

Better Together!

What is the difference between the PTAs and the Issaquah Schools Foundation?



Many parents and community members seek to understand the differences between these different student support systems and why we need so many to provide, what appears to be, the same function. While it is true that each of these organizations provide student support, they each have a separate focus and function.

Our Issaquah PTAs work to increase family engagement and inclusivity in individual schools within the Issaquah School District. Some of the programs that these organizations provide include Art in the Schools, Family and Community Engagement (FACE), Outreach, ParentWiser, Reflections, Special Education, and Volunteers for Issaquah Schools (VIS). The PTAs also fund extra-curricular activities such as curriculum nights, family-school events, and other community engagement opportunities.

The Issaquah Schools Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization able to support district-wide opportunities that help bridge the gap between state and local funding, and what it really costs to provide each of the 19,000+ students in all 27 schools with the highest possible quality education.

Through donation-funded programs, the Foundation ensures that students in EVERY SCHOOL, from those that are struggling to those who excel and every child in between, have access to opportunities to thrive. Our focus is on building solid academic foundations, expanding horizons, and setting students up for success in whatever they pursue next. The Foundation provides myriad programs that prioritize Academic Enrichment, Academic Support, Student Well-Being, and Community Outreach.

There are also instances where Foundation and PTSA objectives overlap, and they enter ventures together. However, these two organizations are governed differently with respect to how they raise and spend money. PTA, as a national organization, is bound by strict by-laws which dictate how fundraising is achieved and how funds are implemented into programs. The Foundation, on the other hand, can pursue as much fundraising as is necessary to achieve its goals. Funding decisions are guided by the Foundation Board, as representatives of parents, together with teacher and administrative input. Decisions can be made, or changed, as the Foundation sees fit.

Our Issaquah PTAs are incredible, and our schools are stronger because of them. Our Foundation will continue bridging the gap between what public education offers and what a competitive, 21st-century education ideally should be. Thank you for your ongoing support of both organizations!