

January 23, 2008

NEWS RELEASE

For more information:

Mike Gunn, 425-385-4190

Mary Waggoner, 425-385-4049

District in negotiations with 16 owners of property sought for future schools

Within the next 20 years, Everett Public Schools expects it will need three more elementary schools and more classroom space for middle and high school students. The district's expectation is based upon population growth projections made by the Washingtonstate Office of Financial Management (OFM). The OFM population figures indicate this region will grow by 15 to 20 percent over the next two decades, and that, according to school officials, drives the need to buy more land for those schools. "Planning for future needs is a leadership responsibility," said Superintendent Carol Whitehead. "We also have an obligation to honor the promises we made to voters in the February 2006 capital bond program."

The bond program Whitehead refers to included funding to not only build new schools and renovate old ones, but also to purchase land for future schools.

Following months of study and evaluation, the district has [identified 24 individual land parcels](#) totaling approximately 68 acres for potential acquisition. This land is located east of Sunset Road between 164th Street SE and 180th Street SE, just outside Snohomish County's Urban Growth Area boundary.

"These sites rose to the top of our list because they are near where future growth is expected," said District Facilities and Planning Director Mike Gunn. "As we studied sites in this area, we considered whether they had wetlands or steep slopes which would increase construction costs or prohibit construction. We also looked at the public roadway system, and potential access to future public sewers, water, natural gas and electricity. These sites meet the criteria necessary for future school construction."

The district's offers to purchase these properties have been structured around legal requirements set by the state, which include market-value property valuations prepared by state-certified appraisers. "We have also offered to pay up to \$750 to each property owner to help pay for the cost of their own property appraisal or a professional evaluation of our offer," said Gunn.

"This proactive approach to buying property ahead of time will help us ensure that our future schools can be built in the right locations when we need them for students," said Whitehead.