

News Release

Everett Public Schools

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Latina speaker kicks off school year for school staff, students, parents and community

Retired Army Lt. Col. Consuelo Castillo Kickbusch will set the tone for school district staff on Wednesday, Aug. 27 with an all-staff gathering at Comcast Arena. Later in the day she will meet with high school student leaders, mingle with those students and parents at a barbeque and end the day with a 6:30 p.m. session for community members and all parents at the Everett Civic Auditorium, across from Everett High School.

"We have invited Consuelo because she brings a powerfully positive message to students and adults," says the district's Interim Superintendent Karst Brandsma. "This district's mission is to see that *each* student succeeds, and Consuelo's message is perfectly aligned with our mission. Brandsma points out that Kickbusch's message is heard each year at hundreds of schools, colleges/universities, corporations and government institutions in the United States and abroad. She is dedicated to empowering a new generation of student leaders. Over the last ten years, she has worked with more than a million children and parents."



The day's events:

- Everett Public Schools staff meet with Kickbusch in the morning
- 3:30-4:45 p.m. Kickbusch presents to student leaders at Civic Auditorium
- 4:45-6:15 p.m. Parents of student leaders and student leaders join Kickbusch at Everett High School for social and barbeque
- 6:30-7:30 p.m. Free community meeting for all district parents and interested adults at Civic Auditorium

Born and raised along the border in a small barrio in Laredo, Texas, she is familiar with the challenges of poverty, discrimination and illiteracy. Although she grew up without material wealth, she learned through valuable lessons taught by her immigrant parents, that she was rich in culture, tradition, values and faith.

The values she learned as a child were reinforced throughout her career in the U.S. military. During the 20 years she served as a U.S. Army officer, she broke barriers, set records and became the highest-ranking Hispanic woman in the Combat Support Field of the U.S. Army. When the opportunity to assume a command post arose, Kickbusch shocked the military by deciding to retire. She chose to honor her mother's dying wish to get back to her roots and become a community leader.

She inspires the students and families she works with to believe that they can make all their dreams come true — to not give up hope. Her message inspires them to take charge of their lives and make a real difference in their families and communities by following a disciplined road map to success.

Kickbusch says:

"My personal heroes are my parents. First, my father, who never received formal education but had a Ph.D. in life, taught me to ask 'Porque No?' which means 'Why not?'. I have carried that lesson with me my whole life, and now I pass it on to the students through my speeches. Secondly, my mother, she was my wake-up call in life. Her dying wish was to see me return home to the community and serve our youth, which I proudly do."