

From: [Communications](#)
To: [EPS.Maillist](#)
Subject: BoardNotes
Date: Wednesday, January 17, 2018 12:20:43 PM

...*BoardNotes*

The board held a regular meeting on Jan. 9, 2018, and related Executive Session on Jan. 16. This issue of BoardNotes summarizes board activity and decisions of both meetings.

ON JAN. 9, THE BOARD HEARD COMMENTS FROM A COMMUNITY MEMBER about eminent domain and difficulties the owner faces moving from property on which high school #4 is to be located.

Some background: Everett Public Schools is growing. Overall, 1,600 more students will attend schools in the district in the next 10 years. Most of that growth will be in the southern portion of the district where a new high school is needed – and where the district already owns some land intended for future schools.

In 2015, southern region property owners next door to that land approached the district about their properties. The district and those land owners began negotiations for purchase to make the site large enough for a high school and future elementary school.

[On Nov. 7, 2017](#), the district answered questions about that process and its status then. We shared that information with you in the [Nov. 6, 2017 Newslinks](#) e-newsletter.

In a “people business,” such as ours, it is difficult to be in a situation balancing the needs of some with the needs of many. Our students need a new high school. Our board is charged with meeting the needs of generations of students who will attend the new high school over decades – and to do so while being fiscally responsible of how they spend public dollars. The district is committed to a solution that is fair and within legal parameters of how public funds can be used.

ON JAN. 16, THE BOARD MET IN EXECUTIVE SESSION to learn more about eminent domain from legal counsel.

Following the executive session, board president Caroline Mason directed the superintendent to negotiate purchase agreements that would include moving expenses for owners of all properties under consideration. Her full statement and the motion unanimously approved follows:

“The laws governing the processes of eminent domain were written to protect both property owners and public resources. However, laws don’t always reflect the difficulties people face when they are in the midst of legal processes. The process of eminent domain takes a toll on property owners, our community and families, and it is one of the most difficult decisions a governing body will ever face.

“As Mr. Gunn previously mentioned, historically districts **do not pay** to relocate property owners as part of the eminent domain process if federal funds are not used to pay those owners for the properties. Because of that history, we followed that precedent in our eminent domain process.

“At the Jan. 9 board meeting, Mr. Gutschmidt shared the hardships he and his partner face to move from the property jointly owned with an out-of-state brother. We empathize with those challenges. We have carefully considered the challenges he brought to our attention *and* the challenges and rights of the other property owners who have already moved *and* our responsibility as stewards of public funds.

“Tonight, we met in executive session to learn more from our legal counsel about eminent domain and options we have as a publicly elected board charged to solve school overcrowding in schools now and into the future and to abide by laws governing use of public funds.

“As a result of this discussion, I would like to propose a motion to direct the superintendent to assess and include reasonable and allowable costs when negotiating settlement agreements, to include:

- **Full, fair, and just compensation for the property**
- **Consideration of other property owners expenses such as moving expenses and humanitarian concerns**
- **While maintaining prudent and equitable use of taxpayer funds”**

The five board members unanimously approved the motion.

ON JAN. 9, THE BOARD CONGRATULATED & THANKED A COMMUNITY PARTNER

Community Transit employees chose a project for their annual giving which resulted in 84 homeless students receiving backpacks. Volunteers from the Everett Service Office of the Department of Social and Health Services shopped, wrapped, stuffed and tagged the backpacks. Each contained a hygiene kit, gift cards of between \$25-\$50, a sweatshirt donated by the Everett Silvertips and other wrapped gifts.

“These are game changers for kids,” said Sequoia High School principal, Kelly Shepherd, as she gave examples of the impact the backpacks had on students receiving them. “It changed a kid from hopeless and alone to hopeful. It changed a kid from feeling uncared for, unloved and alone to loved and cared for. And, it changed for at least one, a kid on the brink of being a drop-out to a kid back on a path to success. So on behalf of my students, thank you, for making that difference.”

ON JAN. 9, THE BOARD HEARD THE SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT which included:

Kudos to staff for helping students in our district learn more than a year’s worth in one year. A recent Stanford study of districts around the nation showed students from grades three to eight gain MORE than five years academically. In fact, they grow almost six years in that time. See the full story and a link to other districts around the country [online](#).

