

GH Private School Launches New Store: Students Profit

By Scott Turner

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GIG HARBOR —There's gonna be a whole lot of shopping and thrifty hands-on learning happening at Gig Harbor's Lighthouse Christian School (LCS).

Last month, after plenty of hard work from students and parent volunteers, there is now an on-campus LCS store, destined to fill the needs of the many as well as complete a three-year vision of Dennis Trittin, a school board member, and parent alumnus.

Trittin's goal was to develop a financial literacy program that could touch every one of the private school's 300-plus (K-8 grade) students.

The process started by integrating finances into class courses, Tritten said. And now, with the launch of the store, his dream of a complete circle of economics — where entrepreneurship will be embedded within the entire curriculum, is unfolding just as planned.

"The last year or so has been spent building a team of people that could really cover all of the basics of what it takes to run a store," Tritten said.

The concept behind the store, he added, is for it to be able to serve a number of different functions that would include spirit wear, healthy goodies, and in-house field trips that would showcase merchandising and economic principles.

At first, the store (still in a student-led process of being named) will be managed by parents volunteers bent on identifying different roles, and a system to integrate students to help manage the program, Tritten said.

"They will actually be applying for jobs. They will go through the interview process to get the real world experience of what it takes to compete for a job," he added with a smile.

Store profits will feed into student activities with a component of them being earmarked toward charitable causes, for which Tritten said, the LCS students will be involved.

Parent volunteer, Amy Gartlan, said the freshly-opened store is a work in progress.

"We are learning as we go. There are all these different opportunities we know about that we want to get to, but right now, we're trying to get the store open.

“The idea is for the parents to be facilitators, but truly, it should be the kids’ store. It’s really exciting,” she said.

Along with the spirit wear, Gartlan said that organizers are working toward offering a healthy food selection for the staff, and for students to come in and purchase either before or after school.

“It’s going to be pretty cool because we can come out here and get something to drink or eat, and it’ll be fun for like a second job, where we can get business experience,” said student, Austin Malavia, 11.



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