

**EVERETT PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**EVERETT, WASHINGTON**  
**Regular Meeting**

The Board of Directors of Everett Public Schools, Snohomish County, Washington, held a regular Board meeting on Tuesday, November 8, 2005, beginning at 4:30 p.m., in the Board Room of the Educational Service Center, 4730 Colby Avenue, Everett, Washington. Those in attendance were Kristie Dutton, Karen Madsen, Sue Cooper, Paul Roberts and Roy Yates.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

President Yates called for any recommended changes to the agenda. Superintendent Carol Whitehead reported that there would be a revised personnel report. With that, Karen Madsen moved for adoption of the revised agenda. Sue Cooper seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**ADOPTION OF  
AGENDA**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Paul Roberts moved for approval of the minutes of the regular meetings of October 11 and 25, 2005. Kristie Dutton seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES**

**SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS**

Superintendent Whitehead opened her comments by notifying the Board of a shift in administrative personnel in the District. Silver Firs Elementary principal Patty Gauksheim is on medical leave for three months. In Patty's absence, Mary O'Brien (Heatherwood Middle School assistant principal) will serve as the principal, and retired middle school principal Linda Butler will assist Greg Gelderman at Heatherwood Middle School. Former employee (and administrator) Laura Poulos will fill in for Linda when it is necessary for Linda to be away tending to prior commitments. It is gratifying to have former employees and retirees available to help out in an emergency.

**SUPT'S COMMENTS**

Dr. Whitehead thanked the Everett Police Department for their help during an incident last week which involved a modified lockdown at Everett High School. Earlier, the District had received a tip and worked with the police to ensure the safety of staff and students while the suspect was sought. The individual, who was not an Everett High School student, was apprehended off-campus by the police.

The District's assessment department is providing opportunities for parents to review their student's WASL document. The review must be conducted under close supervision in the presence of a District employee. During the week of November 3, eight parents reviewed last spring's WASL document and looked at actual test booklets item by item. This process has been well received by the parents. In fact, a number of parents said they will work with their children in areas identified during the review. Additional review dates will be offered in December, January and February.

Dr. Whitehead reported that she is meeting with community members and parents to talk about the proposed levy/bond, capital needs of the District and achievement results. So far, she has spoken to all staff except those in the Food and Nutrition Services area and that meeting will occur later in November. One parent meeting has been completed, with similar meetings planned for parents at each school through the month of January.

Dr. Whitehead called on the District's Director of Athletics Robert Polk who reported on recent athletic activities in the District. First, Robert recognized the accomplishments of Russell Herzog and Jennifer Pederson as October's student scholar athletes of the month. This is the second month of this new and special award that honors students who have excelled both academically and athletically. In September, Everett High School was the school selected to bestow this honor upon one boy and one girl among its scholar athletes. Cascade High School is the school chosen to select two scholar athletes for October and next month Jackson High School will select two, etc.

Russell carries a 3.95 GPA, ranks seventh in his class, scored 1990 on the SAT and is a leader on the Cascade High School tennis team. Jennifer is a leader on her school swim team, ranks 36<sup>th</sup> in her class, has a 3.85 GPA and scored 1650 on the SAT. At the request of the Board, congratulatory letters will be prepared for each recipient.

## **SUPT'S COMMENTS (cont'd.)**

In other academic/athletic news, Robert reported that the WIAA recently gave team academic awards. Two levels of awards are given. The distinguished award (with teams who carry a 3.0 to 3.49 team GPA) went to the Cascade High School girls' cross country team, the Everett High School volleyball and girls' cross country teams. JHS girls' soccer, boys' and girls' cross country and girls' swimming and volleyball.

The outstanding award (for teams with a 3.5 GPA or higher) went to Cascade High School boys' tennis, boys' cross country, volleyball, girls' soccer and girls' swimming teams. The Everett High School boys' cross country, girls' swimming, boys' tennis and girls' soccer teams also received the outstanding award. Of note is that Cascade boys' tennis team also completed another league season undefeated, which is the second season in a row. Fall sports teams are having an exceptional post-season. All three of Everett's high school football teams qualified for the playoffs. Cascade and Everett both won their games against favored teams going on the road. In soccer, Jackson and Cascade both qualified for the district playoffs and Jackson also qualified for the state playoffs. In volleyball, Everett Public Schools had Jackson and Everett qualify for the district tournament. A number of individual athletes qualified for post-season in girls' swimming, tennis and cross country, including the boys' state cross country champion, Jeff Helmer from Jackson High School. Indeed, it has been a very exciting fall for Everett Public Schools' high school teams.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

