

News Release Everett Public Schools



Everett Public Schools

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District earns clean audit report – for the eighth consecutive year *State auditor's report says district's internal controls protect public interests* *Federal audit shows no findings*

For the eighth year in a row, Everett Public Schools has received a clean state audit.

The four board members present at Thursday's audit exit conference were pleased at this year's audit report and the evidence of accountability it represents. "We take our responsibilities seriously," School Board President Ed Petersen told the audit team. "It is comforting to know that you do such a thorough audit examination and that you can document the compliance and efficient work being done by district staff to manage and safeguard public resources. We appreciate being able to come meet and hear from you that things are as we think. Now we *know* our thinking is correct, and we have clear evidence of the checks and balances in place to continue the district's history of public stewardship."

A state auditor team spends weeks each year determining if school district finances and legal compliance issues are handled and managed in such a way that protects public interests. The team reviews finances and district compliance with state and federal laws, regulations and its own district policies. The results of the annual, systematic reviews of district records are then reported to district officials and to the state and published on the [state auditor's searchable website](#). Those interested in audit reports can also subscribe to them at www.sao.wa.gov/EN/News/Subscriptions.

Areas examined in this year's audit of state compliance areas for Everett Public Schools included:

- Open Public Meetings Act compliance
- School district financial condition
- Debts and covenants
- Conflict of interest and ethics laws
- Student store funds
- Cash receipting
- Alternative learning education
- Associated Student Body funds
- Associated Student Body fundraisers

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Examination of the first five areas resulted in no recommendations or suggestions for even minor changes. In particular, the board was pleased to learn the auditors found no violations of the Open Public Meetings Act. The auditors made minor recommendations to clarify district policy about operational procedures in the latter four. None of those suggestions rose to the level of either an official “finding” – which would trigger a negative audit report – or a “management letter” that would further detail the need for important changes.

Each year an audit team visits, they examine varying compliance areas and different records. This was another reassurance for Petersen. “As your audit rotates through various areas, we get a good look at the scope of all program management over time.”

During the exit conference, the board members present took advantage of the time set aside by the audit team to ask questions and to become more deeply familiar with the accountability requirements. When asked about the district’s eight years of clean audits, the audit team affirmed that such a record was “really good” and merited “congratulations.”

Superintendent Gary Cohn and Finance and Operations Director Jeff Moore were complimentary of the staff responsible for the work resulting in another clean audit report. “This is a very clear affirmation of the care we take in the work we do,” said Moore.

Cohn added, “This is something every school district staff member can be proud of because we are *all* responsible in some way for finances and compliance.”

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