

From: Superintendent
Sent: Thursday, March 28, 2013 12:45 PM
To: EPS.MailList
Subject: Spring break wishes
Importance: High

Dear Colleague,

A week ago, more than 500 people attended the [Everett Public Schools Foundation](#) annual breakfast and raised more than \$130,000!

Not only did the Foundation set a record and raise more than its goal in one morning, but the number attending the event was the largest ever. All this to support the work we are doing to help each student in our district! This tremendous show of support for students is evidence of the community's confidence. Thank **YOU** for engendering that confidence and thanks to the Foundation donors (many of whom are district staff) for their generosity. A special thank you to staff, students and families who arrived at the breakfast in the wee morning hours to provide entertainment, greetings and examples of the learning excellence in our schools.

The breakfast theme was Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). The keynote speaker was [Scott Fancher](#), vice president and general manager of Boeing Commercial Airplanes. He spoke about change in that industry and of the growing need in our community and the world for well-educated students and STEM programs such as those we offer now and aspire to offer more of and infuse throughout K-12 classrooms in our district.

I spoke about our accomplishments for students in a district that has gone from 12,000 students in 19 schools 50 years ago to more than 18,000 this year in 26 schools, with another 2,000 students expected by 2021. I emphasized our district staff's successful responses to changing demographics and shifting funding, and I spoke of the significance of "strategic partners" who help us succeed in this world's most important work.

Last Friday's snow perhaps marked the "change" from winter to spring. Like many of you, I was surprised to see white that morning. I was also cheered and reminded of spring when seeing the neighbors' hyacinths and crocus blooming through the brilliant contrast of clean, crisp snow.

I was also impressed and humbled last Friday by the energy and enthusiasm of the 700 elementary and high school teachers, para educators and administrators who spent the day digging deeply into [Common Core Standards](#), including [habits of mind](#) and the instructional shifts implied in the standards and [Smarter Balanced Assessments](#). Keynote speaker, [Dr. Robyn Jackson](#) received rave reviews from attendees – many of whom also rated the day as one of the best professional development experiences in

some time. The implementation process for *Common Core* begins next fall, and Friday's work was a key part of the district's support of the work ahead.

When we return after spring break, watch for updated information about the mysterious word *sequestration* and how it may impact programs for our neediest students next year. We'll also have more information about the developments in the state Legislature and what they might mean for schools and our community.

With spring break just around the corner, I wish you and yours rest, rejuvenation and many more spring flowers.

Happy spring break, and warm regards,
Gary Cohn