President Yates called on the following individual who had submitted a Public Comment card:

1) Leanne Roe—parent of Everett High School student—spoke about matters relating to special education and its laws and the need for the District to exercise common sense and decency.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **RECOGNITION OF RETIREES**

Director of Communications Gay Campbell introduced Emerson Elementary School teacher Linda Butler who will be retiring. Linda has worked at Jefferson, Silver Lake, Woodside and Emerson Elementary Schools. Emerson's principal Cynthia Jones said that Linda is someone for whom teaching is like breathing. She knows how to help students and she cares deeply for them. Parents trust her. It is a privilege to say "thank you" to Linda. Linda commented briefly, saying she has been proud to work in Everett Public Schools. She introduced colleagues and friends Ken Harvey, Margaret Harvey, David Davis, Donna Bosman as well as Linda's son Chad. President Yates congratulated Linda, thanked her for her efforts and presented her with a crystal memento apple.

## **RECOGNITION OF RETIREES**

### **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

The Citizens Supporting the Levy for Everett Public Schools committee conducted a survey regarding voter attitudes towards the proposed Everett Public Schools levy and bond election in 2006. A representative of the company that conducted the survey provided a summary of the results.

## **REPORT OF CITIZENS' SURVEY**

Local parent and State PTA President Linda Hanson introduced the presentation, saying the survey was taken to gauge attitudes about possible measures that might be on the ballot. She introduced Mark Nelson, owner of Public Affairs Council of Salem, Oregon, a firm specializing in legislation representation, public opinion survey research and issue campaign management. He prefaced his comments by saying his firm

**REPORT OF  
CITIZENS'  
SURVEY  
(cont'd.)**

conducts more research for Oregon than any other group in that state. He then shared the results of the Nelson report. The recent survey was conducted between October 5 and October 15, 2005. There were 404 respondents who were interviewed and the error rate was a plus-or-minus 4.85 at the 95 percent level of confidence. The questionnaire consisted of 56 questions using several formats and approaches. Cross-checks were in place throughout the survey to help spot inconsistencies. The survey tested the maintenance and operations levy, the bond measures and the capital levy. Key conclusions: a high percentage of the respondents favored renewal of the maintenance and operations levy for the following reasons: they recognized it is needed, education is important and from personal experience. The reasons given for opposing the maintenance and operations levy are: it will increase taxes, funds are being mismanaged and the District needs to review its spending. Respondents were then asked, "If you knew \_\_\_X\_\_\_, now how would respond to the measure?" Adding such questions helps show how the numbers move. The argument that produced the largest increase in support for renewing the levy was the knowledge that the total school property tax rates would remain the same. Knowledge that renewal of the operating levy would enable the District to maintain most of its current programs aimed at improving student achievement also increased the number of respondents who favored the measure. Knowledge that renewal of the levy would allow the District to continue to pay competitive wages to teachers and teachers' aides increased support for the measure. The fact that the levy would help the District to furnish student instructional materials also increased support.

A high percentage of respondents favored the \$179 million capital bond measure for the following reasons: new schools and upgrades are needed, the bond measure is needed and education is important. Opposition came in the form of the following statements: opposed to increased taxes, need to spend more wisely, need more information. The argument that produced the greatest increase in support for the bond measure was information that new residents who move into the community in the future would assist in the payment for the bond measure. The possibility of receiving matching funds from the state for school renovation and modernization also increased support for the bond measure. Knowledge that the construction of a new elementary would help ease overcrowding increased support. Support slightly decreased when respondents heard that the money would be used to purchase property for new schools. A component priority list showed that a large number of respondents rated upgrading technology for student learning, followed by seismic, heating and ventilation upgrades and modernization of older schools. At the bottom of their list was the modernization of the Everett High School gymnasium.

