The Fiscal Advisory Council’s recommendations for development of the 2017-18 budget
Overview

District’s commitments

During the last decade, state and federal funding failed to keep pace with increasing K-12 operational costs. In fall 2009, the superintendent convened an ongoing Fiscal Advisory Council to give perspective and advice for the superintendent to consider before presenting his recommendations to the school board. The council is comprised of seven community members, four students, three bargaining groups, three principals, and four cabinet members. During the first three years, the FAC had the difficult task of recommending its support of nearly $17 million in cuts to vital district programs.

In 2012, the McCleary case changed the climate when the Washington Supreme Court found the state had not complied with its constitutional duty to fully fund K-12 public education. In the years to follow, state funding did begin to increase and the role of the FAC evolved from measuring the impacts state had not complied with its constitutional duty to fully fund K-12 public education. In the years to follow, state funding did begin to increase and the role of the FAC evolved from measuring the impacts state had not complied with its constitutional duty to fully fund K-12 public education.

Fiscal outlook

State overview

On January 9, the legislature convened its 2017 Legislative Session. This first year of a two-year biennial session, known as the “long” session, is limited to 105 days. The overriding issue is compliance with the state Supreme Court’s 2012 McCleary decision, and the 2018 deadline set by the Court for compliance by the state. Numerous budget plans have been unveiled, including the Governor’s proposal issued in December, and four legislative proposals. The two that carry the most weight are from the Senate Republican Majority Coalition Caucus (SSB 5607), and from the House Democratic Caucus (ESHB 1843). These two proposals vary significantly on key policy issues such as taxation, employee compensation, and basic education funding models. The stark contrast between the proposals leaves the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and school districts in a holding pattern. Fortunately, on March 9, the House and Senate passed and sent to the Governor SSB 5023 which delayed the levy cliff for one year, mitigating layoff notices in several major school districts. While the two chambers continue to negotiate a final compromise on a McCleary solution, school districts must move forward with budget preparation for planning for the worst, and hoping for the best.

The 2017 Regular Session has concluded and as expected, the legislature did not adopt a 2017-19 Operating Budget or a required Education Funding Plan to comply with the Supreme Court’s McCleary decision. Governor Inslee called the legislature back for a Special Session beginning April 24, and a second 30-day session was called on May 23. While the negotiations continue between key players in both chambers and from both parties, the common presumption is that nothing will be resolved until the State Revenue Forecast on June 20, with the hope that a rover picture will help bring the two sides together. According, there is a high likelihood that a third special session will be necessary to adopt a budget by June 30, to avoid a state shutdown.

Federal overview

Federal funding remains flat following several years of reduction and the advent of sequestration. From 2012 through 2014 the state received a waiver from the punitive sanctions of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The waiver is conditioned upon several factors, including specific requirements that teacher evaluations be tied to student tests. The 2014 state legislature determined not to participate at this time and, accordingly, Washington lost the waiver. In December 2015 the House and Senate passed an Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization bill known as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This bill did not provide additional funding but did remove some of the punitive measures under NCLB and provide states with more autonomy in setting standards, assessments, and interventions. Following the presidential election, there had been indications of varying levels of funding reduction for Title programs. The information available at this point suggests that there will be no impact for the 2017-18 school year. However, we continue to monitor federal funding implications for future years.

Local overview

The district has been fortunate to have strong local support for bonds and levies. On February 11, 2014, our community strongly supported a four-year Educational Programs and Operations Levy which currently contributes more than one out of every five dollars of our operating fund, directly funding student learning. Since that time, the board and administration engaged the community in numerous conversations to define needs for a 2016 capital bond measure before the voters rather than holding off until 2018. On April 26, 2016, both measures passed, the levy with 65.1 percent and the bond with 62.2 percent. In the following years, there was intentional focus on building up reserves to prepare for legislative uncertainty and particularly the pending 2018 “levy cliff.” The ending fund balance for fiscal year (FY) 2014 was $9,642,864 or just under 5 percent of total expenditures and by FY 2016, it was increased to $20,388,922 or 8.9 percent. This proactive fund balance management was acknowledged by Moody’s, who increased the district’s bond rating to Aa2, placing Everett amongst the highest rated districts in the state. The agency noted “Everett School District benefits from a strong and proactive management team that demonstrates conservative budgeting practices, conducting multi-year forecasts, cash-flow projections, and scenario analysis.”
Overview

Charge and work plan

The Fiscal Advisory Council's (FAC) charge – what the superintendent asked us to do

The FAC's work is integral to the district's annual budget development process. The superintendent has outlined the FAC's charge as follows:

- **Focus on student achievement** – Balance district programs to support each student's unique achievement needs. Student achievement depends on both academic programs tailored to each student's success, and on extracurricular activities, adequate supervision and student safety, and learning in clean and supportive schools. The council should acknowledge that classroom support is an educational necessity, and that such support ranges from maintenance and personnel to curriculum and assessment.

