



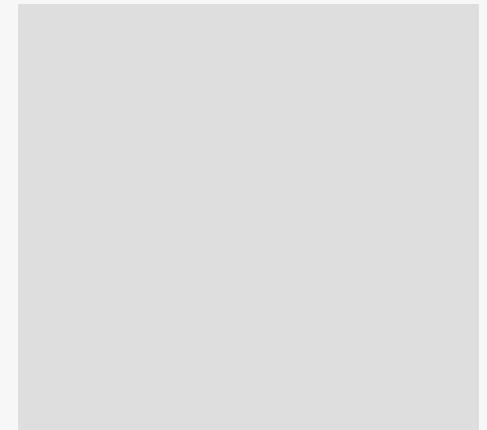
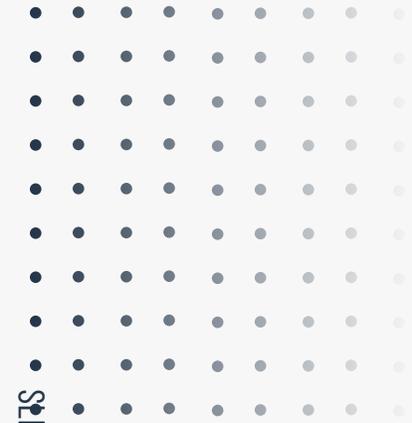
Building Bridges: Strengthening District Climate and Culture through Feedback

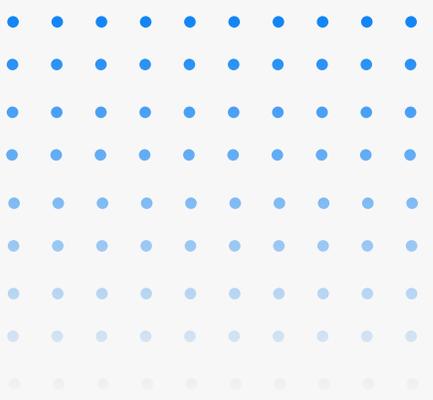
Dr. Jennifer Kephart
School District of Washington
March 2024



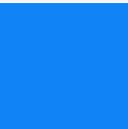
Enhancing District Climate & Culture

- Importance of a Feedback Culture
- Gathering Staff Voice
- Leveraging Feedback
- Enhancing Educational Experiences
- Ongoing Care and Support





Importance of a Feedback Culture

- Increased Employee Engagement
 - Engagement in the Continuous Improvement Process
 - Improved Morale
 - Enhanced Communication
 - Identifying Strengths and Weaknesses
 - Professional Development Opportunities
 - Reduced Turnover
 - Innovation and Creativity
 - Alignment with Organizational Goals
 - Enhanced Problem Solving
 - Positive Impact on Student Success
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Building a Feedback Culture

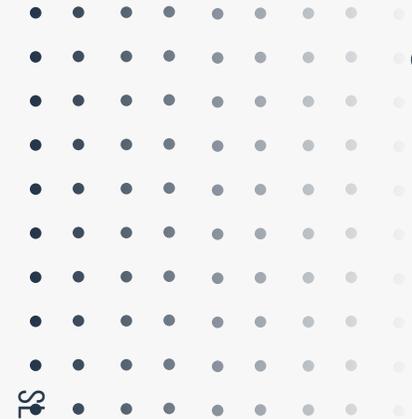
- Nurture a growth mindset
- Provide feedback training
- Set the tone from the top
- Create a feedback-safe environment
- Set clear expectations around feedback
- Make it routine
- Use different feedback channels
- Nurture positive and corrective feedback
- Highlight decisions made based on feedback
- Power your team with feedback tools

Gathering Staff Voice

- The **Power** is In the Conversation
- Dedicate the time to **listen**
- **Notice** areas of growth and examples of success
- Prepare yourself for the negativity, arm yourself with **positivity**
- Report back on findings and **future** action steps
- **Communicate** often

Leveraging Advisory Teams

- Set purpose for advisory teams in gathering feedback
- Build diverse and inclusive advisory teams
- Collaborate on decision-making
- Provide examples of successful advisory teams



Leveraging Advisory Teams

Purpose:

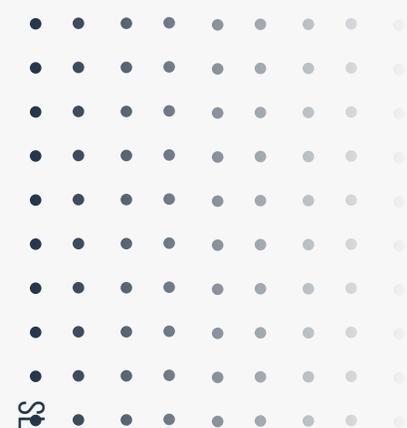
The Staff Advisory Team to the Superintendent consists of teachers and staff representatives from each of our schools and spans a variety of roles. The team will meet four times per year during the school year to discuss a variety of topics aligned to the goals of the District, share information, and broaden understanding of school-related issues.