A large percentage of the respondents favored the four-year capital levy. Those in support said: schools need upgrades and safety improvements, the levy is needed and education is important. Those who opposed said: taxes are too high, the measure is not necessary and funds are mismanaged. The argument that produced the largest increase in support of the capital levy was knowledge that the District is considering the capital levy for some upgrades and building maintenance rather than a bond measure because it is less expensive to the taxpayers than the cost of financing a large sum of money over a longer period of time. Knowledge that the levy would be used for building maintenance projects such as roof replacements and seismic upgrades pushed respondents to increase their support for the measure. Information that the capital levy would protect the community's investment in technology was also reflected in other parts of the survey. Information that monies would be used to install a district-wide emergency communication system caused respondents to favor the measure. Information that the levy would cost taxpayers an additional \$114 per year over the next four years for the owner of a \$300,000 home slightly decreased support for the measure. The argument that reduced support for the measure by the largest margin was that the monies would

pay for the installation of artificial turf at athletic fields at Cascade and Jackson High Schools.

When respondents were asked whether they would support all three proposals, slightly less than half said they would support all three. With the knowledge that, compared to the 2005 property tax rate, all three proposals could be accomplished at a maximum tax rate increase of \$.14 per \$1,000 of assessed value, increased support was seen for all three measures and took it over the 50 percent level.

In summary, it was clear that the community is very supportive of Everett Public Schools as reflected in the high level of support for each of the proposals. Ensuring student achievement, competitive teacher salaries, and providing necessary student materials and a minimum tax increase appear to be important issues to the community as it relates to their strong support for the operating levy. While the \$178.9 million bond measure received slightly less support than the operating levy, the potential to receive matching funds that would offset construction costs as well as address enrollment growth at the elementary level increased the support by a large margin. The capital levy received the least amount of support even though the community lists upgrades of technology and seismic, heating and ventilation upgrades as its highest priorities in addition to protecting the community's investment in school buildings increased the support for the proposal.

Passage of all three measures is possible, but somewhat problematic.

In closing, Mr. Nelson reported that, during the survey, he saw some of the strongest numbers he has ever seen in Washington. These high numbers bode well for the District.

In response to a question from President Yates about obtaining a copy of the survey results, Dr. Whitehead replied that since the survey was commissioned by the citizens committee and paid for by the committee with donated money, not District funds, acquiring a copy would need to be by way of the committee.

When Board member Madsen sought clarification that the community supports all that Everett wants to do but is not as fond of having it in three measures, Mr. Nelson said yes, support was under 50 percent. When Board member Cooper asked whether the purchase of property for new schools was a negative or just not as positive as some of the others, Mr. Nelson said it was just not as positive. There was a slight decrease in support, but Mr. Nelson believed it did not move respondents either way, favorably or unfavorably against the measure.

The Board thanked Mr. Nelson and the Citizens Supporting the Levy for Everett Public Schools committee.

The Board heard a staff report concerning a four-year maintenance and operations levy and addressing the capital needs of Everett Public Schools. Associate Superintendent for Finance and Operations Bob Collard opened by outlining the importance of the maintenance and operations levy, listing capital goals and needs and providing possible scenarios (E:52/06).

To Board member Cooper's question about whether the purchase of another piece of property has been included in the figures, Dr. Whitehead replied that the presentations to the staff, parents and community have produced feedback asking why Monroe Elementary School was not on the list for the first round of remodeling. So much feedback was received that Monroe was moved up on the list and the extra purchase of

**REPORT OF  
CITIZENS'  
SURVEY  
(cont'd.)**

**STAFF REPORT  
CONCERNING A  
4-YEAR M&O  
LEVY &  
ADDRESSING  
CAPITAL NEEDS  
OF EPS**

**STAFF REPORT  
CONCERNING A  
4-YEAR M&O  
LEVY &  
ADDRESSING  
CAPITAL NEEDS  
OF EPS (cont'd.)**

property was dropped off. Even so, the District will continue to look for property and develop strategies by which to make purchases.

Dr. Whitehead provided a timeline which recommends a February, 2006 election. A number of other districts are running elections at that time as well which helps with the costs to the school districts. The Administration will need to ask the Board to adopt resolutions at the regularly-scheduled meeting on November 22. Therefore, Dr. Whitehead recommended that a special Board meeting be held on November 15 to further consider the information presented tonight and provide authorization to the Administration to prepare the resolutions. Dr. Whitehead said her recommendation to the Board will be to follow Scenario 2 which will include a maintenance and operations levy (\$30.5 million in 2007; \$32.5 million in 2008; \$34.5 million in 2009; and \$36.5 million in 2010) as well as a capital bond for \$198.9 million. District administrators, including the Superintendent's Cabinet, have discussed the scenarios at length and concluded that Scenario 2 is the preferred recommendation. The rationale for using Scenario 2 is that although there are some long-term benefits to a capital levy, it is a change in practice from what the community is accustomed to and it would be better to take longer to help the community understand the difference between the capital bond and capital levy. The capital needs are essential to the District and it is important that these needs be described in a way that the community will accept.

