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## English language students inspire new learning strategies for the classroom

BY COLLEEN SMITH  
Editor/Publisher

English language learners are a growing and vital component of the American classroom.

In southern California, educators found that the strategies used to teach children a new language were beneficial for all kinds of learners - from the low-achieving to the gifted. The program GLAD — Guided Language Acquisition Design — was developed to both assist second language instructors and provide a collection of best practices for all classrooms.

“It’s super creative for teachers and students,” said Orcas elementary teacher Catherine Laflin. “It’s highly visual and is very much based on student interaction and language.”

Nearly 30 staff members from the school districts on Lopez, Shaw, San Juan and Orcas participated in a two-day training course led by Orcas Island Elementary School and Montessori Public Principal Lorena Stankevich and Laflin, previously the district’s English language specialist and now a third-grade teacher.

The two finished instructor certification in the GLAD program in 2019, but due to COVID were unable to lead a course until this August. As a



COLLEEN SMITH/STAFF PHOTO

Orcas Island School District teacher Catherine Laflin, Orcas Island Elementary School and Montessori Public Principal Lorena Stankevich and OISD teachers Alexa Nigretto and Anne Ford McGrath with some of the materials used in GLAD strategies for the classroom.

result of the session, all OISD K-8 teachers are now trained in the first tier of GLAD’s professional development model.

“This is the first step in an ongoing process and part of a collaboration between the

districts,” Stankevich said.

Those who finished the first tier training said they learned to make time and space for more student talking; students will follow you if they believe what you believe; and tell EL learners

that they process faster and are more flexible.

This fall, she and Laflin will choose a San Juan Island primary class to demonstrate strategies in over the course of four days. Other teachers will be invited to

watch and take part. The two are hopeful that the GLAD professional development model will continue for years to come.

Laflin was the district coordinator for the English Language Learner program for a decade. She originally brought the idea to Stankevich, who completed tier one GLAD training at her previous school district. She wholeheartedly dived into the project, and they were trained through the Orange County Department of Education over a year and a half. The endeavor was funded by the Orcas Island Education Foundation, federal dollars and the school district.

Some of the GLAD strategies employed to motivate and engage students include orally processing new knowledge with peers; creating group charts and prompts; retelling what has been taught and encouraging interaction between the teachers and students.

“Humans are natural storytellers,” Laflin said. “Everyone has access to the content, so even a non-reading learner has access to what you are teaching.”

Added Stankevich: “The content becomes embedded in them.”

## Washington State Ferries’ staffing shortage faces a new foe: vaccine mandates

BY MANDI JOHNSON  
Journal editor

Washington State Ferries is feeling the pressure this year as COVID spreads through its ranks and a vaccine mandate nears on the horizon.

“Maybe the Governor should have thought of the implications of his emergency mandate. So much for inclusion and understanding differing viewpoints. (Emergency use vaccines could adversely affect my health),” WSF Engineer Rick Hamiter wrote in an email to fellow staff, according to KUOW. “There isn’t a work at home option for my job in the system. So while many worked from home we came to work.”

The vaccine is a “slap in the face” Hamiter wrote in response to an email from Washington State Transportation Secretary Roger Millar, KUOW reported.

Hamiter had requested staff to treat coworkers with respect and understanding.

“I want to remind staff that we’re

all expected to be civil and kind to our co-workers even during difficult or challenging situations,” Millar wrote. “No matter the topic, unprofessional behavior is simply not acceptable workplace behavior in this agency.”

Hamiter wrote he will retire in October — an early exit — to avoid the vaccine requirement.

“I showed up for my scheduled shift so the boat could sail. Just heard that 91 others had the courage to stand up for their beliefs in a meaningful way,” Hamiter said, according to KUOW. “This is my protest action. Thank you to all the wonderful people who make the Ferries go back and forth. I will miss you.”

According to KUOW’s report, 91 relief requests were made by WSF employees on Aug. 12. Six or seven employees were experiencing active COVID cases and additional employees were quarantined, WSF Spokesperson Ian Sterling told KUOW.

The union representing WSF employees is currently in talks with state leadership regarding the mandate, according to KUOW. The agency does not know how many of its employees have been vaccinated as, until now, it has operated on a voluntary reporting system, but it’s switching to a more affirmative tracking system soon, KUOW reported.

On Aug. 15, maintenance worker Brian Black was the fourth WSF employee to die of COVID. The first was Colman Dock ticket seller Esther Bryant-Kyles on March 28, 2020.