- **Commit to big-picture thinking** – The general fund is supported by a multitude of state, federal, and local revenue sources with a variety of specific, legally-defined spending and reporting requirements. Equally complex are the regulatory requirements associated with education.

- **Evaluate the priority of program enhancements** – In the development of the 2017-18 operating budget, the FAC should present to the superintendent recommendations that: fully consider the impact of past reductions; fully consider the parameters used by prior FAC groups; fully consider how recent program enhancements balance all organizational needs, engage in active discussions, and request additional data as necessary to make informed recommendations for future action. The FAC will be presented with needs well exceeding the additional resources and must provide critical input to prioritize all needs as measured against the strategic plan, student performance data, and State of the School Reviews (SOSRs).

- **Integrate the annual work plan with the budget development cycle** – Align the work plan with key milestones including legislative session(s), SOSRs, annual update to the strategic plan, and school board budget adoption.

- **Commit to ongoing participation through 2018** – The council will continue to meet in future years as an integral part of the budget development cycle. Members are asked to serve a minimum of two years to maintain continuity and retain critical knowledge to support informed recommendations critical to the budget development process.

The five phases of the annual budget development cycle:

**Phase one**

October-December

State revenue forecast, issuance of governor's budget, and financial forecasting

**Phase two**

January-May

FAC continual assessment of district programs and further engagement of board in guiding strategic direction

**Phase three**

June/July

Formal development of the operating budget, budget hearing, and adoption

**Phase four**

July/August

Making all operational adjustments to align with formal budget adoption

**Phase five**

September

Complex, eight-day, school-by-school assessment of staffing based on student enrollment, making adjustments as necessary

Development Process

Data driven decision processes

Annual budget cycle

Three guiding lenses are paramount to the distribution of district resources

Several concurrent processes are focused on ensuring that student learning measures are used intentionally and systematically to drive long-term financial and staffing needs. The first is student performance data, critical to defining both areas of success as well as areas of challenge. Student data drives policy decisions for the board, programmatic decisions for the administration, and instructional decisions for each school. The second lens is the State of the School Reviews (SOSRs), where teams from each school report on the assessment of their student data and define modifications to their school improvement plans (SIP). This process identifies specific instructional and programmatic adjustments and the resources necessary to accomplish their SIP. The third lens is the Strategic Plan as established by the board and the Annual Operating Plan (AOP) developed by the administration, identifying the actions necessary to ensure progress on the multi-year strategic plan.

Data driven decision processes - guiding lenses

Fiscal Advisory Council Report - June 2017
Development Process
Necessary adjustments with economic recovery

Economic recovery challenges alignment of the three lenses within the budget development process

The key to the data driven decision-making process is the sequential alignment of the three lenses. Fall student data informs schools on areas that may need additional focus and support. The actions necessary and the resources needed are integrated in the SIP which is presented to the administration in SOSRs held in late January through March. Concurrently, the student data drives district wide programmatic analysis and decisions that are reviewed and prioritized by the FAC and superintendent’s cabinet. Finally, the SOSRs presentations further identify specific school-based resource needs necessary to finalize the AOP and develop the operating budget for the following school year.

With the economic recovery over the past two years, combined with expansion of full-day kindergarten and K-3 class size reduction, there is a teacher shortage throughout the state. In addition, with instructional program changes to Common Core, expansion of STEM and the increase to the number of credits student need to graduate, the shortage is compounded for math, science, language arts, and world language.

This reality requires school districts to begin hiring in late January or early February, which “short-circuited” the traditional budget development process. Accordingly, the FAC had to begin their work in October by deepening their understanding of the 2017-18 draft Annual Operating Plan (AOP), followed by prioritizing more than 97 possible investments to support the 37 targets within the AOP totaling just over $4.8 million. The group further reviewed and affirmed a planned set of reductions to brace against the 2018 levy cliff. Fortunately, on March 9, the House and Senate passed and sent to the Governor ESB 5023 which delayed the levy cliff for one year, mitigating layoff notices in several major school districts.

