

**From:** [Superintendent](#)  
**To:** [EPS.MailList](#)  
**Subject:** Important message regarding State Superintendent Dorn's litigation  
**Date:** Monday, August 08, 2016 4:27:15 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)

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Dear staff:

On July 19 I shared with you that Washington State Superintendent Randy Dorn filed a lawsuit against the legislature as well as several large school districts, including ours, challenging how school districts across the state pay for teachers' salaries and benefits.

Our school board and I are keenly aware that one of the purposes of Mr. Dorn's lawsuit is to highlight the fact that the Washington legislature has not taken the necessary steps to fully fund basic education as required by the *McCleary* court ruling. Nevertheless, we strongly disagree with Mr. Dorn's strategy to sue individual school districts over school funding—and specifically, our state's expectation that we use operating levies to fill the gap left by state funding shortfalls. His lawsuit diverts precious resources away from the classroom to the courtroom, taking time and money away from our central goal of educating our students, just as the new school year begins, as was pointedly noted in the response filed on behalf of five of the districts in Superior Court today:

It is more than a little ironic that in the *McCleary* litigation Dorn decried the Legislature's chronic underfunding of school districts, yet he has now forced these District administrators to spend time and incur attorney's fees to defend themselves. If Dorn's lawsuit is allowed to proceed, the Districts would be forced to mount a time-consuming and costly legal defense. ... Whether an act of frustration in his final months in office or political theater, Dorn's Complaint is misdirected. The [Superior] Court should exercise its discretion to stay this case until the Supreme Court concludes its active monitoring of the remedy for the State's constitutional violations and relinquishes jurisdiction in *McCleary*.

Suing Everett Public Schools or any other Washington school district does not fix the overall school funding situation. The root issue is painfully clear: the state must fulfill its paramount duty to provide for basic education.

The school districts, including Everett, have prepared a vigorous defense to this lawsuit that is in the best interest of our schools, teachers, students and their families. Today we asked the King County Superior Court to put the lawsuit on hold until the Washington Supreme Court concludes its active monitoring of the *McCleary* case. If you would like to review the districts' motion to Mr. Dorn's suit, or several articles and editorials on the matter, the link below will access those resources.

We very much appreciate your continued support of Everett Public Schools, your willingness

to keep focused on our work on behalf of the welfare and future of over 19,000 students in our schools, and we will continue to responsibly use district resources to support and promote student achievement while we wait for the state to fully fund education.

[Link to motion and associated resources](#)



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