

News release



Dec. 2, 2013

For more information:

[Mary Waggoner](#), Director of Communications, 425-385-4040

School Board to appoint replacement member

Director and School Board President Jeff Russell resigns as of Dec. 1, 2013

In a message he said brought him “sadness and a tremendous sense of loss,” Superintendent Gary Cohn announced to Everett Public Schools staff this morning that he and School Board Vice President Carol Andrews, “... were informed by a letter from School Board President Jeff Russell of his resignation from the board effective December 1.”

Cohn’s message to staff included comments from Russell’s letter. *“I am proud of the many accomplishments and significant steps of progress that the Everett Public Schools has made during this time. It has been a joy to work with you, the board, the superintendent’s leadership team, principals, teachers, and staff of what is the finest district in the state of Washington.*

“During the last four years I have appreciated the opportunity to make a positive difference. At the same time, it has become increasingly clear that at this point in my life, I am in need of change.

“You and everyone who make up the Everett Public Schools have all of my best wishes.”

“It is now the school board’s responsibility to appoint a replacement member. Logistics of that process are being developed quickly to align with board [Policy](#) and [Procedure](#) 1115 and state law ([RCW 28A.343.370](#)),” explained district Communications Director, Mary Waggoner. “When those details are worked out, we will publish that information on our website, through email distribution channels and local media.”

Cohn’s staff message credited Russell’s leadership and advocacy. He wrote, “During Mr. Russell’s term on the board, he was a tireless advocate for students, staff and community through some of the most difficult budgetary times I’ve seen in Washington’s public education.

“He also played a key role in some of our most gratifying achievements and work in progress. One is our 21st century skills work. He has been instrumental in our approach to [integrating STEM](#) across the district curriculum.

(more)

"Our district's mission, vision and strategic plan were crafted with board and community collaboration over nearly two years, during which Mr. Russell was a thoroughly invested participant, a frequent contributor, and a visible leader. He was firm in his resolve that our strategic plan goals and the professional growth expectations and accountability of TPEP can be met ONLY with strong professional development and time for staff and administrators to collaborate...

"Mr. Russell was deeply engaged in the process leading up to last week's decision to put a Replacement Educational Programs and Operations Levy and a Capital Bond on the February 11, 2014 ballot. Over two and a half years and more than 14 meetings and study sessions went into planning what voters will be asked to approve in approximately two months. Throughout the deliberative, community process, Mr. Russell focused on what students need and ... on a stable projected tax rate for the community.

"Today, two high school student representatives sit at the table with the board. Mr. Russell led that board initiative to bring student voices and perspectives to its meetings. The legacy of putting students first in this most visible way is among other lasting impacts of Mr. Russell's time on the board.

"Serving well as a school board member is as challenging as it can be rewarding. With more than 50 meetings a year, and any number of additional appearances at dozens of school- and community- related events, school board members are truly unsung heroes for students. I am grateful to have worked with and for a board member of Jeff Russell's caliber.

"I am confident that Mr. Russell's replacement will be equally committed to students, to staff, to open governance, to our community, and to being thoroughly invested in what it takes to do this work."

---end---