Members work together to:

- Discuss staff perspectives on topics impacting the climate and culture of the District.
- Identify common needs and goals among staff in the School District of Washington.
- Provide the Superintendent with feedback and insight from a staff member's perspective on school processes, policies, and initiatives to ensure that the needs of staff are included as decisions are made in the District.
- Bring to the Superintendent's attention existing and emerging issues expressed by staff at their workplace.
- Facilitate communication between and among staff from different workplaces and serve as a forum for sharing innovations and best practices from around the District.

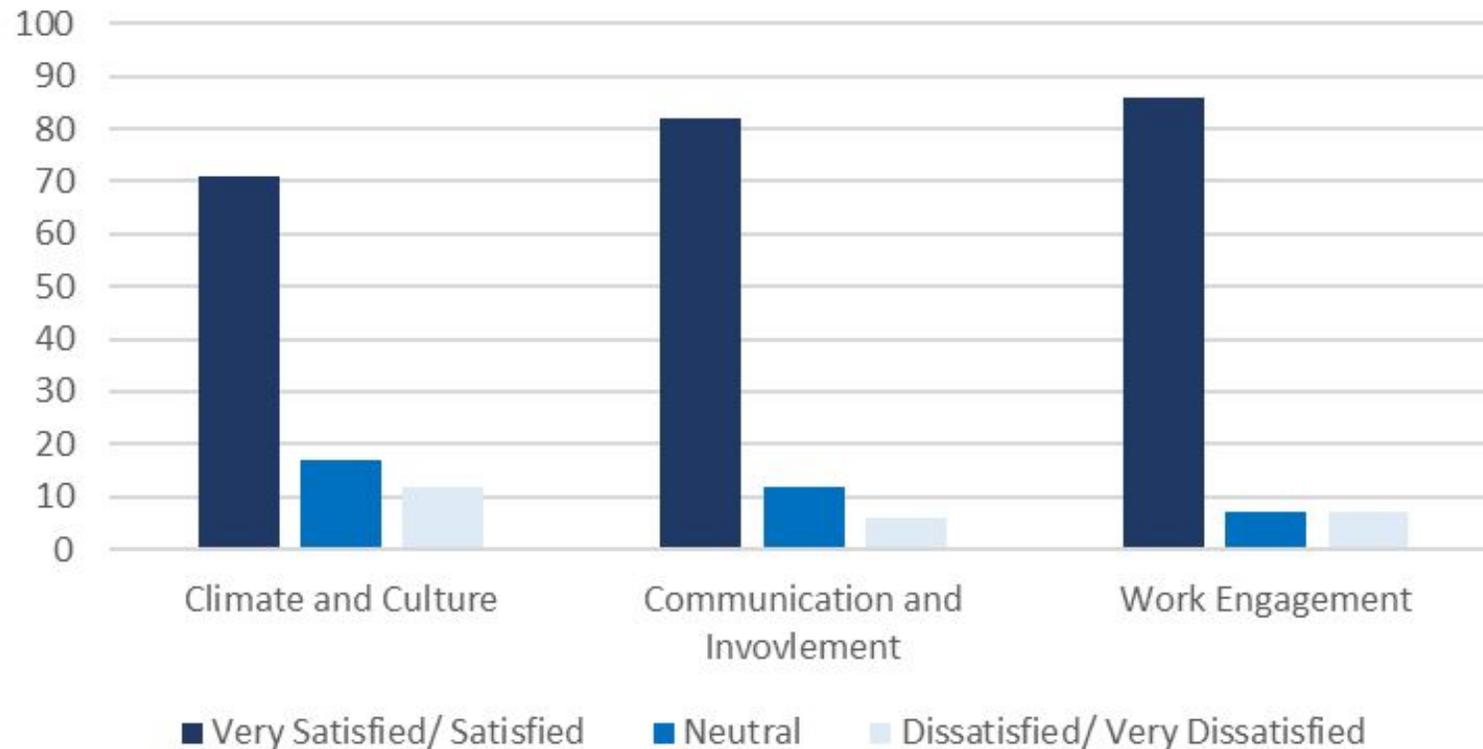
Surveys as a Feedback Tool

- Shifting to Satisfaction and Engagement
- Importance of surveys in gathering diverse opinions
- Types of surveys (anonymous vs confidential)
- Satisfaction and Engagement
- Designing effective survey questions
- Providing Open- Ended Questions
- Analyzing survey data for actionable insights
- Preparing leaders for data (3 buckets)



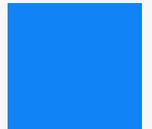
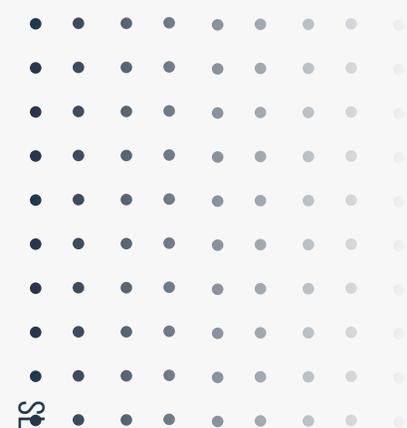
Surveys as a Feedback Tool

2023-2024 Overall Satisfaction and Engagement



The Power of Listening Sessions

- Definition of listening sessions
- Benefits of conducting listening sessions
- Real-life examples or success stories
- Tips for organizing effective listening sessions



The Power of Listening Sessions

District Staff,

As a follow-up to the recent Staff Satisfaction Survey, the Executive Leadership team will be hosting a listening event at each school location to increase understanding and engagement around the focused survey questions listed below. Each listening event will be 45 minutes long and is voluntary for staff in that location. We will focus on the same questions during the events, and then compile all responses to analyze for District continuous improvements.