Board member Roberts said he appreciates the information and recommendation and looks forward to reviewing the survey data so he can be prepared to move forward on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Board member Madsen said this is a good timeline decision and she appreciates the work that went into compiling all of the numbers and the data.

Dr. Whitehead emphasized that passage of the maintenance and operations levy is essential and it is imperative that everyone understands it. The District has made overt decisions to compensate staff well in order to employ the best staff. It is important to understand that the District is asking for a specified dollar amount, but it is the tax rate that varies based on a number of variables such as the number of new homes and businesses that come to the community, the ability to re-finance the bonds, getting the optimum bond rate, and re-appraisal of homes, among other things. The District anticipates growth in its student population over the four years as well as growth in the community. The District works hard to ensure the upkeep of its facilities to the level expected by the community. Classroom space has been added in the recent past, but more space is needed as witnessed by the fact that there continue to be portables at the schools. Board member Cooper concurred and said there will continue to be a lot of people coming into the state. She also stressed the need to emphasize that the maintenance and operations levy is a renewal.

President Yates asked about the process for determining interest rates concerning the bond. Bob replied that the District examines current rates and works with the Bank of America to project short-term and long-term rates. There is not a one-rate assumption although an increase in the rates is reflected as well as a short-term increase in assessed property values. The assumptions have been kept as conservative as possible.

Board member Dutton asked about the funding of the projects in terms of rolling the capital levy into the capital bond and whether the projects would be on the same schedule. Bob said there may be some small adjustments but, essentially, the projects would remain on the schedule indicated. She went on to say that she finds it invaluable that Dr. Whitehead has been out in the community and gathered feedback such as was learned about Monroe Elementary School.

Board member Madsen noted that this is a four-year levy. When she asked whether other lengths of time were considered, Dr. Whitehead said yes, but the District feels it has been advantageous to have a four-year levy which allows the District to focus on its mission; in fact, there has been academic achievement growth. A four-levy is less expensive as well in terms of election costs.

**STAFF REPORT  
CONCERNING A 4-  
YEAR M&O LEVY  
& ADDRESSING  
CAPITAL NEEDS OF  
EPS (cont'd.)**

Year-end financial reports for the 2004-2005 fiscal year were provided for the Board of Directors' review (E:53/06). Bob Collard said the District's ending fund balance was \$10.42 million, which is \$300,000 less than was projected. Bob said this difference was due to some additional expenditures regarding I-728 funds and approximately \$100,000 less in tax revenue.

**YEAR END  
FINANCIAL  
REPORTS FOR  
2004-2005**

**ACTION ITEMS**

Sue Cooper moved for approval of the revised Consent Agenda items. Kristie Dutton seconded the motion.

**CONSENT  
AGENDA**

- 1) Personnel Report (revised) (E:54/06);
- 2) Voucher Lists (E:55/06);
- 3) Proposed Revised Policy 1400 – Board of Directors (*regarding allowing districts to deliver notices of special meetings via facsimile or electronic mail*) (E:56/06);
- 4) Final Acceptance: Gateway Middle School Eight-Classroom Addition (E:57/06);
- 5) Approval of Mitigation Agreement Between Everett School District and Alexander Reed Construction, Inc. (SEPA #05-63) (E:58/06);
- 6) Approval of Mitigation Agreement Between Everett School District and Vien Bui (SEPA #05-038) (E:59/06); and
- 7) Contract Between Everett School District and Refugee & Immigrant Services Northwest (E:60/06).

The motion carried unanimously.

**BOARD COMMENTS**

Board member Madsen said it was heartwarming to hear the District's athletic director lead off his report with information about students' academic achievement.

**BOARD  
COMMENTS**

With no further comments, President Yates adjourned the regular meeting at 5:45 p.m.

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Carol Whitehead, Secretary

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Roy Yates, President