2017-18 Budget Development Timeline

Implications of possible legislative outcomes

Historic legislative session likely to defer most difficult decisions to local school districts

The Supreme Court ruled on McCleary in January 2012. In a unanimous decision, the Court found that the state relying on local levies to fund basic education was unconstitutional. The Court further found that if the legislature followed the process created by HB 2261 to phase in full-day kindergarten, reduce K-3 class size, fully fund transportation and funding a Prototypical School Model, it would satisfy their concerns over “the deficiencies in the K-12 funding system.”

In their 2016 order the Court acknowledged progress towards fulfilling the requirements of HB 2261, but in contrast, the order stated that “on the subject of personnel costs, the State had wholly failed to offer any plan for achieving constitutional compliance. “They called upon the legislature to address “its consistent underfunding of the actual cost of recruiting and retaining competent teachers, administrators, and staff” in other words, it is unconstitutional to use local levy dollars to pay for basic education salaries.

Accordingly, school districts are looking to the state to define basic education and provide rules on how we can spend local levy dollars to provide additional supports such as pre-school, summer school, remedial supports, and other instructional enhancements in addition to the traditional activity and athletic programs. This would provide school districts and local bargaining units with a “rulebook” to work together locally to modify exiting labor agreements.

To our dismay, the current proposals from the House and Senate are actually weakening the definition of basic education, and one even eliminates the prototypical school model. To compound the issue, they both move away from the current salary allocation model and further contemplate a different levy structure. This collectively leaves the 295 school districts in a holding pattern of uncertainty until the 2017-19 biennial budget is adopted. The writing on the wall suggests that rather than providing a “rulebook” every district will need to work through this extremely complex transition at the local level.
Concurrence with prioritized program enhancements

The ongoing showdown between the House and Senate leaves school districts in a holding pattern of uncertainty. While both proposals commit between $1.5 and $1.8 billion in additional K-12 investments, they also vary on how much to cut local levies. Local levies provide discretionary funding while most of the new state funding is committed to salaries, benefits, increased retirement rates, and increased K-3 class size. When the numerous parts and pieces are put together, the wrong combination can put districts in the position of making cuts even with added state funding. Districts continue to provide input to the legislature to guide decisions that will benefit all districts, but must finalize on their budgets. The FAC, Superintendent’s Leadership Team, and Superintendent’s Cabinet worked concurrently to develop and prioritize needs aligned with the 2017-18 AOP. The level of implementation will be dependent upon the net available resources following the legislative session.

A word of appreciation

The FAC commends the superintendent and board for engaging representatives of our community, employee groups, students, and administrators in this highly collaborative process. We appreciate the commitment of time, energy, and talent to develop an open and transparent process to support informed decision making.

Respectfully, The Fiscal Advisory Council

Public School Funding

Everett Public Schools budget

School district operations (general fund) have three sources of revenue

(Appendix A)

Local

Local revenues equal approximately one third of the general fund income. The majority of this is from local property taxes. Other non-tax local resources include lunch fees, fines, summer school, tuition-based full-day kindergarten, rental income, interest earnings, and donations.

State

The largest source of general fund revenue, 66 percent, comes from the state in two areas: state general purpose funds, called “state apportionment,” and state special purpose funds, called “categorical program funding.” The amount each district receives is based upon the annual average number of students enrolled in the district and a series of formulas that consider base set salaries, the collective education and experience of teachers, employee benefits and materials, as well as supplies and operating cost allocations. These formulas are set by the state legislature. State special purpose funds support programs such as special education, student transportation, transitional bilingual, and learning assistance. Most of this money is designated for specific programs and cannot be used for other purposes.

Federal

Federal funds are the smallest source of revenue for the district and equal only about seven percent of the district’s budget. Federal funds support specialized programs that are designated to support school improvement (Title II), disadvantaged students (Title I), and students with limited English proficiency (Title III). In addition, federal funds provide free and reduced price lunch programs as well as supplemental funds for special education. Federal funds are very restrictive and can only be used for specifically designated programs.