If you plan to be in attendance for one of these events, we are looking forward to hearing from you. Please ensure that you are:

- Exhibiting professionalism
- Engaging in solutions-focused dialogue
- Ensuring that a growth mindset and collaborative interactions remain the focus

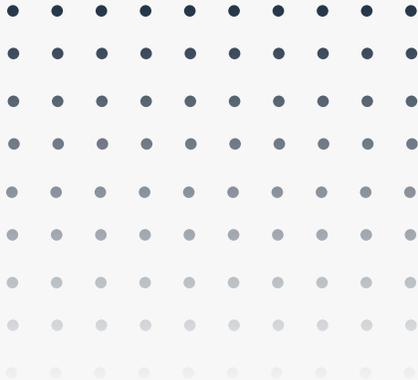
Questions: *(The underlining represents the question asked on the survey.)*

- With a 3% increase, what makes you feel proud to work in SDOW?
- How does that equate to a 3% decrease in SDOW cares about me at 59%?
- We also noticed a decrease in the feeling of safety, what may be a cause of this decline?
- Our lowest response was in regards to SDOW making you feel appreciated. Can you tell me what appreciation looks like and feels like to you? How could this increase?
- Another question focused on SDOW challenges the status quo and seeks continuous improvement. While this is a focus of ours, as a District, how could we better communicate our focus on continuous improvement and/or challenging the status quo?
- Several questions pointed to having the training, professional development, and/or resources to do your job well. What do you need to be more successful?
- We are working on a new strategic plan, are there any areas that you want us to make sure we focus on for the future of the District?

Leveraging Feedback

- Importance of timely follow-up
- Strategies for effective communication post-feedback
- Addressing concerns raised during feedback sessions
- Demonstrating responsiveness and transparency
- Aligning to the Strategic Plan and Building Plans

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate



- Communicate Often
- Plant Seeds for Upcoming Action Steps
- Communicate Again
- Communicate Again- In a different way



SURVEY FOLLOW-UP: HR COMPENSATION CONT.

