. Stewart reflected with pride: “I think I need to make a bigger deal about this and really celebrate the students and the teachers and all the work they did to get them there because they deserve it.”