

**From:** [Cohn, Gary](#)  
**To:** [EPS.Maillist](#)  
**Subject:** Work Session Summary  
**Date:** Thursday, April 19, 2018 9:35:48 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Dear Colleague:

On Tuesday morning I sent to you a [message](#) to alert you to a special meeting of the school board that evening. I thought you might want to know how the meeting went. The work session delved into the question “What’s next?” after not enough voters in February said “yes” to the projects in our proposed Capital Bond. (Remember that bonds require a 60 percent super majority in Washington State.)

The biggest item in the bond was a fourth comprehensive high school to ease the crowding at Jackson High School, *and* what we expect students and staff will also soon experience at Cascade High School. Although other proposed Capital Bond items were (and still are) important for high quality learning environments and programs, it is the combination of enrollment and class size reduction that creates the crunch we’re feeling most immediately.

You may remember that school board study sessions and work sessions rarely are formal decision-making sessions. Instead, they are times for the board to dig deeply into a particular topic, asking questions and engaging in wide ranging discussions, usually on one subject. In work sessions, the board typically brainstorms concepts and ideas. District staff and board members share ideas and learn from each other. Often these discussions help coalesce thinking so that we may prepare future action items for directors’ consideration.

I’ve concluded from observing the work session discussions that our school board is interested in two overarching “What’s next?” steps:

1. **More time** for public engagement, information gathering, and information sharing *before* placing another Capital Bond request before voters. At this time, board members expressed more interest in April 2020 as a potential election date than in other election dates available through November 2020.
2. **More time** for more public discussions and information gathering before they make decisions about enrollment-growth solutions that do **not** include a fourth comprehensive high school. As a result, you should expect to see announcements of dates, times, and locations for community engagement sessions to gather opinions about (1) high school boundary changes to better balance our comprehensive high schools’ enrollments, (2) schedule change options for Jackson High School (e.g., double shifting), and (3) accommodating enrollment growth at Jackson High School with portable classroom additions. I expect these community engagement sessions to be held at our three comprehensive high schools to gather unique thoughts and ideas from the three regions.

The board’s interest in “more time” is an opportunity for us – and a challenge for us. We are always better off when we know, understand, and act with the sentiment and will of our community in

mind. And ... we face the reality of students here now and more students coming in the future.

This is also a rich opportunity for you to be a part of the discussions and to share your ideas. Some of you already have done so, and I very much appreciate the comments and ideas you've sent over these months – and in response to yesterday's email.

You always have a great deal on your plate. With end-of-year activities and festivities, this time of year is even more intense than other times. I hope you will watch for information about public sessions, and hope you'll consider attending one in your region. I invite you to take time to share your wisdom and insights as we continue this important work on behalf of our communities' children. Finally, I hope you will contribute to the conversation, generate ideas, and assess various options with the understanding that we are one district, and one school's challenges belong to all of us.

Best regards,



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