Continued from Page 2

- In looking at historical data for the last 19 years, salaries have not been frozen. It is possible that an employee has received minimal enhancement percentages due to reaching the maximum pay on their schedule or column.
- In the last 19 years, there were three times in which only annual percentage increases (step movement) were approved which is not the same as frozen. This happened in 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2019 - 2020.
- Compression of the salary schedule has taken place on several occasions in the last 19 years. The most significant compression happened between the years of 2011-2012 and 2013-2014. During that period, the "step label" stayed the same for employees but the changes in the schedule resulted in higher pay through enhancements and annual percentage movement. For example, the entry point of the schedule increased by \$3,150 during this period.
- This same strategy was employed in 2017-2018 and 2021-2022, again resulting in annual percentage increases and a total enhancement of \$2,350 to our entry point.

2023-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN: ONE-PAGE VISUAL

STAFF LISTENING TOUR FAQs

The Executive Leadership Team has been addressing common themes from the 2022-23 Satisfaction Survey in the March-May editions of the Kephart Insider. The [attached document](#) intended to provide clarification on several of the common themes coming from the Staff Listening tours that have not been previously addressed in Kephart Insider messages. Overall, the goal is to continue to support our staff through the alignment of goals and action steps on the upcoming Strategic Plan while addressing many of the themes that have been shared via the survey and listening tour. We will continue to streamline district communication and provide training, resources, and support needed to be prepared for the rapidly changing world our students are embarking upon.

SURVEY FOLLOW-UP

Updates from Mrs. Maranda. Your feedback is very appreciated. Planning for PD and collaboration are designed to empower faculty to discuss evidence of student learning to help streamline processes for professionalism and hope that is collaboration time, providing support, and discontinuing standard weekly lessons.

Based on your feedback, we will have sessions on district PD days, but to provide more time for elementary/secondary PD time needs. (Please note ES will not have teachers participating in LETRS training. Additionally, food trucks will be back to school keynote. While valued, we understand several staff as a team. With the need to not have vendors, we hope that only offer participation.

The district will continue to focus on increasing effectiveness and maximizing potential. It is essential to provide support for this collaboration. We hear from surveys that this time is valued. We will continue to provide district team time on PD days, as well as the elementary grade-level collaboration time monthly. This time is designed as teacher-led time to meet your needs. Coordinators can be available as requested to provide support. The need for time to collaborate has been stressed, and we understand the complexities of meeting before/after school. Therefore, we will continue to meet once a month during a common plan time (for the next two months). This time is designed to

The School District of Washington



WORDS OF WISDOM

Reflection for the Month from Dr. Kephart. As a follow up to the March Kephart Insider editorials, we share District-level ways that our executive leadership team to show our appreciation and follow-up that we want the staff listening tours have been completed. The following are not inclusive; however, it does showcase a few of the multiple aspects of our District.

- Alignment and narrowing of District goals and action steps
- Visibility throughout each building monthly
- Benefit incentives such as PTO instead of sick days, as well as not having "blackout days"
- Staff involvement in District-level decision making, Compensation & Benefits, Professional Development, Instructional Leadership Team, Curriculum, etc.
- Transparency of communication with staff through Kephart Communications monthly videos, newsletters, and social media
- Feedback attainment and action step follow-up, including the addition of Staff, Parent, and Student Surveys

WORDS OF WISDOM

Reflection for the Month from Dr. Kephart.

As a follow up to last month's Kephart Insider, the upcoming newsletters will contain follow-up clarification, information, and upcoming action steps from information provided in the Staff Satisfaction Survey. We analyzed over 800 comments to focus on the following themes of celebration and areas of growth.

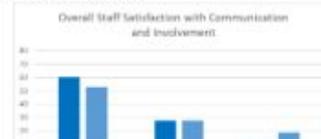
Based on feedback from the Staff Advisory team, the Executive Leadership team will be hosting a Staff Listening Tour at each building. This will be a voluntary opportunity to provide your feedback on several key questions on the survey that we want to focus on in the coming year. Questions and parameters will be provided via District email in the coming days. Please attend if you are interested.

Areas of Celebration:

- Increased Communication
- Updated Assessment Alignment and Lesson Plan Updates
- Seeking Feedback and Providing Action
- Choice Professional Development Opportunities
- Visible Leadership

Areas to focus on for Growth:

- Monetary Compensation and Benefits (stipends, incentives, sick days, workload, leave)
- Professional Development Time
- Discipline and Behavior Expectations and Support
- Building/ Department Specific



Staff Listening Tour Follow-Up FAQs



Overview:

The Executive Leadership Team has been addressing common themes from the 2022-23 Staff Satisfaction Survey in the March-May editions of the Kephart Insider. The following document is intended to provide clarification on several of the common themes coming from the Staff Listening tours that have not been previously addressed in Kephart Insider messages. Overall, the goal is to continue to support our staff through the alignment of goals and action steps on the upcoming Strategic Plan while addressing many of the themes that have been shared via the survey and listening tour. We will continue to streamline district communication and provide training, resources, and support needed to be prepared for the rapidly changing world our students are embarking upon.

