

From: [Superintendent](#)
To: [EPS.MailList](#)
Subject: Words for the day -- "Cautiously optimistic" and "dauntless"
Date: Wednesday, April 23, 2014 12:13:57 PM
Importance: High

Dear Colleague,

"Cautiously optimistic" is a good phrase for today.

The good news

Of the 16,013 votes counted as of last night, 57.3 percent (a clear majority) said "yes" to our request for capital funds to build safe, modern schools for a growing student enrollment and to ensure those students have educational technology to prepare for their futures in the 21st century.

The bad news

School district capital bonds require a 60 percent *supermajority* approval. We are among a dozen other school districts in the state with capital requests before their publics, and [all 12 of those bonds](#) (as of this morning) are below 60 percent *supermajority* approval. Eight of them, including Everett Public Schools' bond, have a clear *majority*, but not a *supermajority*.

All four of the April 22 Educational Program and Operating Levies in the state (which require a 50 percent *majority approval*) are passing.

Facts

The county elections office has another 3,864 ballots to count today. To reach the 60 percent *supermajority*, 71.17 percent of those ballots must contain "yes" votes. That is a difficult, but not impossible bar. At 5 p.m. this afternoon, the elections office will release new results. We will be watching – this afternoon, tomorrow afternoon and until the results are certified on May 6.

For the February 11 election, the first day results were 56.2 percent *majority* approval, and that number increased over the subsequent count days to an ultimate 58.16 percent *majority*, which was just less than two points and about 300 votes below being a *supermajority*.

What's next

The needs of our students will not diminish. We will have more students in our schools. The schools needing modernizations will continue to get older, and those on the list for "next time" in the bond schedules will wait longer for those renovations.

Students will continue to need quality instruction and quality instructional tools – including the educational technology this capital bond is designed to provide.

School districts can put bonds and levies on the ballot just twice a year – that is state law. If this capital bond does not meet the *supermajority* requirement, and if the board

were to place another capital request before voters, that election could not happen before February of 2015.

If this capital bond does not meet the *supermajority* requirement, the board must consider what options are available for accommodating the hundreds of students who will be coming to our district over the next decade. The board must also consider how to ensure the best educational technology access for all students.

Until all election results are in and until the board is able to convene to discuss those results, the district must put these capital facilities and technology projects on hold.

While we could be described as “on hold and waiting and *cautiously optimistic*” about the election results, we are *dauntless* in our work on behalf of students and their learning. I am always and *eternally optimistic* about the things happening in our schools. I dedicate each Wednesday morning to visiting schools; this morning included delightful visits to Jackson High and Gateway. No matter the challenges of the first part of the week or the unknowns of the rest of the week, Wednesday morning is a spirit-lifter for me – as it is for anyone who visits any of our schools or offices on any day.

Thank you for the *dauntless* spirit you bring to every student and for inspiring a *majority* of voters to show their support for your work on behalf of students.

With *dauntless*, optimistic and warm regards,
Gary