ON JAN. 9, THE BOARD ACCEPTED

\$60,000 from The Washington State Department of Commerce to [subcontract with Cocoon House](#) to help homeless students in the district secure stable housing or reunify with family. The goal is to provide educational stability for homeless students.

The number of homeless students in our district increases each year. In 2007-08, the district served 458 homeless students. That number grew to 1,150 last year. In this partnership work, Cocoon House will hire and train an educational advocate and provide case management. Cocoon House has years of successful experience working with unaccompanied homeless youth. Approximately 45 students will be involved in the program.

By stabilizing their lives and reducing the barriers to their educational success, their educational accomplishments will likely increase. As a side benefit, there may be transportation cost savings from reduced McKinney-Vento expenses.
(See news release about this partnership [online](#))

ON JAN. 9, THE BOARD ALSO ACCEPTED

\$90,000 from The Boeing Company, through the [Everett Public Schools Foundation](#). The early learning department, in partnership with the STEM department staff will use these funds to align early learning math. This will broaden access students and families have to engaging, high-quality, early math instruction and will fund professional development for teachers.

ON JAN. 9, THE BOARD REVIEWED AND DISCUSSED STRATEGIC PROGRESS in the district's early learning work.

The district's strategic plan includes targets to increase kindergarten readiness, deepen collaboration with community early learning partners, and increase access to high quality early learning opportunities for students before they come to the first day of kindergarten.

The board reviewed [current status](#) of this work and identified next steps for continued work.

All 17 elementary schools have full-day kindergarten. Regional preschool and kindergarten teachers routinely work together to ensure students entering kindergarten have a sound academic and social base for success in public school. This *Building Foundations that Last* program has been ongoing since 2010. An April 2017 early learning symposium brought educators, business and parents together to help leverage resources and deepen collaboration.

Check out a recent news release about [professional development sessions](#) for regional preschool and kindergarten teachers.

ON JAN. 9, THE BOARD REVIEWED the [first quarter financial update](#)

Each month the board reviews the district's most current fiscal activity. Each quarter, the board reviews more detailed information about each of the district's five funds – this meeting includes a quarterly review. A school district's fiscal year is Sept. 1 through Aug. 31 each year.

ON JAN. 9, THE BOARD APPROVED legislative priorities for the 2018 legislative session.

Each year the board sets legislative priorities used in conversations with legislators and the community. The 2018 priorities include focus on financial stability and adequate funding for public education. This is largely because of measures the state has not taken in response to the Supreme Court's McCleary ruling.

In 2012, the Washington State Supreme Court decided in McCleary vs. State the state had not complied with its constitutional duty to amply fund K-12 public education. The Court set a deadline of 2018 for full compliance. During the 2013-15 biennium, the Legislature provided some added funding focused on increasing discretionary dollars for materials, supplies, and operating costs.

During the 2017 legislative session, the house and senate submitted contrasting proposals to address McCleary. Governor Inslee called three additional special sessions in which the two bodies were to work to hash out a state budget. In the face of government shutdown, the Legislature adopted the 2017-19 biennial budget (EHB 2242) on June 30, 2017.

While the Legislature said it had fully complied with McCleary, school districts and state associations disagreed. On Nov. 15, 2017, the Supreme Court ruled the state had not done enough to fully fund basic education by the Sept. 1, 2018, deadline.

The justices specifically faulted the Legislature for failing to implement a constitutionally compliant salary model by the deadline. The court reasoned the state could satisfy its constitutional obligations by funding the prototypical school model formula set forth in ESHB 2261. The court admonished the Legislature for dragging its feet in adopting this funding plan, noting the opportunity to act in a timely manner did not suddenly occur in the 2017 session. Further, the court retains jurisdiction over the case, and continues daily sanctions against the state until it complies.

Nondiscrimination statement

The district 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.

Designated to handle inquiries about nondiscrimination policies are: **Affirmative Action Office** – Carol Stolz, cstolz@everettsd.org, 425-385-4106; **Title IX Officer** – Randi Seaberg, rseaberg@everettsd.org, 425-385-4104; **504 Coordinator** – Becky Ballbach, rballbach@everettsd.org, 425-385-4063; **ADA Coordinator** – Becky Clifford, rclifford@everettsd.org, 425-385-5250; Address: 3900 Broadway, Everett, WA 98201