Common Listening Tour Themes:

- Explanations of the "Why" as much as possible
- Supports for student behavior
- More time for PLCs, work time at the start of the year and flexible work time during the year
- Focus on building culture and climate
- Pay and an understanding of "frozen steps"
- Substitute needs and success in the classroom
- Common expectations from building to building
- Mental health support for staff
- Safety concerns from a larger, national scale
- Too much reliance on technology
- Too much change, too quickly
- Support with resource implementation
- Concerns regarding a lack of parent involvement

Priority Focuses

→ Survey Theme: Salary Info

→ Staff Wellness Reminder

DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS: DISTRICT COMMUNICATION

In celebration of the successes noted in the area of communication, please see the various avenues for internal communication along with upcoming action steps in this area for growth.

Monthly:

- Kephart Communication Video
- Kephart Communication Podcast
- Kephart Insider (staff only)
- Curriculum Corner (staff only)
- Blue Jay Bulletin
- Blue Jay Pride Award
- Building Parent Newsletters
- Building Showcase at each Board meeting

During the Month:

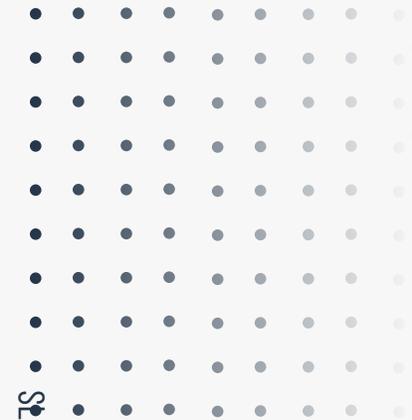
- Building Newsletters (staff only)
- Weekly School & District highlights on Twitter and Facebook @SDofWashington @DrKephart
- Culture & Climate Snippets on social media
- Teacher Shout Out Tuesdays (2nd Tuesday of the Month across the State)
- SDOW App Alerts

Upcoming Action Steps:

- Staff Listen Tours
- Staff Advisory work on staff appreciation
- Kephart Insider survey follow-up

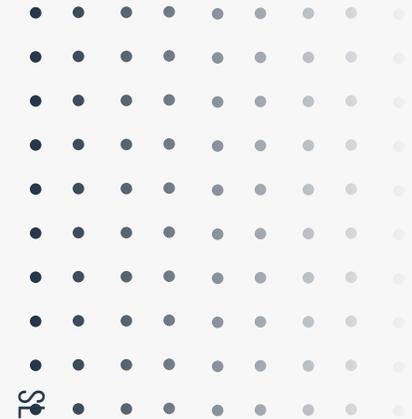
Action Planning

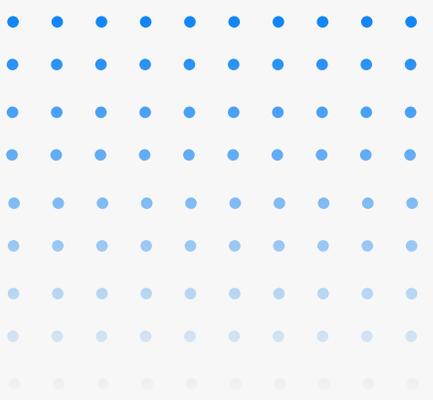
- Translating feedback into actionable steps
- Goal-setting based on feedback
- Involving stakeholders in the action planning process
- Monitoring progress and making adjustments



Fostering Collaboration

- Creating a culture of collaboration
- Building partnerships with parents, students, and staff
- Encouraging open communication channels
- Showcasing examples of successful collaborations