Revenues are designated to five separate funds:

(Appendix A)

School districts in Washington State have five separate funds to conduct district business. State and federal laws specify how these funds can be used. The five state-mandated funds are:

General Fund, the operating budget which guides our day to day activities;
Capital Projects Fund, which covers our long-term school construction and repair needs and cannot be spent on school operations;
Debt Service Fund, which we use to pay the principal and interest on bonds we issue to finance school construction and renovation;
Associated Student Body Fund (ASB), which accounts for each middle and high school’s extracurricular activities; and
Transportation Vehicle Fund, which provides for the purchase of school buses.

For more in-depth and detailed discussion, financial information, and other data, please see the district’s award winning, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), which is available online, along with other pertinent financial information, on the Everett Public Schools: Departments: Budget page.
Community partnerships
Lighting the way for our students

The district's strategic plan includes targets to expand and improve early learning opportunities for students in preschool through third grade. In pursuit of this strategic priority, the Early Learning department is engaged in a number of partnerships. Three of them are described here.

Everett Public Schools Foundation
The Everett Public Schools Foundation was established as Citizens for Everett Public Schools Association in 1985, with the central goal “to support the educational programs of the Everett Public Schools.” Their mission is to build community support and invest resources to inspire innovation, excellence and achievement for all learners in the Everett Public Schools. In the 2016-17 school year, the foundation contributed $403,560 in classroom grants, full-day kindergarten and summer school tuition assistance, college bound scholarships, “Stuff the Bus” campaign, and numerous other instructional supports.

Washington Alliance for Better Schools
Washington Alliance for Better Schools (WABS) was established in 1995 by several Puget Sound school districts in order to help students graduate career and college ready; WABS is designed to facilitate school districts working together more closely. Its mission is to leverage resources, talent and intellectual capital to help over a quarter million students graduate career and college ready; WABS is designed to facilitate school districts working together more closely. WABS engages students, family and local communities in education to help close the achievement gap and develops districtwide leadership capacity to improve student learning. Signature programs include STEM teacher externships, STEM fellowships, family STEM nights, and Natural Leaders.

Music4Life
Music4Life is a nonprofit organization that gathers “lovingly used” musical instruments, repairs them, and provides them to students in participating public school districts. With adequate financial resources, Music4Life also buys new musical instruments for school districts. “The reason we do this,” David Endicott, President of Music4Life says, “is because research now shows that students who participate in instrumental music activities tend to do better in math, science, history, literature, international languages, reading, writing, even in computer science, in addition to what it teaches in terms of teamwork and self-discipline. These benefits should be available to all students. But for families that continue to suffer during hard economic times, even renting a musical instrument can be prohibitive. Music4Life helps them across the very first barrier they encounter, the acquisition of the musical instrument in the first place.” Partnering with Music4Life will give more students attending Everett Public Schools the ability to participate in band or orchestra without worrying about where they will get an instrument.

School district comparisons
How Everett Public Schools compares to others

OSPI compiles financial information about every school district in the state and publishes financial data on the OSPI website. Using that information, it is possible to compare how districts spend money in various categories. The chart below shows that Everett Public Schools compares favorably to the state’s other similarly sized districts with student populations between 10,000 and 20,000 students.

This chart is a representation of specific categories of spending and does not represent all areas of measurement.

2015-16 OSPI Financial Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spending Category</th>
<th>What is included in this category</th>
<th>% of general fund spent in Everett</th>
<th>Avg % spent by similarly sized districts</th>
<th>What this says about Everett Public Schools spending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total teaching (includes teaching support)</td>
<td>Teachers, paraeducators, supplies, coaches, activity advisors, librarians, counseling, student security, recess supervision, psychologists, speech, and health services</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
<td>66.1%</td>
<td>Everett Public Schools spends more on teaching and teaching support than 18 of the state’s 20 comparably sized school districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching support</td>
<td>Librarians, counseling, student security, recess supervision, psychologists, speech and health services</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>Everett Public Schools spends more on teaching support than 13 of the state’s 20 comparably sized school districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special education</td>
<td>Staffing including teachers, paraeducators, psychologists, nurses, speech and language therapists, occupational and physical therapists, administrative staff, services, equipment, and materials</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>Everett Public Schools spends more on special education than 12 of the state’s 20 comparably sized school districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total administration</td>
<td>School and district administrators, technical and clerical staff, their supplies and materials</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>Everett Public Schools spends less on total administration than 12 of the 20 comparably sized school districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District-wide support</td>
<td>School board, superintendent, human resources, finance, information systems, communications, maintenance</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>Everett Public Schools spends less on district-wide support than 18 of the 20 comparably sized school districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance and operations</td>
<td>Maintenance of schools and other district facilities and grounds, custodians, utilities and school security</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>Everett Public Schools spends less in this category than all other comparably sized districts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More details for each category above, including the comparison districts of our size, the rank of each district in those categories, and a visual comparison can be found in the charts in Appendix B.

