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Subject: Almost Good-bye!!
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Good morning! I hope you are enjoying this beautiful, even if a little cloudy and windy, June day.

Last night our school board and I had the pleasure of participating in the Sequoia High School commencement ceremony. What an absolute joy to be a part of the success of 65 more graduates from Everett Public Schools! If you haven't participated in one of our four high schools' commencement ceremonies recently, I encourage you to join in one of the celebrations, especially if a student you taught or supported along the way is graduating. There really isn't anything like the experience.

Last night's ceremony reminded me it's that time of year when we all wonder *What happened?* Suddenly we went from May to June, and the last day of school is next week!

There are LOTS of thoughts and things to share this time of year. But I know you are busy. This is short and sweet, but ever so long on *thank you* and *appreciation* for what you've helped accomplish this year.

CELEBRATIONS AND THANKS – all round. (This list could go on and on, but here are some highlights.)

- The [Innovation Expo](#) at Angel of the Winds Arena gathered more sponsors than ever for this event, which continues to grow in attendance and recognition. It's a perfect ending to our first year of success with 1:1 technology rollout. Thanks to all who helped showcase one of our biggest annual events of the year.
- Our last art show for this season featured [elementary art](#) on display at the CRC. This is just one of many examples of our district's and our communities' support for students' fine and performing arts experiences.
- Have you seen the number of awards and scholarships our students earned this year? They are all documented on the [district's Facebook page](#), or you can check out the [news release](#) section of the website. Just this week we learned a Sequoia student was featured in a [West Virginia magazine](#)! Kudos to you for your role in making such successes possible.
- Transitions, transitions, transitions – from hosting [kindergarten transition events](#) to orientations for students moving from elementary to middle and from middle to high school, you are showcasing our culture of caring to families and students. Thanks for that!
- Of course, the biggest transition of all is graduation, and tomorrow our three comprehensive high schools' seniors will walk across the stage at Angel of the Winds Arena and on to new lives you have helped make possible. Thanks for 13 (or more) years of support for these students – and for the efforts underway now to certify every one of those who will have so justly earned their diplomas on those graduation dates.
- We launched [career connected learning](#), a [K-12 continuum](#) of in- and out-of-school learning experiences designed to support students' career awareness, career exploration, and career

preparation. Core to career connected learning are [high school career pathways](#) and [summer internships](#). These opportunities are made possible by our growing [employer engagement opportunities](#), and is another of the ways we will achieve the district mission of students *graduating inspired, educated and prepared to achieve to high standards, contribute to our community and thrive in a global society*.

- Infrastructure work happening everywhere – the technology support staff are setting up a whole new flight of schools for next year's 1:1 educational technology. Maintenance and custodial staff are poised for deep cleaning and routine maintenance work over the summer. Food and nutrition staff are prepped for a summer providing meals for students who depend upon that food for sustenance until school starts again next fall. For many, the school year does not end in June; their work makes the school year better for all of us.
- Major construction projects are underway. We just held the groundbreaking ceremony for Elementary #18, which will open in 2019. Our facilities team is supervising dozens of security upgrades and updates at our elementaries in particular, and we are repairing grounds deterioration at numerous schools. And tonight we dedicate the [new baseball field](#) at Memorial Stadium, a project that includes financial commitments from our county and the Aqua Sox!

SOME LINGERING WORRIES

- Legislative decisions earlier this year are worrisome. They PREVENT us from collecting millions of dollars in levy funds our voters approved last February, and they very clearly, slowly diminish state funding over time. (Full details of why this is worrisome were part of the [school board meeting on May 23](#).) We are working with legislators to see why this is bad for Everett Public Schools and others and urging a fix in the next session.
- If you are watching the news, you know that bargaining teams across the state – including in Everett - are meeting to talk about funding and to unravel the Legislature's confusing and conflicting funding messages and provisions. This I can fully celebrate, because seated in our bargaining sessions are teams of highly professional staff and administrators fully intent on solutions that will work for students and staff and short and long term district finances. Those discussions will continue as they have in the past, with bargaining decisions and news being more frequent as the summer draws to a close.

POSITIVES OUTWEIGH THE NEGATIVES

How sweet it is to be in this business which, yes, does have challenges and which, yes, is so full of rewards and people who care.

Here's an early wish for the best ever school year ending and a restorative summer. Warmest regards for a great finish to a great year!

Gary



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