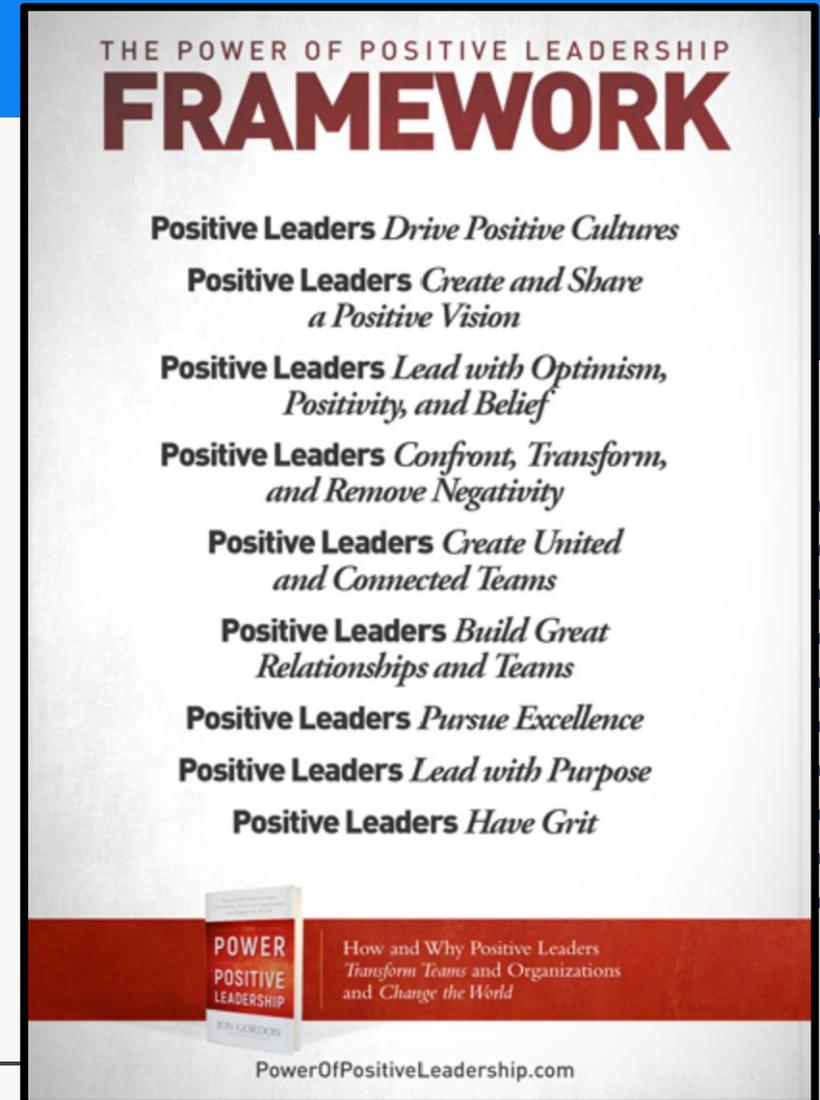


Enhancing Educational Experiences

- How feedback contributes to improving education
 - Examples of positive changes resulting from feedback
 - Creating a student-centered learning environment
 - Continuous improvement in educational experiences
- 

Ongoing Care and Support

- Serve well
- Create a positive culture
- Build YOUR team
- Lead with purpose
- Show appreciation
- Notice growth
- Be there when it is hard
- Listen, slow down, listen
- Be intentional
- Highlight others- over and over
- Smile and have fun :)



Jennifer Kephart @DrJKephart · Jun 3

It was a great few days with the @SDofWashington building and district leaders at this years June Leadership Retreat! Thank you for the fun, collaboration, and foundation building for next year. #wearegettingready



Jennifer Kephart @DrJKephart · Aug 4, 2021

Leading with purpose and setting a positive course for the @SDofWashington year with our ONE word. #adminretreat #oneword #SDOWstrong



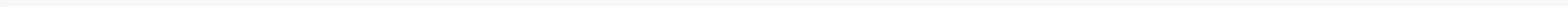
Jennifer Kephart @DrJKephart · Sep 8

Our first 2022-23 Lead Learner "Holy Mackerel" 🐟🏆 award goes to @WHSCoachKing for his new leadership at @FourRiversCC! We are so glad you are part of the Blue Jay Leadership family! 🥰 @MonicaGentaEd #EngageSDOW #180DaysOfAwesome





Questions



Stay Connected



<https://www.washington.k12.mo.us/>

Dr. Jennifer Kephart

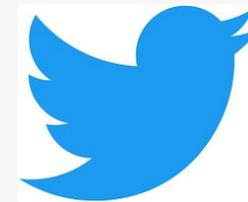
School District of Washington

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Kephart Communications Podcast



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