Appendix B

Fiscal Advisory Council Report - June 2017
Appendix A
Budget--five funds and sources of revenue

Five funds of the budget 2016-17

- General Fund: 79.0%
- Capital Projects: 12.4%
- Debt Service: 7.6%
- Associated Student Body: 0.9%
- Transportation Vehicle Fund: 0.1%

Sources of Revenue General Fund 2016-2017

- Local tax: 20%
- Local non-tax: 6%
- State general purpose: 14%
- State special purpose: 4%
- Federal general purpose: 55%
- Federal special purpose: 4%
- Other: 6%

Appendix B-1
How do we compare? Teaching and teaching support

Large district comparison
Districts with enrollments between 10,000 – 19,999

Total teaching: 2015-16 (includes teaching support)
Teachers, para educators, supplies, coaches, activity advisors, librarians, counseling, student security, recess supervision, psychologists, speech, and health services

- Auburn: 76%
- Everett: 72%
- Issaquah: 73.2%
- Kent: 68.6%
- Bellevue: 60%
- Central Kitsap: 62%
- Renton: 64%
- Yakima: 66%
- Pasco: 68%
- Bellingham: 70%
- Highline: 72%
- Issaquah: 74%
- Renton: 76%
- Yakima: 78%
- Pasco: 82%
- Statewide average: 66.1%

Teaching support only: 2015-16
Librarians, counseling, student security, recess supervision, psychologists, speech, and health services

- Auburn: 19.7%
- North Thurston: 14.1%
- Kennewick: 9.2%
- Bellevue: 0%
- Central Kitsap: 2%
- Renton: 4%
- Yakima: 6%
- Pasco: 8%
- Bellingham: 10%
- Highline: 12%
- Issaquah: 14%
- Renton: 16%
- Yakima: 18%
- Pasco: 20%
- Statewide average: 8.7%
Appendix B-2

How do we compare? Special education and total administration

Special education: 2015-16
Staffing including teachers, para educators, psychologists, nurses, speech and language pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, administrative staff, services, equipment, and materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Kitsap</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Renton</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snohomish</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukilteo</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everett</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellingham</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marysville</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellevue</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yakima</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Highline</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Battle Ground</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kentwood</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richland</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasco</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issaquah</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Statewide average: 10.2%

Large district comparison
Districts with enrollments between 10,000 – 19,999

Total administration: 2015-16
School and district administrators, technical and clerical staff, and their supplies and materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
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<td>Renton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clover Park</td>
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<td>Snohomish</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Thurston</td>
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<td>Central Kitsap</td>
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<td>Richland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pasco</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Issaquah</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
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</table>

Statewide average: 14.5%

Appendix B-3

How do we compare? District-wide support and maintenance

District-wide support: 2015-16
School board, superintendent, human resources, finance, information systems, communications, and maintenance

<table>
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<th>District</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mukilteo</td>
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<td>Issaquah</td>
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<td>Everett</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
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Statewide average: 18.1%

Maintenance and operations: 2015-16
Maintenance of schools and grounds, school custodians, utilities, and school security

<table>
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<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Central Valley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marysville</td>
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<td>Kentwood</td>
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<td>Highline</td>
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<td>Glover Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mukilteo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bellingham</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Issaquah</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everett</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statewide average: 8.9%
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Caroline Mason, President  
Carol Andrews, Vice President  
Traci Mitchell, Board Member  
Pam LeSesne, Board Member  
Ted Wenta, Board Member

**SUPERINTENDENT**

Dr. Gary Cohn

*Designated to handle inquiries about nondiscrimination policies are:*

**Affirmative Action Officer**

Carol Stolz  
3900 Broadway  
Everett, WA 98201  
425-385-4106  
cstolz@everettsd.org

**Title IX Officer**

Randi Seaberg  
3900 Broadway  
Everett, WA 98201  
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**Section 504 Coordinator**

Becky Ballbach  
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*Everett Public Schools shall provide equal educational opportunity and treatment for all students in all aspects of the academic and activities program without regard to race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, veteran or military status, the presence of any physical, sensory or mental disability or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a student with a disability.*