

From: Superintendent
Sent: Tuesday, June 11, 2013 12:53 PM
To: EPS.MailList
Subject: Celebrate!
Importance: High

Dear Colleague,

This time of year, lyrics from Kool & The Gang's *Celebrate Good Times* roll around my mind (yes, I do listen to pop and rock now and then) – probably because of the dozens of celebratory events popping up during the school days this season, in the evenings and on the weekends when you are showcasing and celebrating the results of your work – student achievements.

Students are earning scholarships and awards, certificates and ribbons, smiles and high-fives for milestone accomplishments marking the end of this school year. When I attend one of these many ceremonies, be it a school assembly, a classroom presentation, a student club recognition, a *moving up* assembly, ASB officer installation, or a community event, I hear that Kool & The Gang refrain: "CEL-a-BRATE good times, come on!" I think of all of the wonderful people who have played a role in those individual student's accomplishments. I'm reminded time and again: this is a collective effort; we do this work together; we complement one another to instill strengths and capabilities that may be celebrated months or even years after a student has left our circle of influence. But our influence remains, and whenever I see a student being honored, I say a little thank you all those who contributed over the years here to help make that honor possible.

On Thursday night for Sequoia High and again on Saturday for Cascade, Everett and Jackson, we will hold commencement ceremonies for an estimated 1,100 students. (That is today's estimate.) Each of those students has been helped by dozens and dozens of Everett Public School employees and volunteers. We will joyfully celebrate these students and their families, genuinely honor their graduation achievements, and collectively look forward to great things in their futures. Commencement is also a time to reflect, think back over the year, and honor all those who helped make commencement events possible and a reason for students and families to celebrate.

As we say congratulations and good luck to our students, we also will say a "fond farewell" to many co-workers this spring. More than 50 Everett Public Schools staff have decided that this is the year to retire from education. So far, those choosing to "graduate" to retirement represent more than 1,365 years of service on behalf of students – an awesome number on its own. Yet, when one thinks of how many lives were touched and supported during those years, it is all that much more awesome, and there is so much more reason to celebrate their contributions to our kids and community.

In this last week of 2012-13, please do take time to *Celebrate Good Times*. Bask in the good feelings of this season's "good times," and take a moment to thank a colleague for his or her part in making these good times possible.

And if you need some musical accompaniment for the good feelings, here's a You Tube link to Ronald Bell's [Kool and The Gang](#) celebrating – and a tiny insight to what's rolling around in the superintendent's head this time of year (besides the legislature and the AWOL state budget) and what helps to put some bounce in my step each day I work with you.

Thank you for your part in a successful year, and very best wishes for a great summer! It's an honor and a joy to be a part of the Everett Public Schools with you.

Warm wishes,
Gary