Gov. Jay Inslee announced on Aug. 9 that all state employees, health care workers, long-term care facility employees and those who work in dental clinics to be fully vaccinated by Oct. 18. Washington State Ferries employees, as well as firefighters and emergency medical technicians, are subject to the mandate as well.

“It is the mission of public

servants and those providing health care to serve our fellow Washingtonians. These workers live in every community in our state, working together and with the public every day to deliver services,” Inslee said. “We have a duty to protect them from the virus, they have the right to be protected, and the communities they serve and live in deserve protection as well.”

Anyone who chooses to not comply with Inslee’s vaccine mandate will be subject to non-disciplinary dismissal from their job for failing to meet the qualifications. Only employees who have a documented medical reason or strongly-held religious beliefs preventing vaccination are exempt from the mandate.

“Getting vaccinated against COVID is a public good. We have come so close to defeating this deadly disease,” Inslee said. “We have the tool — the vaccine — to get this era behind us. It is safe, it is effective, and you will never regret getting it.”

WSF was struggling to staff its vessels prior to the vaccine mandate, however.

WSF crews operated with an extra member prior to 2012, in case someone called in due to an emergency, Sterling told the Seattle Times in early July. Now, ferries are staffed with the minimum number of crew members to save the agency money, the Seattle Times reporters added.

In A June 24 letter from WSF Chief of Staff Nicole Macintosh to the crew of all vessels, she expressed her concern about managing an “unprecedented staffing challenge.”

“We have an obligation to the taxpayers of the state to not miss sailings due to crewing,” Mackintosh wrote. “When we do it lets down thousands of customers who trust and depend on getting them safely to their destinations.

## San Juan County COVID case update

Note: Current positive case numbers are available online at the County Case Data Dashboard at [sanjuanco.com/1682/COVID-19-SJC-Data-Dashboard](https://sanjuanco.com/1682/COVID-19-SJC-Data-Dashboard).

Since the last update on Friday, Aug. 8, total cases in San Juan County have increased from 237 to 264.

Of these 27 new cases, initial investigations indicate that at least seven appear to have occurred in fully vaccinated individuals — a number that is not at all surprising given the overall high rate of vaccination in San Juan County.

There are approximately 27 unvaccinated close contacts of positive cases who are currently in two-week quarantine. Note that vaccinated close contacts do NOT need to quarantine and this number would be far higher if not for the relatively high vaccination rate in San Juan County.

The transmission sources for these new cases vary widely. More than half of these new cases were previously identified as close contacts of previous positive cases.

Note that an unvaccinated individual included in last week’s report has been hospitalized on the mainland. This is the first DOH-reported COVID hospitalization for a San Juan County resident since April.

### Lopez Island

There are no new cases on Lopez Island since the last update. There are no positive cases under active monitoring on Lopez Island.

### Orcas Island

There are 14 new cases on Orcas Island since the last update. There are 15 positive cases under active monitoring on Orcas Island.

### San Juan Island

There are 13 new cases on San Juan Island since the last update. There are 13 positive cases under active monitoring on San Juan Island.

### Shaw Island

There are no new cases on Shaw Island since the last update. There is one positive case under active monitoring on Shaw Island.

### Key points

- San Juan County will be offering free walk-up COVID vaccine clinics on San Juan on Aug. 24, Orcas on Aug. 25, and Lopez on Aug. 26. For full details go to <https://www.sanjuanco.com/1737/COVID-Vaccine-Info>.

- Immunocompromised individuals interested in discussing need for a third dose of vaccine should review their situation with their primary healthcare provider — who will then arrange for the delivery of vaccine if appropriate.

- As per recent federal guidance, San Juan County is working with local healthcare providers and pharmacies to discuss plans to supply booster shots for later in fall. Once finalized, those plans will be well-publicized and widely shared with island communities.

## State-wide mask mandate

On Aug. 18, Washington State Secretary of Health Umair A. Shah, M.D., MPH, amended Order 20-03 requiring face masks for everyone over five years of age in most public indoor settings regardless of vaccination status. These include places like grocery stores, malls, gyms, and community centers. Masks are strongly recommended in crowded outdoor settings like sporting events, fairs, and concerts where physical distancing is not possible. The updated order went into effect on Monday, Aug. 23. The order reflects the recommendations of all 35 local health officers in the state of Washington and recent changes to CDC guidance that all people, regardless of vaccination status, wear masks in indoor public settings, in areas of substantial or high transmission. For more information, visit [doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/COVID19/ClothFaceCoveringsandMasks](https://doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/COVID19/ClothFaceCoveringsandMasks).